

# North Carolina Prevention Report Card 2005

A stylized map of North Carolina in a light blue color. Overlaid on the map are several small, detailed illustrations of community settings: a school building with a flagpole and a sign that says 'SCHOOL', a residential neighborhood with houses and trees, a 'Health Department' building, a large multi-story building, and a 'CLINIC' building. The letters 'NC' are written in a large, light blue, semi-transparent font across the center of the map.

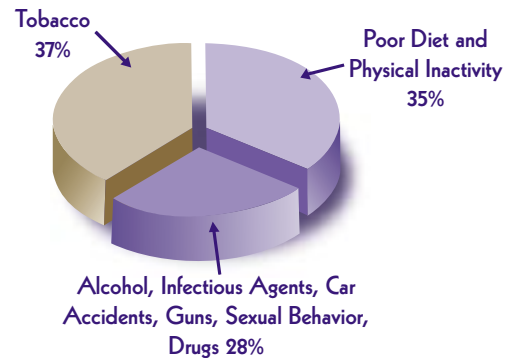
## Prevention Partners

Does  
North Carolina  
make the grade  
for prevention?

# Why Focus on Tobacco, Nutrition, and Physical Activity?

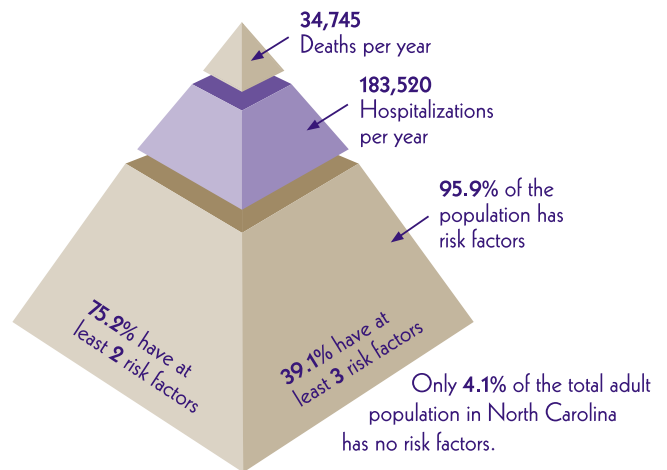
## 1 Zeroing in on Critical Prevention Issues

Two-thirds of North Carolina's preventable deaths are related to tobacco, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity.<sup>1</sup>



## 2 Linking Behaviors to Health Outcomes

North Carolina deaths, hospitalizations, and risk factors linked to tobacco use, poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and overweight.<sup>2</sup>



## 3 Costs to North Carolina

Estimation of medical and lost productivity costs per year in NC related to tobacco use, poor nutrition, overweight and obesity, and physical inactivity.

	North Carolina <sup>6</sup>	Per Employee <sup>6</sup>	Per Resident <sup>6</sup>
Tobacco Use <sup>3</sup>	\$4.75 billion	\$1,429	\$582
Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity <sup>4</sup>	\$4.9 billion	\$1,474	\$600
Physical Inactivity <sup>5</sup>	\$6.2 billion	\$1,865	\$759
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15.85 billion</b>	<b>\$4,768</b>	<b>\$1,941</b>

# Tobacco Grade: C (previously a D-)

The cost of tobacco use in North Carolina is over \$4.75 billion each year. The economic cost of smoking is estimated to be about \$3,391 per smoker per year.<sup>3</sup>

## Behavior

- 25% of NC adults are current smokers.<sup>7</sup>
- 34% of high school students use tobacco products.<sup>8</sup>
- 14% of middle school students use tobacco products.<sup>8</sup>
- 78% of adults report that their worksites prohibit smoking.<sup>7</sup>
- 11% of pregnant women smoke.<sup>9</sup>

## Community

- NC's cigarette tax is only \$0.05 per pack versus \$0.84 for the nation.<sup>10</sup>
- 41% of NC restaurants protect their customers from tobacco smoke (36% are smoke-free, 5% have separate ventilated areas).<sup>11</sup>
- 46 out of 115 local school districts are 100% smoke-free for students, staff, and visitors campus-wide and at school-related events.<sup>12</sup>
- 15% is the rate at which minors can purchase tobacco products in retail outlets.<sup>13</sup>

## Health Service

- NC invests \$15 million per year for tobacco prevention, moving from a 30th to a 21st rank in the nation.<sup>10</sup>
- 76% of smokers have been counseled by a provider within the past year to stop smoking.<sup>7 1</sup>
- 68% of Medicare smokers hospitalized for heart attack were offered smoking cessation counseling.<sup>14</sup>
- 100% of private and public health plans offer a cessation benefit, rider, or program.<sup>15</sup>
- 42 out of 110 NC hospitals have smoking cessation programs.<sup>16</sup>

## Strengths:

- NC HealthSmart, a new healthy living initiative of the NC State Health Plan, is piloting Quit for Life, a tobacco cessation benefit package that will control costs and improve the health of state employees.<sup>15</sup>
- FirstHealth, a multi-county health system headquartered in Pinehurst, became a tobacco-free campus in 2004, and offers free counseling and medications to help employees and community members quit tobacco use.<sup>17</sup>
- Mecklenburg County Commissioners issued a resolution in 2003 encouraging lawmakers to pass a statewide cigarette tax to prevent smoking in young people to support tobacco cessation for county employees through benefits and programs.<sup>17</sup>
- 42%, or 107 out of 257, Alamance County restaurants are smoke-free.<sup>12</sup>

# Nutrition Grade: **D** (previously an F)

The cost of poor nutrition, overweight, and obesity in North Carolina is over \$4.9 billion each year.<sup>4</sup>

