

Celebrating a 25-Year Low in Youth Tobacco Use

American Cancer Society and American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network mark their 48th annual Great American Smokeout

November 29, 2024 By American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

During this year's American Cancer Society's (ACS) Great American Smokeout® on November 21, ACS and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) are encouraging people who use tobacco to take an important step toward a healthier life by making a plan to quit. The annual event takes place on the third Thursday of November and was created by ACS to provide an opportunity to amplify the risks of tobacco use, promote tobacco cessation resources, and encourage those who use tobacco to quit and urge lawmakers to pass proven tobacco control policies.

According to data from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [2024 National Youth Tobacco Survey](#), youth tobacco use has dropped significantly over the past two decades, but over two million middle and high school students still report current use of tobacco products. Smoking increases the risk of at least 12 different cancers including lung cancer, and smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke causes more than 480,000 deaths in the U.S every year.

"Quitting smoking has almost immediate positive health benefits. Just 20 minutes after quitting your heart rate and blood pressure drop. Within months your circulation improves and your lung function increases. In two to five years, your risk of certain cancers is cut in half," said Dr. Wayne A. I. Frederick, MBA, interim CEO of the ACS and ACS CAN.

Of adults who smoke regularly, [90 percent](#) started smoking before the age of 18. ACS's advocacy affiliate, ACS CAN, works at all levels of government to combat Big Tobacco's deliberate targeting of youth with their harmful products.

"In order to protect our youth and build on the progress we've achieved, it's essential that we continue to advocate for policies that have been proven to reduce tobacco usage," said Lisa Lacasse, president of ACS CAN. "As part of the Great American Smokeout, we urge state and local governments to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products in addition to enacting proven tobacco control policies such as comprehensive smoke-free laws and regular and significant tax increases on all tobacco products—lives depend on it."

This story was published by the [American Cancer Society Action Network](#) on November 21, 2024. It is republished with permission.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.cancerhealth.com/article/celebrating-25year-low-youth-tobacco-use>