



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND COMMISSION

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Commission Announces \$8 Million in Grants to Combat Teen Tobacco Use

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission announces the availability of \$8 million in grants for community-based programs to dissuade North Carolina teens from using tobacco products. These grants constitute the initial phase of an \$18.6 million, three-year initiative that will employ multiple strategies to promote tobacco prevention and cessation among teens statewide. "We're breaking new ground by investing state resources on this issue in North Carolina," said Lieutenant Governor Beverly Perdue, who chairs the Commission. "People understand that teens are a vulnerable segment of the population, and that with nearly 40 percent of North Carolina high school students already using tobacco, it is a problem that must be addressed right now."

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), over 90 percent of first-time tobacco use occurs prior to age 20, with the average age of initiation being 13. The health effects of prolonged tobacco use among the general population are well documented, and studies by the CDC show that African Americans suffer disproportionately high rates of heart disease, stroke and lung cancer. The Commission has followed the CDC's guidelines in structuring its overall plan, which includes the effective use of media as well as cessation services and programs designed to help teens who want to quit using tobacco be successful.

The Commission today is releasing two separate Requests for Proposals. The Community/Schools Prevention Programs Initiative will award between 20 and 30 grants, at an annual level of \$25,000 to \$100,000 each for three years, for local coalitions capable of organizing and managing tobacco prevention programs for teens. These coalitions will be comprised of entities such as schools, public health agencies, local governments, faith-based organizations, state agencies and nonprofit organizations. Additionally, the Priority Populations Initiative will provide \$700,000 annually for three years, to fund three organizations or partnerships capable of projecting statewide reach to address disparities in the use of tobacco by African-American, Native American and Hispanic/Latino youth in North Carolina.

Applicants can obtain a copy of both Requests for Proposals and Application Forms online at www.HWTFC.org, or by contacting the Commission directly.

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund was established by the General Assembly to receive and allocate 25% of North Carolina's share of the multi-billion dollar national tobacco settlement agreement reached in 1999. The Commission is comprised of 18 individuals representing a wide background of health care experience throughout North Carolina.

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