



## CHCHD News

Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department

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For Immediate Release  
January 9, 2012

### **SmokefreeTXT Offers Support to Smokers Trying to Quit**

Chattanooga, TN – Kick off 2012 by kicking the habit with the help of a new, free mobile smoking cessation service from the National Cancer Institute. [SmokefreeTXT](#) was created to provide 24/7 encouragement, advice, and tips to help smokers quit for good. Twenty percent of adults and 17 percent of high school students in Hamilton County still smoke, according to the 2011 County Health Rankings and Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The program was created with young adults in mind, but anyone with a cell phone can take advantage of this helpful service.

"Many people use text messaging these days, especially teens, so this is a great way to reach them," said Jay Collum, tobacco control coordinator at the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department. "Many teens want to quit smoking, but few of them use proven cessation resources to help them quit. A recent report by the CDC found that by combining tobacco cessation counseling and medicine, smokers could double or triple their chances of quitting. This is one more tool to help smokers quit," said Collum.

To sign up for SmokefreeTXT, text the word QUIT to IQUIT (47848) from your mobile phone, answer a few questions, and you'll start receiving messages. After you sign up you will receive text messages timed according to your selected quit date and up to six weeks after that date. "Research shows that cessation support continues to be important beyond the first few weeks of quitting," said Collum.

Tobacco use is still the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States, according to the American Cancer Society, yet more than 46 million Americans still smoke. According to the CDC, quitting smoking has the following health benefits:

- Lowers risk of lung and other types of cancer
- Reduces risk for heart disease and stroke
- Improves respiratory symptoms such as coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath
- Reduces risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, a leading cause of death in the U.S.
- Reduces risk for infertility among women
- Reduces risk of low birth-weight babies for women who stop smoking while pregnant

For more resources on quitting smoking call the FREE Tennessee Tobacco Quit Line 1-800-QUIT-NOW, or visit <http://smokefree.gov/>.

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