## Behavior

- Only 23% of adults eat the daily requirement of 5 vegetables and fruits each day.<sup>7</sup>
- 61% of NC adults are overweight or obese.<sup>7 ii</sup>
- Only 18% of high school youth eat the daily requirement of 5 vegetables and fruits each day.<sup>18</sup>
- 17% of youth are overweight.<sup>18 ii</sup>
- 27% of senior citizens eat the daily requirements of 5 vegetables and fruits each day.<sup>7</sup>
- 50% of senior citizens are overweight or obese.<sup>7</sup>

## Community

- 19% of restaurants label certain menu items as “healthy.”<sup>11</sup>
- In the past year, 62 out of 115 school districts have established a Winner’s Circle<sup>SM</sup> Healthy Dining Program.<sup>19</sup>
- 93% of NC counties have a Winner’s Circle<sup>SM</sup> Healthy Dining Program in local restaurants.<sup>19</sup>

## Health Service

- 14% of overweight or obese adults have received advice in the previous 12 months from a health professional to lose weight.<sup>7</sup>
- 100% of private and public health plans offer a nutrition benefit, rider, or discount program.<sup>15</sup>
- 75 out of 110 NC hospitals offer weight control programs or nutrition centers.<sup>16</sup>

## Strengths:

- Joining state, regional, and national chains, McDonald’s now labels healthy foods and beverages using the Winner’s Circle<sup>SM</sup> logo in all of its NC franchises, which are located in 93 counties.<sup>20</sup>
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of NC became the first health insurer in the state to establish an obesity benefit that includes coverage of physician consultation, medical nutrition therapy by a registered dietitian, and medication and surgery when appropriate.<sup>15</sup>
- Eat Smart, Move More... NC, NC DHHS, released “Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools” in 2004. NC Department of Public Instruction’s Child Nutrition Program’s first step to meet these standards is to implement Winner’s Circle in elementary schools across the state.<sup>19</sup>

# Physical Activity: **D** (previously an F)

The cost of physical inactivity in North Carolina is over \$6.2 billion each year.<sup>5</sup>

## Behavior

- 38% of NC adults get the recommended amount of physical activity.<sup>7 iv</sup>
- 14% of adults report that they walk or bike for transportation.<sup>7</sup>
- 22% of high school students and 25% of middle school students report participating in regular, moderate physical activity.<sup>18 v</sup>
- 61% of high school students and 73% of middle school students report participating in vigorous physical activity.<sup>18 vi</sup>
- Among middle school children, 4% bike and 10% walk to school at least once a week.<sup>18 viii</sup>

## Community

- 29% of residents report that their neighborhoods have sidewalks.<sup>7 i</sup>
- 31% of high school students attend physical education classes daily.<sup>18</sup>

## Health Service

- 50% of private and public health plans offer a physical activity benefit, rider, or discount program.<sup>15</sup>
- 32 out of 110 NC hospitals have a fitness center or physical activity program.<sup>16</sup>

## Strengths:

- The NC State Board of Education passed a new policy, HSP-S-000, in January 2003 that encourages all schools to consider the benefits of offering between 30 and 45 minutes of physical activity a day.<sup>21</sup>
- A collaborative effort between the Greensboro Department of Transportation, the Triad Real Estate and Building Industry Coalition, and various city departments produced an ordinance regarding sidewalk construction, which increases opportunities for physical activity.<sup>22</sup>
- Parents from Olive Chapel Elementary in Apex volunteer to lead walking school buses so that their children can safely walk to and from school.<sup>23</sup>

# References

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6. US Bureau of the Census: Business Statistics, 1999; Population Estimates Program, 2001.
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8. NC Youth Tobacco Survey, 2003.
9. NC SCHS, PRAMS data, 2001.
10. Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, November 2004.
11. Restaurant Heart Health Survey, NC DHHS, 2002.
12. Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch, NC DHHS, 2004.
13. SYNAR Survey, NC Substance Abuse Services Section, NC DHHS, 2003.
14. Medical Review of NC (MRNC), 2004.
15. PreventionWatch, NCPP, 2004.
16. American Hospital Association, 2004 annual survey.
17. Quit Now NC! Database, NCPP, 2004.
18. NC Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 2003.
19. Physical Activity and Nutrition Unit, Health Promotion Branch, NC DHHS, 2004.
20. Winner's Circle<sup>sm</sup> Database, NCPP, 2004.
21. NC State Board of Education, 2003.
22. NC DHHS, <http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/successStories/chronicles/chron06.pdf>.
23. UNC Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, 2004.

# Notes

- i. Among adults reporting smoking during the last 12 months and who had seen a health professional for health care during the last 12 months.
- ii. Body Mass Index (weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared) of 25-30 are overweight, those over 30 are obese.
- iii. Using the pediatric growth charts, overweight is greater than 85th percentile weight for height, and obese is greater than 95th percentile.
- iv. Moderate activity for 30 minutes or more on 5 or more days per week or vigorous activity for 20 minutes on 3 or more days per week.
- v. 30 minutes or more moderate activity per day, 5 or more days per week..
- vi. 20 minutes or more of vigorous activity per day, 3 or more days per week.
- vii. Among children who live within 1 mile from school who walk to school, and who live within 2 miles of school who bike to school.

Data from this report card were compiled by the NC Prevention Partners staff, state statisticians, and Report Card Committee. Grades are based on the Healthy People 2010 objectives for the nation.



NC Prevention Partners is a nonprofit with the mission, "Putting prevention first for a healthier NC." For information about our board of directors, staff, projects and funders, how to get involved in our strategic initiatives, please visit [www.ncpreventionpartners.org](http://www.ncpreventionpartners.org), email: [ncpp@ncpreventionpartners.org](mailto:ncpp@ncpreventionpartners.org), or call toll-free 1-888-919-NCPP.



## BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina

### Foundation

