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## Truth Initiative's EX Program Supports 1 Million Young People Seeking to Quit Nicotine

*Free, evidence-based program expands to address nicotine pouches and use of multiple products*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 7, 2026)** – Truth Initiative, the nation's largest public health nonprofit dedicated to preventing youth and young adult nicotine addiction and empowering quitting for all, today announced a historic milestone: **1 million young people ages 13 to 24 have enrolled** in its first-of-its-kind, free, and confidential [EX Program](#) on their journey to quit. This milestone comes at a time when nicotine is showing up in culture again and young people are facing more complex and concerning patterns of use, with a growing number using multiple products at once—including e-cigarettes, cigarettes, and nicotine pouches—heightening the risk of nicotine addiction and making quitting more challenging. At the same time, data show a strong desire among young people to quit, underscoring the critical role that effective, accessible support can play in helping them navigate today's evolving nicotine landscape and quit for good.

In response to online posts looking for help to quit vaping, Truth Initiative launched This is Quitting in 2019 as the first text-based quit-vaping program specifically designed for youth and young adults. This groundbreaking intervention came at a critical moment, as youth vaping prevalence skyrocketed to over 20% in 2018, including among many young people who had never previously smoked. Today, This is Quitting is part of EX Program by Truth Initiative, a comprehensive digital tobacco cessation platform developed in 2008 with Mayo Clinic. This longstanding resource, including text-message support, is now the nation's leading quit program for young people seeking to quit e-cigarettes and nicotine addiction.

"Enrolling 1 million young people in cessation treatment is a historic accomplishment. We're helping break the cycle of nicotine addiction during these critical formative years and building skills and confidence that will pay dividends for years to come," said Dr. Amanda Graham, Chief Health Officer at Truth Initiative. "For every young person who enrolled in EX Program, we know there are 1000 more who now know where to turn when they decide to quit. Increasing the use of evidence-based quitting resources is what it will take to create lasting change and protect future generations from lifelong addiction."

### Unhooking Gen Z



Today's nicotine products are more addictive, delivering higher nicotine concentrations, more puffs per device, and nicotine salt formulations that can deepen dependence—often at a lower cost and with easy access. Gen Z continues to grapple with the aftermath of the youth e-cigarette epidemic that emerged in the late 2010s, initially driven by products like JUUL. Among young adults aged 18–24, who are often dubbed the “JUUL Generation,” e-cigarette use remains high, with nearly 1 in 5 young adults (18–24) now at risk of long-term nicotine addiction. An increasing number of young people are also [dual-using](#) cigarettes or newer products like oral nicotine pouches (e.g., Zyn) alongside their vapes, potentially compounding stress and mental health challenges, given the connection between nicotine dependence and mental health.

While teen e-cigarette use is at its lowest in more than a decade, signs of nicotine addiction are rising. [Research](#) shows the share of daily middle and high school vapers who tried to quit but were unable to grew from around 28% to 53% between 2020 and 2024. At the same time, Truth Initiative data indicate that 76% of teens who vape use their device within 30 minutes of waking, a key sign of growing nicotine dependence. Additionally, while oral nicotine pouch use remains stable among youth, trends in use over the past several years show a rapidly changing marketplace which provides a new avenue for potential nicotine addiction.

Despite a strong desire to quit, millions of young people struggle with cessation. Young adults make more quit attempts than any other age group, yet they are the least likely to use evidence-based quit treatments. [Research](#) shows that 95% of people who try to quit nicotine “cold turkey” relapse, underscoring the critical gap that EX Program fills with its evidence-based program that directly engages youth and young adults.

### **EX Program: Free Support, Increased Success**

[EX Program](#) has been proven effective in the first randomized clinical trials of vaping cessation among adolescents and young adults, with the young adult trial published in [JAMA Internal Medicine](#) and the adolescent study published in [JAMA](#). The program can increase the odds of quitting by up to 40%. Other analyses from these trials [reveal](#) that the program can help young people who use nicotine quit both nicotine and cannabis. EX Program continues to innovate to meet emerging nicotine use trends, including the recent launch of tailored support for people looking to quit nicotine pouches in response to rising use and demand for resources.



