

PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS & UPDATES

TEXAS RESEARCH-TO-POLICY COLLABORATION PROJECT

November 2025



*Wishing you and yours a restful,
healthy, and happy Thanksgiving!*



Upcoming Webinars

November is National Tobacco/Smoke Free Month. Join us over the next few weeks to learn more about work being done in Texas communities on tobacco cessation and prevention!



Breakthrough Randomize Controlled Trial Results on CATCH My Breath

November 20, 2025, from 12:00 - 1:00pm CT

Join us for the public unveiling of findings from the five-year CATCH My Breath Randomized Controlled Trial.

In this webinar, Drs. Kelder and Mantey, and CATCH Global Program Director Marcella Bianco will:

- Share key outcomes and their implications for youth health from smoking and vaping tobacco.
- Present the new professional development session for the CATCH My Breath Students-Teach-Students extension.
- Discuss how this peer-led initiative empowers youth leaders to help their peers stay nicotine-free.

[Register here](#)



Nicotine and Tobacco Use among College Students in Texas

December 9, 2025, from 11:00am - 12:00pm CT

Tobacco and nicotine use among young adults remain pressing public health concerns, especially among Texas college students.

This webinar will:

- Share findings on the prevalence and trends of nicotine and tobacco use among Texas college students, using data from large, annually repeated cross-sectional samples.
- Highlight insights from the Vaping, Acculturation, and Media Study (Project VAMoS), a longitudinal study of Mexican American college students in Texas.
- Explore how social media influences tobacco and nicotine use behaviors in young Mexican American adults.

TX RPC Project Health Policy Resource Reports

Effects of Tobacco Use on Health

March 11, 2025

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Tobacco smoking is the leading cause of cancer, lung, and heart diseases in Texas.
2. The U.S. spent over \$600 billion in 2018 on smoking-related costs, including health care and job loss productivity.
3. Tobacco prevention and cessation programs, such as 'Truth Initiative,' can help support healthier Texans of all ages.

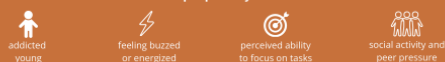
Impact of Tobacco Smoking

Cigarette smoking is the most common type of tobacco use, but other popular products include cigars, cigarillos, waterpipe tobacco (hookah), and smokeless tobacco.¹

- Nicotine is highly addictive, especially when smoking begins at a young age. Around 90% of smokers began smoking before the age of 18.²
- People who smoke are at a higher risk for heart attack, stroke, lung disease, and cancer.³
- Tobacco use is the leading cause of several cancers, including lung, bladder, stomach, and esophageal, among others.³
 - In Texas, lung, bronchial, and tracheal cancer were the leading cancer cases (82%) from tobacco smoking between 2013 and 2017.⁴
 - Lung, bronchial, and tracheal cancers are the second most commonly diagnosed cancers, following prostate cancer in males and breast cancer in women.⁴
- Cigarette smokers are almost four times as likely to develop heart disease, and twice as likely to experience a stroke than non-smokers.⁵
- Approximately 3 in 10 cancer deaths are a result of tobacco use.⁶

Smokers are
25x
more likely
to develop
lung cancer than
non-smokers⁴

Reasons people may smoke:⁷



UTHealth Houston
School of Public Health

UTHealth Houston
School of Public Health

Tobacco Vaping Use Among Youth

March 11, 2025

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Vaping tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, contain high amounts of nicotine that are addictive, particularly for adolescents.
2. Teens who were exposed to e-cigarette advertisements, especially on social media, were more likely to vape.
3. Prevention efforts like 'Catch My Breath,' are needed to limit the exposure of tobacco products to children and adolescents.

Electronic Cigarettes and Vapes

These battery-powered devices create an aerosol that contains nicotine, appealing flavors, and chemicals, which are harmful to the body and developing adolescent brains.^{1,2}

- Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and vapes simulate smoking. Newer models are disposable, while older models look similar to USB flash drives.⁴
- Vapes can contain as much or more tobacco as a carton of cigarettes, delivering higher amounts of nicotine quickly.⁵
- Youth who smoke e-cigarettes are at an increased risk for coughing, wheezing, and asthma exacerbations, which can lead to hospitalization.⁶
- A 10% increase in tobacco product pricing has shown to reduce youth consumption by approximately 7%.⁷

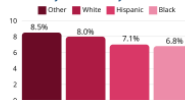
Youth who
vape nicotine are
3x
as likely
to vape cannabis³

Early Exposure Poses Risks

E-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product among U.S. youth.⁸

- In 2024, approximately 1.6 million U.S. middle and high school students reported using e-cigarettes, with 44% of those students reporting vape usage.⁹
- Exposure to e-cigarettes earlier in life led to youth and adolescents being almost four times as likely to smoke in adulthood.⁹
 - Around 90% of adult daily smokers began smoking before the age of 18.⁹
- Students who don't smoke but are exposed to e-cigarette use on school campuses are nearly twice as likely to start smoking.¹⁰

Texas Middle and High School Students' Reported E-Cigarette Use in Past 30 Days by Race/Ethnicity in 2023



UTHealth Houston
School of Public Health

UTHealth Houston
School of Public Health

Effects of Tobacco Use on Health

Released March 11, 2025

Key Takeaways:

1. Tobacco smoking is the leading cause of cancer, lung, and heart diseases in Texas.
2. The U.S. spent over \$600 billion in 2018 on smoking-related costs, including health care and job loss productivity.
3. Tobacco prevention and cessation programs, such as 'Truth Initiative,' can help support healthier Texans of all ages.

