

# **Teaming up for the 2005 North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)**

## **You are a key player on this team!**

This reminder is about the upcoming 2005 North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS) this fall and of the important role that you play in that process. A listing of selected school districts and schools will be sent out early summer. Depending on if your LEA was selected, there will be a series of action items over summer and fall.

## **You were the best in the nation: let's do it again!**

The NC YTS is the single largest statewide youth survey in the state and has had an unprecedented participation rate. In 1999, NC had a school district participation rate of 98%, the highest in the nation (top 5 in 2003 at 96%). Rates this high don't come easily—they are due to the hard work and dedication of school officials! You have set the standard for the nation, and I know you can meet that standard for 2005. But beyond the number of schools and students, data from YTS resulted in the Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) allocating funding for school and community prevention programs. Funding for HWTF's Teen Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Initiative has increased from \$6.4 million to \$15 million annually since the initiative was started in 2002. Many schools and communities, perhaps your own, were granted awards in the past two years. Hopefully, even more opportunities exist in the future. In order to measure progress, extend our prevention efforts, and dedicate future funding, we need a similar response rate from school districts, schools and students for the 2005 YTS. It is high response rates that make the data convincing.

## **N.C. Youth Tobacco Survey is Critical**

The 2005 YTS will be vital as we now have expanded and enhanced prevention efforts across the state. We need to demonstrate that evidence based tobacco prevention programs work and show significant declines in youth consumption of tobacco. And in 2003 for the first time, middle school current cigarette rates dropped significantly and high school tobacco use rates declined overall.

## **Contact us**

We are ordering 8,000 more pencils for the YTS this fall. And if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call Scott Proescholdbell, Epidemiologist, Department of Health and Human Services at 919-715-3497 ([scott.proescholdbell@ncmail.net](mailto:scott.proescholdbell@ncmail.net)) or Antonia Johnson, Safe and Drug Free Schools at 919-807-3944 ([ajohnson@dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:ajohnson@dpi.state.nc.us)). Again, thank you for your support and help.