Beyond young people, EX Program has supported millions more individuals of all ages, demonstrating its broad reach and impact in helping people quit all forms of nicotine, including [smoking](#). The program engages with those looking to quit where they are: on their phones, online, and on social media. Its design reflects years of behavioral science and digital innovation — providing:

- Personalized quit plans to address triggers and nicotine cravings
- Interactive and tailored text messages offering judgement-free tips, motivation, and reminders
- 24/7 access to the nation’s most established online quit community

“After trying to quit countless times throughout high school and most of college, EX Program provided me with the resources and community to finally do so,” said EX Program user Jadon, age 22. “The community is welcoming and supportive, and the strategies and tools they suggest really work. I highly recommend EX Program to anyone looking for help quitting.”

## **Outsmarting Nicotine**

This milestone is fueled in part by the success of [Outsmart Nicotine](#), a bold, Gen Z-focused national tobacco cessation campaign that continues to evolve alongside shifting patterns of nicotine use. The campaign’s recent [expansion](#) addresses the expanding spectrum of nicotine products young people are using today—including e-cigarettes, cigarettes, and, for the first time, nicotine pouches—reflecting the growing trend of multi-product use.

Through humorous, relatable creative that taps into everyday stressors and the cycle of cravings and nicotine addiction, the campaign delivers a clear message: you don’t have to do this on your own. The campaign’s social-first strategy also amplifies real stories from a network of young creators known as the Quit Collective, making quitting visible, aspirational, and possible across platforms while connecting audiences to free, evidence-based support through EX Program.

“Quitting helped me be the best version of myself,” said [Tyler Kidd](#), a creator known for sharing honest reflections about life’s challenges and the lessons she’s learned. “EX Program helped me quit because I finally realized that I didn’t have to do it alone, and my community could do it with me.” As part of the Quit Collective, Tyler has encouraged and motivated thousands of followers to join her in quitting with her raw and real experiences with EX Program.

## **Enroll Today**



With public health resources for tobacco cessation stretched thin in many places across the U.S., EX Program delivers accessible, effective, and science-backed solutions to help young people live nicotine-free lives. It offers a resource to support young people as well as parents, schools, and healthcare providers looking for a proven solution for the young people they serve.

“We’re proud to lead the way with science-backed, digital tools that are personalized, accessible, and proven to work,” said Kathy Crosby, CEO and President of Truth Initiative. “This milestone illustrates the powerful steps we’ve taken toward unhooking an entire generation. With growing demand for quitting support, we continue to look for innovative partnerships and delivery models to expand and enhance our reach of this free program.”

Building on the meaningful impact of EX Program, Truth Initiative’s free curriculum, [Vaping: Know the truth](#), also this year surpassed 1.5 million student enrollments nationwide. Made available to schools by EVERFI®, this digital learning experience equips middle and high school students with the facts about e-cigarettes and nicotine addiction, while also helping young people who are currently vaping quit with support from EX Program. Together, the curriculum and EX Program work hand in hand—preventing nicotine addiction before it starts and offering proven support for young people looking to quit.

Anyone ages 13+ can join EX Program by texting **EXPROGRAM** to **88709**.

### **About Truth Initiative**

Truth Initiative® is a national nonprofit public health organization committed to a future free from lifelong addiction, fostering healthier lives and a more resilient nation. Our mission is to prevent youth and young adult nicotine addiction and empower quitting for all. Through our evidence-based, market-leading cessation intervention, [EX® Program](#), and national public education campaigns, we lead the fight against youth and young adult tobacco use. Learn more at [truthinitiative.org](http://truthinitiative.org).

### **About EX Program**

EX® Program is a proven-effective tobacco cessation program, developed by Truth Initiative® with Mayo Clinic, that brings together the best evidence-based quitting approaches, interactive digital quitting programs, and the most established online quit community. EX Program has helped millions of youth and adults develop the skills and confidence on their journey to quit nicotine. Truth Initiative research has



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shown that EX Program text messages can increase the odds of quitting by up to 40%. To learn more, visit [exprogram.com](http://exprogram.com).

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