
This is Quitting from truth[®] reaches milestone of helping half a million young people overcome nicotine addiction

As the youth e-cigarette epidemic remains a public health threat, the innovative, first-of-its-kind text message program is helping young people quit

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 18, 2022) – Truth Initiative announced today that the first-of-its-kind, free quit vaping program This is Quitting from **truth[®]**, the largest in the country and the only one that has been validated by peer-reviewed research, has reached a milestone of helping more than 500,000 youth and young adults quit vaping nicotine.

This milestone is especially significant as youth e-cigarette use persists at epidemic levels. The newly released 2022 National Youth Tobacco Survey shows that nearly 3 million young people are using nicotine, with the majority using e-cigarettes. [Over 2.5 million](#) high school and middle school students use e-cigarettes and, of the high schoolers who use e-cigarettes, 46% do so on an almost daily basis. Among young adults aged 18-24, approximately 2.8 million (9.4%) are current e-cigarette users, according to the latest [National Health Interview Survey](#). Moreover, recent Truth Initiative [research](#) found that between July 2021 and June 2022 alone, nearly 2.5 million young people used e-cigarettes for the first time, signaling that vaping initiation remains widespread among youth and young adults. Despite these high rates of use, most young people (more than 60%) want to quit.

This is Quitting is an anonymous vaping cessation program that combines age-appropriate advice, cognitive and behavioral coping strategies, and social support to help young people feel motivated, inspired, and supported throughout their quitting journey. First launched in 2019, This is Quitting was developed with input from teens, college students, and young adults who have attempted to, or successfully, quit e-cigarettes. The program uses text messages — tailored by age, e-cigarette product usage, and stage of quit journey — to show the reality of quitting — the ups and the downs. Teens and young adults ages 13-24 can visit [thetruth.com](#) or text “**DITCHVAPE**” to **88709** to enroll in This is Quitting. In addition to providing help to young people, Truth Initiative also has a complementary program available for parents who want to support their child’s efforts to quit, available at [BecomeAnEX.org](#).

In addition to its broad reach, This is Quitting is leading the field in generating scientific evidence about what works to help young people quit vaping. A



randomized clinical trial published in [JAMA Internal Medicine](#) found that young adults aged 18-24 who used This is Quitting had [nearly 40% higher odds of quitting compared to a control group](#). Secondary analyses from the trial published in [Preventive Medicine](#) found that young adults randomized to This is Quitting were more likely to report abstaining from both vaping and smoking compared to the control group, suggesting that some young adults may use the program to quit all forms of tobacco. A new clinical trial evaluating This is Quitting's effectiveness among teens is currently underway.

“The tobacco industry has long known that young people are their life-blood for growth and profit and e-cigarettes have been a goldmine, with young people the unwitting victims. The majority thought e-cigarettes were just fun and flavors and did not know that these products almost always contain nicotine. Hoodwinked and now hooked, this new generation wants to quit vaping nicotine as evidenced by the over half a million young people who have enrolled in This is Quitting thus far,” said Robin Koval, CEO and President of Truth Initiative. “These latest data further emphasize the urgency to help young people overcome their nicotine addiction with a program that works and young people trust.”

Colliding Crises

Years of scientific, peer-reviewed research shows nicotine can amplify feelings of anxiety and depression and increase levels of stress, as detailed in [“Colliding Crises: Youth Mental Health and Nicotine Use.”](#) Quitting can alleviate these symptoms and lead to long-term improved mental health. As evidenced by [Truth Initiative data](#), 90% of young people who quit vaping e-cigarettes said they felt less stressed, anxious, or depressed.

This is Quitting is a crucial component of the **truth** brand and the public education campaign run by Truth Initiative. The latest campaign, titled *It's Messing With Our Heads*, calls out vapes for what they are – Depression Sticks that deliver a Breath of Stress Air. **truth** messaging also uplifts the voices of real young people and their journeys to quit through its ongoing “Quitters” series. One such story comes from [Sophia](#), a young person who committed to escaping her addiction. Using This is Quitting, she has successfully been able to commit to a healthy, vape-free lifestyle.

This is Quitting continues to rapidly expand, both in terms of enrollment and programmatic features through innovative partnerships and integrations. Through its collaboration with Crisis Text Line, more than 2,600 young people referred by



This is Quitting have received mental health support since December 2021. **truth** also launched a partnership with Breathwrk through This is Quitting that promotes science-backed [breathing and meditation exercises](#) to help curb nicotine cravings.

This is Quitting also seamlessly integrates with [Vaping: Know the truth](#), a free, comprehensive digital curriculum that provides young people with the facts about nicotine. The self-led, interactive curriculum speaks to young people in their language and offers a module on self-care, aimed to help young people address mental health challenges. Since its launch in 2020, the curriculum has engaged nearly 510,000 students in more than 6,000 schools across the country. Parents and educators can learn more about the curriculum and how to get included at a school for free by visiting: <https://truthinitiative.org/curriculum>.

Working together, these resources give young people the motivation and support they need to quit nicotine.

“There are clear links between quitting nicotine and improved mental health outcomes,” said Dr. Amanda Graham, Chief of Innovations at Truth Initiative. “At a time when young people are facing so many challenges, it is even more critical to provide them with both quitting and mental health resources like those offered by This is Quitting. Engaging more than half a million young people in an effective quitting program early in life is a milestone worth celebrating.”

In addition to supporting young e-cigarette users through This is Quitting, Truth Initiative also continues to make available proven-effective tobacco cessation programs to the 47.1 million adult tobacco users in the U.S. [BecomeAnEX[®]](#) is a freely-available digital cessation program developed in collaboration with Mayo Clinic that includes the longest running online community and resources to help parents of young vapers. The [EX[®] Program](#) is Truth Initiative’s field-leading enterprise digital cessation solution designed exclusively for employers and health plans, now available to more than 10 million employees, health plan members, and adult dependents across the U.S.

About truth[®]

truth is the longest-running and most successful national tobacco prevention campaign for youth and young adults. The campaign delivers the facts about tobacco use and the marketing tactics of the tobacco industry so that young people can make informed choices and influence others to do the same. We are credited with preventing millions of young people from becoming smokers and



are equally committed to achieving the same results in ending the youth e-cigarette epidemic, including by helping young people quit with our first-of-its-kind quit vaping program for teens and young adults This is Quitting®. **truth** is part of Truth Initiative®, a national public health organization dedicated to achieving a culture where young people reject smoking, vaping, and nicotine. Learn more about **truth** and the organization behind it at thetruth.com and truthinitiative.org.

About Truth Initiative®

Truth Initiative is a national public health organization dedicated to achieving a culture where all young people reject smoking, vaping and nicotine and a future where tobacco and nicotine addiction are a thing of the past. In 2020, we celebrated 20 years of saving lives and preventing millions of youth from smoking. Our impact has helped drive the teen smoking rate down from 23% in 2000 to under 3% in 2021. The truth about tobacco and the tobacco industry are at the heart of our proven-effective and nationally recognized **truth**® public education campaign. As youth e-cigarette use threatens to addict a new generation to nicotine, we are leading the fight against tobacco and nicotine addiction in all forms. Our rigorous scientific research and policy studies, community and youth engagement programs supporting populations at high risk of using tobacco, and innovation in tobacco dependence treatment are also helping to end one of the most critical public health battles of our time. Based in Washington D.C., our organization, formerly known as the American Legacy Foundation, was established and funded through the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement between attorneys general from 46 states, five U.S. territories and the tobacco industry. To learn more, visit truthinitiative.org.

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