



Contact: Sarah Shank
202-454-5561
sshank@truthinitiative.org

First-of-its-Kind Free E-Cigarette Quit Program Now Available to Young Vapers Looking For Help

Truth Initiative® Launches Text Message Quit Program in Wake of Youth E-cigarette Epidemic

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Jan. 18, 2019) - Truth Initiative, the nonprofit organization behind the youth tobacco prevention [truth](#)® campaign, has expanded its quit-smoking resources to include the first-of-its-kind e-cigarette quit program to address the significant rise in youth vaping declared an epidemic by the Surgeon General. This innovative and free text message program was created with input from teens, college students and young adults who have attempted to, or successfully quit, e-cigarettes. The program is tailored by age group to give appropriate recommendations about quitting and also serves as a resource for parents looking to help their children who now vape. It is being launched and integrated into the already successful [This is Quitting](#) and [BecomeAnEX](#)® digital cessation programs from Truth Initiative. To access the new e-cigarette quit program, users simply need to text “QUIT” to (202) 804-9884 or enroll in either program to get started.

The most recent National Youth Tobacco Survey, funded jointly by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released in November 2018, showed e-cigarette use was up by 78 percent among high school students and 48 percent among middle schoolers in just one year. In addition, the frequency of use among current high school e-cigarette users surged with nearly 28 percent vaping more than 20 times per month. As a result, many young people have taken to social media platforms like Reddit, expressing their desire to stop using e-cigarettes and looking for help underscoring the need for a specific youth e-cigarette quit program.

“More than 3.6 million youth who use e-cigarettes are now vulnerable to long-term nicotine addiction — largely because of JUUL — and those new young e-cigarette users, most of whom weren’t smokers in the first place, are four times more likely to go on to smoke deadly cigarettes compared to their peers who don’t vape. This new e-cigarette program provides the much-needed tools to quit vaping before it has the chance to progress into smoking,” said Robin Koval, CEO and president of Truth Initiative.

Truth Initiative, through its digital quit-smoking programs [This is Quitting](#) and [BecomeAnEX](#), has a long history of innovation around developing engaging and effective cessation programs. Developed in collaboration with the Mayo Clinic, more than 800,000 smokers have enrolled in BecomeAnEX. Research shows that following the BecomeAnEX quit plan quadruples a tobacco user’s chance of quitting, proving the importance of digital resources throughout the quit journey. Text coaching is a proven, powerful strategy to deliver interventions that drive behavior change. The new e-cigarette quit program will deliver tailored messages via text that give age-appropriate advice for quitters age 13 and older, including information about nicotine replacement therapy. Text program users also have the option to connect with online communities and interactive tools for added support through [This is Quitting](#) and [BecomeAnEX](#).

“While the science behind overcoming nicotine addiction may be the same, e-cigarette users

don't identify as smokers. They have different barriers to quitting, and, especially in the case of teens and young adults, many want an anonymous way to go about quitting without involving their parents or friends, which texting provides. We believe this new program will be very effective in getting the right support and information into the hands of anyone looking to quit e-cigarettes, including adults who have successfully used them to quit smoking, but are now looking to quit nicotine completely," said Dr. Amanda Graham, senior vice president, Innovations, at Truth Initiative who has built This is Quitting, BecomeAnEX and the [EX[®] Program](#), a quit-smoking program designed for employers, health systems and health plans to offer employees, members, and their dependents.

In addition, the youth-targeted **truth** tobacco prevention campaign from Truth Initiative recently launched its first e-cigarette effort, [Safer ≠ Safe](#), to give teens and young adults the facts about e-cigarette use and clear up misperceptions — such as the fact that, according to JUUL, one standard JUUL pod delivers the equivalent nicotine of a pack of cigarettes.

"Beyond educating youth on the risks of e-cigarettes, we felt it was critical to provide the tools to stop vaping. It's sad and ironic that e-cigarettes, a product intended to help adult cigarette smokers quit, have now addicted a new generation of nonsmokers to nicotine. It certainly makes you question the motives behind JUUL given its new partnership with Altria, makers of Marlboro, the most popular cigarette brand," added Koval.

For more information on the text-based e-cigarette quit program from Truth Initiative, visit truthinitiative.org/quitecigarettes or text "QUIT" to (202) 804-9884.

About Truth Initiative:

Truth Initiative is a national public health organization that is inspiring tobacco-free lives and building a culture where all youth and young adults reject tobacco. The truth about tobacco and the tobacco industry are at the heart of our proven-effective and nationally recognized truth public-education campaign, our rigorous and scientific research and policy studies, and our innovative community and youth engagement programs supporting populations at high risk of using tobacco. The Washington, D.C. -based organization, formerly known as Legacy, 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 about how Truth Initiative speaks, seeks and spreads the truth about tobacco, visit truthinitiative.org.

About This is Quitting:

This is Quitting (TIQ) is a mobile app designed by Truth Initiative to help young people quit with inspiration from others like them. It is one of the few publicly available resources designed specifically for young adult tobacco users. TIQ is freely available on Android and iOS to users over 17, with a companion text message program available to users ages 13 and older. It includes a variety of unique features proven to engage young adults such as "challenges" to stay smoke-free in different circumstances and user-generated content aggregated from social media platforms. Users receive daily text messages tailored to their sign-up date or quit date and learn about nicotine replacement therapy in language that speaks to them.

About BecomeAnEX:

In 2008, Truth Initiative partnered with the Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center to launch BecomeAnEX as a free digital quit smoking program. Since then, the program has helped more than 800,000 tobacco users on their quitting journey. BecomeAnEX includes an active social community, text and email messaging support, expert guidance and interactive quitting tools.

Today, BecomeAnEX is a thriving community, supporting more than 1,500 tobacco users to quit together each month. Most importantly, BecomeAnEX works. Federally-funded research shows that following the BecomeAnEX quit plan quadruples a tobacco user's chance of quitting and 93 percent of those say they would recommend BecomeAnEX to a friend. Available on any device, BecomeAnEX is available at www.becomeanex.org.

About the EX Program:

Truth Initiative and Mayo Clinic expanded the reach of BecomeAnEX and created the EX Program, a comprehensive, digital smoking-cessation program designed for employers, health systems and health plans to offer to their employees or members who smoke. The EX Program combines the popular quit-smoking planning tools and online community from the proven-effective smoking cessation program, BecomeAnEX, and adds personalized, digital coaching and nicotine replacement therapy fulfillment from tobacco treatment specialists at the Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center and Truth Initiative. To learn more about the EX Program for employers and health plans, visit theexprogram.com.

###