

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

Celeste Philip, MD, MPH
State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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GULF YOUTH FIGHT BACK AGAINST TOBACCO

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Port Saint Joe, Fla. The youth cigarette smoking rate in Florida is on the decline. But more than 7,400 kids under 18 still become new daily smokers each year in Florida.ⁱ In fact, the more likely they see that tobacco use is acceptable or normal among their peers, the more likely they are to use it.

That's why Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) is working hand in hand with the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida during Tobacco Free Florida Week – to help spread the message that tobacco is costly to your health and your wallet.

The amount of money spent on smoking can be significant. A pack-a-day smoker in Florida can spend more than \$2,000 on cigarettes in one year. That is money that could be used to save up for a car or even to be stored away for a college education.

But your money is not the only thing that can go up in smoke. Many people start using tobacco during adolescence, which can result in a lifelong addiction after initiation.^{ii,iii,iv,v} On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers.^{vi,vii} Smoking can cause cancer almost anywhere in your body.^{viii} In fact, about 30 percent of cancer deaths in Florida are caused by cigarette smoking.^{ix}

To increase awareness about the cost of smoking, Gulf County SWAT are working with tobacco retail outlets to educate the public. Around gas pumps and store windows, poster advertisements show items that could have been purchased over time with the money spent on tobacco products. Examples include new mud tires, a grill and a tank of gas.

“More efforts and education are needed to prevent and reduce the use of all forms of tobacco use among youth,” said Marsha Lindeman, Administrator for the Florida Department of Health in Gulf and Franklin Counties. “The more educated Florida’s youth are about the cost and dangers of smoking, the better understanding they have on how it benefits them to quit or to never start.”

SWAT is Florida's statewide youth organization working to mobilize, educate and equip Florida youth to revolt against and de-glamorize Big Tobacco. SWAT is a united movement of empowered youth working towards a tobacco free future.

www.swatflorida.com

SWAT is made possible with the support of Tobacco Free Florida and the Florida Department of Health.

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About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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ⁱ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). National Survey on Drug Use and Health. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2016.

ⁱⁱ Office on Smoking and Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC

ⁱⁱⁱ Center for Tobacco Products, Food and Drug Administration

^{iv} U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health, 1994 [accessed 2016 Apr 14].

^v U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2012 [accessed 2016 Apr 14].

^{vi} Hodgson, TA, "Cigarette Smoking and Lifetime Medical Expenditures," *Milbank Quarterly*, 70(1):81-115, 1992.

^{vii} Jha P, Ramasundarahettige C, Landsman V, et al. 21st Century Hazards of Smoking and Benefits of Cessation in the United States. *New England Journal of Medicine* 2013;368:341–50 [accessed 2017 Mar 28].

^{viii} U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.

^{ix} Lortet-Tieulent J, Goding Sauer A, Siegel RL, Miller KD, Islami F, Fedewa SA, Jacobs EJ, Jemal A. State-Level Cancer Mortality Attributable to Cigarette Smoking in the United States. *JAMA Intern Med*. 2016;176(12):1792-1798. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.6530