

# UIC Toolkit Evaluates Youth Smoking Cessation Programs

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Health care providers and educators nationwide who run youth smoking cessation programs now have access to a free toolkit to improve their programs.

The toolkit, available for download at [www.HYSQ.org](http://www.HYSQ.org) , was developed by the Helping Young Smokers Quit, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation directed by University of Illinois at Chicago researchers. The toolkit gives youth [smoking cessation](#) program leaders a mechanism for evaluating their programs' effectiveness in helping high school aged-smokers successfully quit.

Each day an estimated 1,000 American youngsters 12-17 become daily cigarette smokers, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Young smokers try to quit more often than older smokers, but are less likely to find and use effective treatments.

"Youth smoking cessation programs are invaluable, but often the individuals and organizations who provide these programs do not have the time, money or experience to conduct an evaluation of their program to figure out if it helped young people quit smoking," said Robin Mermelstein, co-director of the Helping Young Smokers Quit project and director of UIC's Institute for Health Research and Policy.

The toolkit provides program administrators with surveys that can be given to participants in stop-smoking programs. It also includes tools to create reports from pre-program, post-program and follow-up surveys

and provides suggestions for interpreting results.

Program leaders will also be able to see how their programs compare with results from a national sample of youth smoking cessation programs.

"Measurement is critical to the creation of successful tobacco cessation programs," said Susan Curry, program co-director and dean of the College of Public Health at the University of Iowa.

Tracy Orleans, senior scientist at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and a member of the foundation's Public Health Team, agrees. "This evaluation toolkit provides an imaginative and much needed vehicle to be able to learn from what works on an ongoing basis," she said.

The Helping Young Smokers Quit program is supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), and the National Cancer Institute.

Provided by University of Illinois at Chicago

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