



State of North Carolina  
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**N.C. Public Health a Partner in New National Program to Teach  
Smokers *How to Become an EX*<sup>®</sup>**

RALEIGH – An unprecedented public health campaign created by an alliance of national organizations and state health agencies, including The North Carolina Division of Public Health, was launched today in Washington, DC. The new program, called **EX**<sup>®</sup>, will change the way smokers feel about the difficult process of quitting and guide them to valuable resources to build a successful quit attempt.

Not since 1968-1970, when the Fairness Doctrine was applied to anti-tobacco messages, have so many public health organizations aligned to promote a concerted smoking cessation message to the public.

This new public education effort will encourage the more than 22 percent of North Carolina adults who smoke to approach quitting smoking as “re-learning life without cigarettes.” **EX** provides smokers with information that can help them prepare for a quit attempt by 1) re-learning their thinking on the behavioral aspects of smoking and they can overcome smoking triggers with practice and preparation; 2) re-learning facts about addiction and how medications can increase their chances for quitting success; and 3) re-learning their ideas of how support from friends and family members can play a critical role in quitting.

Nationally, **EX** will educate smokers through advertisements on television, radio and online, and through community-based promotions. The program also offers smokers a new website, [www.BecomeAnEX.org](http://www.BecomeAnEX.org), that features action-oriented tools and information to help smokers prepare for quitting by developing a personalized plan, as well as a virtual community where smokers can share stories and best practices about their quit attempt.

The North Carolina Division of Public Health will promote its free, confidential Quitline for those who seek telephone support to help quit. The N.C. Tobacco Use Quitline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669), is available daily, 8 a.m. until midnight, in English, Spanish and many other languages. The Quitline can double a tobacco user’s chances of quitting for good. Learn more about the Quitline at [www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov).

“This is an historic opportunity for North Carolina”, said Dr. Leah Devlin, state health director. “Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in North Carolina, contributing to one in every five deaths. And, for every death, 20 more people in our state are sick from tobacco use. It is also important to note that the preventable health care costs due to tobacco use in North Carolina are enormous – \$2.46 billion each year.

(MORE)



“The EX campaign is a critical strategy to help smokers get ready to quit for a lifetime so they can live healthier and longer. As an added benefit, health care costs will also be reduced,” Devlin said.

Most smokers in North Carolina want to quit, but in 2006, 57 percent made unsuccessful attempts to quit. Quitting smoking is the single most important lifestyle changes tobacco users can make to improve and extend their lives. Tobacco-related disease is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. and in N.C.; smokers need to be armed with all the available information to make the best, most informed choices about the smoking cessation medications and resources available to them.

In 2006-2007, The American Legacy Foundation<sup>®</sup>, the national public health foundation best known for its **truth**<sup>®</sup> youth-smoking prevention campaign pilot tested **EX** in four markets throughout the country, Buffalo, NY, San Antonio, TX, Grand Rapids, Mich. and Baltimore, Md. As a result of the successful pilot program, Legacy has brought together several national organizations and 14 states to form the National Alliance for Tobacco Cessation (NATC) and launch **EX** nationally. The NATC is a growing group of states, non-profit organizations, foundations and corporations, all dedicated to helping people quit smoking.

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