



NEWS RELEASE

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AMERICAN INDIAN CANCER FOUNDATION SUPPORTS LAUNCH OF SMOKEFREE NATIVE: A NATIONAL TEXTING PROGRAM FOR AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES

SAINT PAUL, MN - The National Cancer Institute's (NCI) [Smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov) initiative and the [Indian Health Service](https://www.ihs.gov) (IHS) have announced the availability of [SmokefreeNATIVE](https://www.smokefreenative.org), a free text messaging program to help American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) quit smoking commercial tobacco.

The [American Indian Cancer Foundation](https://www.aicaf.org) (AICAF) in collaboration with the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, supported NCI and IHS in their efforts to create a culturally aligned digital resource to improve access to evidence-based smoking cessation support for AI/ANs. This project supports new actions federal agencies are taking to advance the mission of the [White House Cancer Moonshot](https://www.whitehouse.gov/whitehouse-cancer-moonshot).

Traditional tobacco has been used for spiritual and medicinal purposes by AI/ANs for generations and is central to culture, spirituality and healing. This lifeway was prohibited until the American Indian Religious Freedom Act was passed in 1978, which led to increases in commercial tobacco use as a replacement for traditional tobacco. Due to cultural shifts, commercial tobacco use is a driver of health inequities among AI/AN populations.

[SmokefreeNATIVE](https://www.smokefreenative.org) is a 6-8 week (*depending on when a quit date is set*) texting program that braids together evidence-based smoking cessation support with key themes and content reflecting Native cultural experiences, worldviews, and traditions. People who are ready to quit smoking commercial tobacco can enroll online or by texting NATIVE to 47848.

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We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the organizations that have played a pivotal role in achieving this significant milestone, making the journey to quit commercial tobacco more accessible to our relatives across Indian Country. Together, we can heal with culture and reclaim Indigenous health.

For more information and enrollment, visit [SmokefreeNATIVE](#) or text NATIVE to 47848.

About the American Indian Cancer Foundation

AICAF is a national Native-led and Native-governed non-profit organization established to address the cancer burdens faced by American Indian/Alaska Native people. AICAF strives to be a partner trusted by tribes and organizations and is working toward effective and sustainable cancer solutions based on cultural teachings and wisdom. Visit our website today at www.aicaf.org.

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