



Rhode Island Chapter

INCORPORATED IN RHODE ISLAND

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America®
NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER



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INSPIRING A Tobacco-Free Rhode Island

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States and in Rhode Island. To address this enormous toll, we urge the General Assembly to take the following actions:

SUPPORT

adequate funding for tobacco prevention and cessation efforts through increased tobacco taxes.

- **S2860 (Sen Vargas)** and **H8346 (Rep Cortvriend)** would codify the Rhode Island Tobacco Control Program and increase funding for tobacco prevention and cessation efforts



OPPOSE

tobacco industry-driven attempts to roll back protections for kids including decreasing taxes on certain tobacco products and allowing flavored e-cigarettes back on the market in Rhode Island.

- **S2844 (Sen DiPalma)** and **H8370 (Rep O'Brien)** would allow flavored e-cigarettes back on the market in RI
- **S2360 (Sen DiPalma)** and **H7804 (Rep Caldwell)** would lower taxes on certain tobacco products making them more accessible to youth
- **S3131 (Sen DiPalma)** and **H8188 (Rep Baginski)** would make emerging products like nicotine pouches cheaper under a new tax definition



Burden of Tobacco/Nicotine Use in Rhode Island

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the United States and in Rhode Island. Approximately 490,000 deaths each year are attributed to smoking and other tobacco use in the United States, with 1,800 deaths in Rhode Island annually and 31.3% of cancer related deaths attributable to smoking.¹ Tobacco-related disparities negatively impact health equity.² No tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, are safe.³

An estimated 1,100 youth in Rhode Island will try smoking cigarettes for the first time this year.¹ Nearly 9 out of 10 (90%) adults who currently smoke cigarettes started using tobacco/nicotine products by age 18, and 99% started by age 26.⁴ Flavored e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches are the most used tobacco/nicotine products among youth and young adults. In Rhode Island, 95% of high school students who use e-cigarettes use flavored products,⁵ and the most common flavors used nationwide are fruit, candy, mint, and menthol.⁶ Most e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches contain nicotine, which is highly addictive. Nicotine can harm the parts of an adolescent's brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.⁷ Aerosol from e-cigarettes can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances.³ There is currently no e-cigarette or nicotine pouch approved by the FDA to help people quit smoking.⁸

Rhode Island Youth Tobacco Use Behaviors

High School, 2023 ⁵	Percent (%)
Ever tried e-cigarettes	32.4
Flavored e-cigarette use	15.6
Ever tried cigarettes	11.9
Purchased e-cigarettes from store/shop †	23.3
Obtained e-cigarettes by other means (i.e., other individuals, friends, or family) †	75.1

† among current high school e-cigarette users

Rhode Island Current Tobacco Use

High School, 2023 ⁵	Percent (%)
E-cigarettes	16.5
Daily e-cigarette use	3.9
Cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars	4.0
Cigarettes	3.1
Smokeless tobacco products	2.8
Middle School, 2023 ⁵	Percent (%)
E-cigarettes	6.7
Adults, 2024 ⁹	Percent (%)
Cigarettes	9.9
E-cigarettes	7.0
Menthol cigarettes*	40.1

*among current adult cigarette users

Rhode Island Department of Health Tobacco Control Program:

health.ri.gov/tobacco/tobacco-control-program

Reducing Tobacco/Nicotine Use Burden with Treatment:

Most people who smoke want to quit.¹⁰ Rhode Island offers free, effective, customized, and confidential help for adults and youth interested in quitting or reducing tobacco/nicotine use:

QuitNowRI

The Rhode Island Nicotine Helpline

- Recommended for adults ages 18+
- To learn more, scan or visit:

QuitNowRI.com

QuitNowRI



My Life, My Quit™

- Recommended for youth ages 13 to 17
- To learn more, scan or visit:

mylifemyquit.com

MY LIFE MY QUIT.



Smoking-Caused Monetary Costs for Rhode Island per Year¹

\$744 million

Annual healthcare costs

\$233.0 million

Medicaid costs

\$1.1 billion

Losses in productivity

References:

- 1 Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. [The Toll of Tobacco in Rhode Island](#).
- 2 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Eliminating Tobacco-Related Disease and Death: Addressing Disparities — A Report of the Surgeon General](#).
- 3 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Smoking and Tobacco Use](#).
- 4 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [The Health Consequences of Smoking — 50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General](#).
- 5 Rhode Island Department of Health. Center for Health Data Analysis. [2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#).
- 6 Park-Lee E, Jamal A, Cowan H, et al. [Notes from the Field: E-Cigarette and Nicotine Pouch Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2024](#).
- 7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [E-Cigarette Use Among Youth](#).
- 8 U.S. Food & Drug Administration. [Want to Quit Smoking? FDA-Approved and FDA-Cleared Cessation Products Can Help](#).
- 9 Rhode Island Department of Health. Center for Health Data Analysis. [2024 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System](#).
- 10 Babb S, Malarcher A, Schauer G, Asman K, Jamal A. [Quitting Smoking Among Adults—United States, 2000–2015](#).