

Tobacco Prevention & Cessation

A Critical Need in West Virginia

Maintaining support for tobacco prevention and cessation is key to West Virginia's health and economic future.

The Challenge

West Virginia faces one of the nation's most severe tobacco crises. The state ranks 48th nationally for adult cigarette use, 50th for smoking during pregnancy, and 42nd for youth tobacco use. With emerging threats like e-cigarettes surging among youth, tobacco use costs West Virginia over \$1 billion annually in healthcare expenses.

Importance of Investment

Investing in tobacco use prevention and cessation is crucial for helping West Virginians find purpose and health, and for reducing morbidity and long-term illness. Evidence demonstrates that every dollar invested in tobacco prevention and cessation returns up to \$55 in healthcare savings.**

\$1 → **\$55**
Invested Healthcare Savings

This exceptional return on investment makes tobacco prevention one of the most cost-effective public health interventions available.

Tobacco Use in WV

AT A GLANCE

State Rankings & Statistics*

48th

Adult
Cigarette Use

42nd

Youth
Tobacco Use

50th

Smoking
During
Pregnancy

\$1B+

Annual
Healthcare
Costs

A Foundation for Success

For over two decades, West Virginia has developed and delivered effective, evidence-based programs to curb youth tobacco initiation and support quitting among users of all ages. Maintaining funding for tobacco prevention and cessation efforts is essential to keep these successful programs going and to achieve our state's goals to:

- Promote tobacco cessation among adults and youth
- Prevent youth tobacco use initiation, including vaping and electronic delivery devices
- Eliminate secondhand tobacco smoke exposure
- Identify and eliminate disparities in priority populations

In order to continue this important work, we must build in support for evaluation efforts and robust administrative infrastructure.

* <https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/measures>

IN ACTION

The WV Division of Tobacco Prevention

Together, the programs below form a comprehensive approach to reducing tobacco use and improving health for all West Virginians.

WV QUITLINE

The WV Quitline offers free, effective services to help people quit tobacco. RVO Health has operated the WV Quitline since 2024, with new improvements expected to increase usage and improve results across the state. According to research:**

- Tobacco users who use quitlines are 2x more likely to quit successfully.
- Quitline helps reach rural and low-income populations.
- Every \$1 invested in quitline services yields significant health care savings.

NOT-ON-TOBACCO

Not-On-Tobacco (N-O-T), a widely recognized program that helps youth quit tobacco and vaping, was developed in West Virginia and adopted nationally by the American Lung Association. DTP supports N-O-T Facilitator Training in West Virginia. Currently, the program is delivered by 66 facilitators in schools and community organizations across 27 West Virginia counties.

RAZE PREVENTION PROGRAM

Raze is a school and community-based program that engages youth in tobacco prevention and education. Since over 90% of smokers start before age 18, and e-cigarette use is rising among youth, programs like Raze are vital for preventing tobacco initiation and building long-term health.

Since 2001, Raze has reached an estimated 50,000 youth across all 55 West Virginia counties.

"My time as a RAZE member gave me great knowledge at a young age that prevented me from using tobacco products. The program also allowed me to lead within my school and step outside of [my] comfort zone."

- Former Raze Member

COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS

Local Solutions, Trusted Voices

West Virginia funds local partners to expand access to tobacco cessation services, increasing engagement and impact by tailoring solutions to local needs. These community-based programs have included:

- **Baby and Me:** Helps pregnant women and new mothers quit tobacco.
- **Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist Trainings:** Builds local expertise to support quitting tobacco.
- **Spit It Out:** Supports education and cessation workshops to address smokeless tobacco use. From 2023-24, DTP held 11 "Spit It Out" workshops, reaching 116 participants. According to a follow-up survey (n=11)***, 100% of respondents reported reduced tobacco usage since attending the workshop.

EVALUATION: ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY & RESULTS

Evaluation is the key to understanding what is working and why. It helps us track program effectiveness, identify areas for improvement and incentives for cessation, make data-driven decisions, and demonstrate measurable outcomes and return on investment.

** 2020 Surgeon General's report on Smoking Cessation

*** Reed, D., Lusk, S., Dangerfield, T., Ball, M., Stoner, J., & Bowles, M. (2025). Spit It Out West Virginia: A perspective of smokeless tobacco cessation and education in rural West Virginia. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 13: 1503858. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1503858>