Tobacco Vaping Use Among Youth

Released March 11, 2025

Key Takeaways:

1. Vaping tobacco, including e-cigarettes, contain high amounts of nicotine that are addictive, particularly for adolescents.
2. Teens who were exposed to e-cigarette advertisements, especially on social media, were more likely to vape.
3. Prevention efforts like 'Catch My Breath,' are needed to limit the exposure of tobacco products to children and adolescents.

Past Webinars



Navigating Holiday Meals: Culinary Strategies for Blood Sugar Control

November 11, 2025

In honor of Diabetes Awareness Month, the [Nourish Program](#) discussed the unique challenges the holiday season presents for blood sugar management. This webinar highlights:

- Practical strategies for mindful eating, balanced meals, and joyful food experiences during festive gatherings.
- A live cooking demonstration showcases delicious, diabetes-friendly holiday recipes.
- Counseling tips, culinary inspiration, and ready-to-use resources to help clients manage blood sugar without sacrificing the spirit of the season.

[View the recording here](#)



Nourishing Beginnings: Fueling Healthy Futures in the First 1,000 Days of Life

November 4, 2025

The role of optimal nutrition in the first 1,000 days, from conception through toddlerhood, is critical for shaping lifelong health, growth, and development.

This session highlights:

- Data-driven strategies to support early nutrition education and guide families through the timely introduction of nutrient-rich complementary foods
- Practical tools and resources to connect families with community and clinical programs that promote access to healthy, affordable options
- Collaborative approaches to integrating nutrition-focused care into clinical practice and community outreach

[View the recording here](#)

Recent Publications

Featured Publication:

Pfledderer CD, Mullane EJ, Brown DM, Burkart S, **Hunt ET**, Johnson A, Parker H, **Salvo D**. [Five-year trends in US child and adolescent 24-hour movement behavior guideline adherence, 2018–2022](#). *J Act Sedent Sleep Behav*. 2025;4(1):16. doi:10.1186/s44167-025-00086-8.

A national study analyzing over 135,000 U.S. children and adolescents (ages 6–17) from 2018–2022 found a significant decline in adherence to healthy 24-hour movement guidelines.

- Between 2018 and 2022, adherence to physical activity fell from 21% to 17% and screen time compliance dropped from 52% to 47%, while sleep duration adherence remained steady; only 7% of youth met all three guidelines concurrently by 2022.
- Girls, adolescents, and children with overweight or obesity were consistently less likely to meet activity and combined movement standards, signaling the need for tailored interventions.
- Developing integrated 24-hour movement guidelines and supporting coordinated school, community, and policy efforts can help strengthen healthy routines and increase physical activity, balanced screen use, and adequate sleep among youth.

Additional Publications:

- Abraham AM, Swartz MD, **Van den Berg AE**, Linder SH. [Multilevel analysis of the food and physical activity environment and adult obesity across US counties and states](#). Preprints. 2025. doi:10.20944/preprints202510.0888.v1
- **Benzer JK**, Charns MP, Singer SJ, Young GJ. [Building on advances in learning health systems from the pandemic: insights from organization theory, challenges, and potential solutions](#). *J Gen Intern Med*. 2025;1-5.
- Burford KG, **Salvo D**, **Kohl HW**, Ganzar LA, Bauer CX, Resendiz E, Zhang Y, Hoelscher DM. [Examination of traffic safety in neighborhoods associated with active commuting to school in Austin, Texas](#). *J Phys Act Health*. 2025;1(aop):1-12.

- Craig DW, Lanza K, Pfledderer CD, Pavlovic A, Onadeko K, Heredia NI, Injiil J, DeFina LF, Walker TJ. [Using the R=MC² heuristic to assess whole-of-school physical activity implementation in elementary schools: a cross-sectional study](#). *Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act* . 2025;22(1):1-8.
- Kanouse D, Nascimento-Ferreira MV, Hunt E, Singh B, Shastri P, Lawal A, Knaus K, Ghosal R, Gray J, de Moraes, ACF. [Blood pressure mediates the association between screen time and cognitive function in US adolescents](#). *Hypertension*. 2025;82(Suppl 1).

Resource Corner

The TX RPC Project develops accessible and accurate public health policy-related resources from field experts. Links to specific resource categories on our website can be found below:

[Texas
Legislative
Bill Tracker](#)

[Michael & Susan
Dell Center for
Healthy Living
Webinar Series](#)

[TX RPC Project
Health Policy
Resources](#)

[Texas Child
Health Status
Reports and
Toolkits](#)

[TX RPC Project
Newsletters
Archive](#)

Request information on a public health topic.

About

The [Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration \(TX RPC\) Project](#) is a nonpartisan network that aims to bridge research and policy by supporting partnerships between child health researchers and legislators.

If you and your legislative office are interested in collaborating with our team to receive data-driven information at state, district, and local levels, please reach out to TXRPCNetwork@uth.tmc.edu.

Contact Our Team

[Dr. Deanna Hoelscher, PhD](#), Principal Investigator

[Dr. Alexandra van den Berg, PhD](#), Co-PI

[Tiffni Menendez, MPH](#), Project Director

[Yuzi Zhang, PhD](#), Postdoctoral Fellow

[Shelby Flores-Thorpe, PhD](#), Postdoctoral Fellow

For more information about the TX RPC Project, please email: TXRPCNetwork@uth.tmc.edu.



Try email marketing for free today!