

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Independent Report Lauds the Historic Strides of NC's Tobacco Use Prevention Programs**

**Raleigh, NC** – The first independent and comprehensive report released by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) researchers has identified major successes in North Carolina's efforts to combat tobacco use. The report states that the gains made by the Health and Wellness Trust Fund's multiple tobacco programs are models for other states to follow.

"The North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund's initiatives to prevent, fight and cease tobacco use have been held up in an independent report as a model for America," said Governor-elect Bev Perdue, HWTF Chair. "This report acknowledges our successes, motivates us to keep moving forward and shows that we are on our way to North Carolina's first tobacco-free generation."

Successes cited in UNC's report include:

- The rate of decline in teen tobacco use has more than doubled since the HWTF began funding community/school grants and media campaigns in 2003. From 1999 to 2003, cigarette use among high school students declined by just 13.6 percent. From 2003 to 2007, the rate of decline has been more than 30 percent.
- The report highlights an historic accomplishment that took place in 2008, the adoption of the 100% tobacco-free policy in all 115 North Carolina school districts, largely due to efforts by HWTF and their grantees.
- The report calls North Carolina's tobacco-free colleges program a "national leader". Through the HWTF's Tobacco-Free Colleges Initiative, 17 North Carolina colleges have adopted comprehensive tobacco-free campus policies in the last two years.
- Since the HWTF Teen Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Initiative began, nearly 2,000 youth and their community supporters have helped promote the adoption of more than 700 tobacco-free policies in youth-frequented venues such as restaurants and churches.
- More youth and young adults that smoke contacted Quitline NC in 2007 and 2008 for smoking cessation assistance than ever before. The HWTF established Quitline NC as a telephone support service for people who want to quit using tobacco.

### **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 \$199 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$102 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit [www.HealthWellNC.com](http://www.HealthWellNC.com).

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