

## **COMPREHENSIVE TOBACCO PREVENTION & CONTROL – A WISE INVESTMENT**

*Washington state programs successfully reduce tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure*

### **Public Health Problem**

- Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and accounts for a large share of taxpayer medical expenditures.
- Applying comprehensive, proven, and cost-effective strategies can reduce the rate of tobacco use, improve quality of life and prevent disease and disability caused by tobacco.

### **Program**

- The Washington State Department of Health Tobacco Prevention and Control Program works with local health departments, tribes, schools, and community organizations to deliver integrated tobacco prevention and cessation activities benefiting all Washington residents.
- Funding is provided from the Master Settlement Agreement, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a sales tax on tobacco products and fees paid by tobacco retailers.
- All nine of the state's Educational Service Districts receive funding to help schools improve and enforce tobacco-free policies, provide intervention services for students, deliver research-based curricula, train teachers and staff, and provide information to families.
- The Tobacco Quit Line provides free one-on-one counseling, tobacco quit kits, and referrals to local stop-smoking programs. The Program educates healthcare providers on ways to help their patients stop using tobacco.
- An advertising campaign uses traditional media, such as television and radio, as well as innovative approaches to reach youth, adults, and high-risk populations to off-set targeted tobacco industry marketing.

### **Impact**

After eight years of implementation, the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program and its statewide partners cite these substantial accomplishments:

- Significant reductions in the number of smokers - Washington youth smoking was cut in half and adult smoking dropped 25 percent.
- An estimated 80,000 adults were spared an early, tobacco-related death.
- About 3,000 fewer babies per year were exposed to cigarette smoking during pregnancy. (Babies born to women who smoke during pregnancy are more likely to be born with low birth weight and to die of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.)
- Secondhand smoke exposure in Washington homes declined by more than fifty percent.

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