

STATE OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF  
**Health** AND **Human**  
SERVICES

2023 Annual Report of the Iowa  
Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention  
and Control

DECEMBER, 2023

December 1, 2023

To: The Honorable Kim Reynolds, Governor  
Members of the Iowa General Assembly

From: Dr. Robert Nichols,  
Chairman  
Iowa Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

Re: 2023 Annual Report of the Iowa Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

Pursuant to Iowa Code section 142A.4, I am pleased to submit to you this annual report of the Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control for 2023. The Commission and our community partners take seriously the challenge of reducing the negative impacts of tobacco and nicotine use among Iowans. We appreciate the support of our accomplishments you and other leaders have shown and look forward to working with you on the important tobacco and nicotine control goals of our commission.

The intent of the legislative charge for Iowa's tobacco use prevention and control initiatives, as outlined in Iowa Code chapter 142A, are summarized below:

1. To establish partnerships among the Executive Branch, General Assembly, communities and the people of Iowa in addressing the prevalence of tobacco use in the state,
2. To work toward reducing tobacco use by youth and pregnant women, while also engaging youth actively in attainment of these results, and
3. To foster a social and legal climate in which tobacco use becomes undesirable and socially unacceptable.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in Iowa and the United States. Consider the following statistics and recent trends:

- In 2021, 24.0% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students reported having ever used an e-cigarette.<sup>1</sup>
- The highest percent of students reporting current use was for electronic nicotine products (e.g. e-cigarette, JUUL, vape-pen, e-hookah, mod-box, or other electronic cigarette) with 13% of 11th graders.<sup>1</sup>
- Among 11th grade students who reported having used an electronic nicotine product, 43% reported first use between 15-16 years old<sup>1</sup>
- In Iowa, an estimated 31.4% of cancer diagnosis are attributable to smoking<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Iowa Department of Public Health. Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control. *Iowa Youth Tobacco Use Rates: Iowa Youth Survey—2021*. Des Moines: Iowa Dept. of Public Health, 2021. <https://iowayouthsurvey.idph.iowa.gov/>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/iowa> 2023

Accomplishments of the Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control and the IHHS State Tobacco Program during 2023 include:

- All 99 counties in Iowa have local tobacco prevention and control work via Community Partnerships; [Allocation Table](#)
- [Map of FY23 Community Partnerships](#)
- [Community Partnership Policy databases](#)
- Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control [2019-2023 Strategic Plan](#)
  - The Commission's five-year plan places emphasis on nicotine addiction, the health risks of vaping and the increased teen use of electronic smoking devices.
  - The Commission recognizes that tobacco means cigarettes, vapor devices and other tobacco products including alternative nicotine products.

The work of the Commission and Iowa HHS State Tobacco Program, as well as the ongoing provision of Quitline Iowa cessation services available to all Iowans is a valuable and essential asset for the state.

- The free one-on-one phone counseling and access to quit smoking medications available through Quitline Iowa remains a helpful resource to Iowans who want to quit and need support for coping with stress and withdrawal.
- The Quitline Iowa service provider, National Jewish Health, created and released a youth tobacco cessation program called [My Life, My Quit](#) for youth aged 12-17. The program combines best practices for cessation of youth tobacco and vaping, including tailored resources and educational materials for quitting, and coaching services by phone, text or online chat. The State Tobacco Program staff created a tool kit for schools, and is working with schools to promote its use as an alternative to suspension when students are caught with tobacco and vapor products on school grounds.

Policy databases and Smoke Free Homes Registry:

- Policy databases indicate:
  - The number of schools districts with tobacco free/ nicotine free (TF/NF) policies **increased** from 285 in FY16 to 409 in FY23;
  - A **144% increase in TF/NF parks/recreation areas** (from 90 in FY18 to 229 in FY23).
  - An **271% increase in TF/NF businesses** (from 735 in FY18 to 1,997 in FY23);
- Over 1,500 rental properties in Iowa have a voluntary smoke free policy listed in the [Smoke Free Homes Registry](#), a 46% increase from 1,027 in FY17 when data collection began to FY23. (Note this reflects properties not units)

In 2023, the Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control recommends state policymakers focus on the following priorities:

- Include vapor products under the Iowa Smokefree Air Act.
- Tax alternative nicotine and vaping products at their cigarette equivalent and increase the cigarette excise tax.
- Begin regulating and lowering the concentration of nicotine in e-cigarettes and ban the sale of all flavored nicotine vaping products in Iowa.

- Restore state funding for tobacco and nicotine prevention, education and treatment to a total of \$12 million annually.

The Commission looks forward to working with your office as well as the Iowa Statehouse to address tobacco and nicotine control issues, as well as the vaping epidemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Nichols" with "Ph.D., BCPS" written below it.

Dr. Robert Nichols  
Chairman  
Iowa Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control