

# KEEPING KIDS TOBACCO-FREE

*"Nicotine addiction begins when most tobacco users are teenagers so let's call this what it really is: a pediatric issue."*

— David Kessler M.D.,

Former Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration

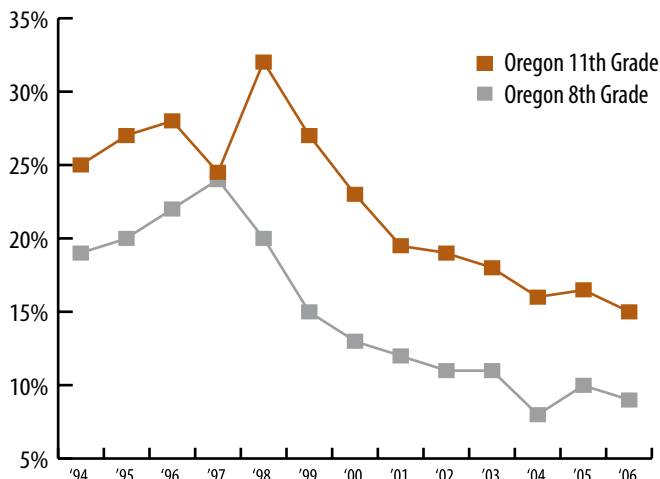
**Nearly 90% of smokers begin at or before the age of 18.<sup>1</sup>**

## Too Many of Our Youth Smoke

In Oregon, 48 kids smoke their first cigarette every single day. A year later, 20 of those kids will still be smoking. Among the 20 youth still smoking, one out of three will die prematurely due to tobacco-related causes. More immediately, tobacco use negatively affects students' academic performance and their physical and mental health.

As demonstrated in the graph, the prevalence of tobacco use by Oregon's 8th and 11th graders continues to decrease slightly. However, the steep declines that occurred when TPEP school programs were being implemented between 1998 and 2003 have slowed. This is a result of the severe budget cuts that occurred during 2003 when TPEP lost funding for comprehensive school-based tobacco prevention programs.

**Percentage of Oregon 8th and 11th graders who smoke cigarettes, 1994-2006**



## Comprehensive Tobacco Programs Reduce Youth Initiation

Reducing youth tobacco use requires widespread efforts to counteract tobacco industry promotion of tobacco. Beginning in 1998, Oregon's overall youth prevalence declined at a rate faster than the rest of the nation. Specifically, the rate of smoking declined more steeply in school districts with TPEP-funded comprehensive school-based programs than it did in non-funded school districts.<sup>2</sup> Comprehensive school programs are one successful component of prevention efforts critical to reducing tobacco use among Oregon's youth. A total prevention plan includes:

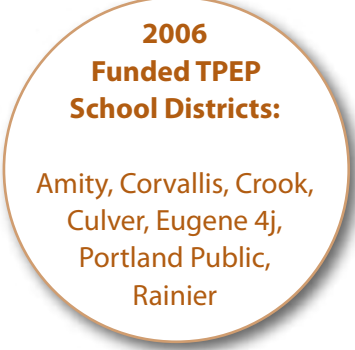
- Tobacco taxes that make it more expensive for youth to purchase tobacco products.
- Anti-tobacco media campaigns that are effective in helping smokers quit<sup>3</sup> and in preventing youth from starting to use tobacco.
- Comprehensive school programs that implement tobacco-free school policy, research-based tobacco prevention curriculum, and on-going tobacco prevention education for district employees.
- Community programs that engage parents, policy makers, and community groups in tobacco prevention and education.



## Funding Makes a Difference

Despite limited resources in 2006, Oregon TPEP increased funding for school-based tobacco prevention and education programs by over 200% to \$750,000. As a result, approximately 78,300 students (14% of students in Oregon) in seven Oregon school districts will benefit from school-based tobacco prevention and education programs during the 2006-2007 school year.

In 2007-2009, TPEP hopes to increase funding to extend comprehensive tobacco prevention and education school programs to 220,000 Oregon students (40% of all students). Additionally, a strong public education and awareness campaign is an essential component to a comprehensive tobacco program. In Oregon, we know implementing a comprehensive TPEP program will decrease tobacco use among youth and contribute to achieving national goals.



**2006  
Funded TPEP  
School Districts:**

Amity, Corvallis, Crook,  
Culver, Eugene 4j,  
Portland Public,  
Rainier

### References:

<sup>1</sup> SAMHSA, HHS Calculated based on data in 2005 National Household Survey on Drug Use and Health, <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh.htm>

<sup>2</sup> CDC, MMWR, Effectiveness of School-Based Programs as a Component of a Statewide Tobacco Control Initiative — Oregon, 1999–2000.

<sup>3</sup> Tobacco. Guide to Community Preventive Services Website. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [www.thecommunityguide.org/tobacco/](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/tobacco/). Last updated: 06/14/2005. Accessed on: 10/21/2005.