

New Report Finds North Carolina Teen Tobacco Use Prevention Program Has Made Great Strides

Lt. Gov. Perdue available for interviews

Raleigh – A newly released study shows that North Carolina's Teen Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Initiative continues to make substantial progress in only its second year. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine found that the program, which is funded by the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF), is effectively preventing teens from using tobacco products.

The UNC study found that HWTF's increased funding from \$6.2 million to \$15 million annually resulted in positive outcomes, including several new school districts adopting a 100% Tobacco-Free Schools (100% TFS) policy, reduction of secondhand smoke in public places frequented by youth, and more. This increased funding helped elevate NC from 30th in the nation to 21st in funding programs to protect youth from using tobacco products in 2004.

In addition, TRU (Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered), HWTF's media campaign, which features hard-hitting testimonial TV ads warning teens about the effects of smoking, continues to resonate around the state. TRU is designed to educate young people about the dangers of tobacco, to prevent initiation, and to help teen users quit.

"I'm very proud of the progress that has been made since our teen tobacco use prevention program was created in 2002," said Lt. Gov. Perdue, HWTF chair. "The long-term health benefits of tobacco use prevention are immeasurable, and we have made great strides. However, there is still more work to be done before we achieve our goal of creating North Carolina's first tobacco-free generation."

A full copy of the report is available at:

<http://fammed.unc.edu/TPEP/hwtfceval/reports/HWTF%20TTUPC%20Initiative%2004-05%20Outcomes%20Report%20Final2.pdf>

Lt. Gov. Perdue will be available for interviews from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. today.

Contact Alison K. McLaurin at 919.733.4009 to arrange for an interview.

ABOUT THE NC HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$127 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$78 million to fund a prescription drug assistance program. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.

ABOUT TRU

Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered, commonly known as TRU, is North Carolina's first-ever statewide youth tobacco prevention multi-media campaign that uses testimonials of real North Carolina teens as well as hard-hitting facts to dissuade young people from using tobacco. This campaign is part of the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund's teen tobacco use prevention initiative. Funded at \$28 million from HWTF, this grassroots initiative includes the TRU media campaign, as well as a grant program including 70 grants (50 community-based grants, 4 statewide grants and