

# MMWR: Increases in Quitline Calls and Smoking Cessation Website Visitors During a National Tobacco Education Campaign — March 19–June 10, 2012

## MMWR Introduction

During March 19–June 10, 2012, CDC’s Tips From Former Smokers (TIPS) campaign, the first federally funded, nationwide, tobacco education ad campaign, let smokers know that quitting assistance is available by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW, a portal that links callers to their state tobacco quitlines; or visiting [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov), a federal website that helps people quit smoking. The analysis in this report compares quitline calls and unique website visitors during the 12-week ad campaign with the same time period in 2011.

The report indicates that an evidence-based, emotionally evocative national tobacco education ad campaign can substantially increase calls to state quitlines and unique visitors to a cessation website. The increase indicates that many smokers are interested in quitting and in finding out more about cessation assistance, and will respond to motivational messages that include an offer of help. This analysis provides additional evidence that, within the context of comprehensive tobacco control efforts, tobacco education media campaigns are an important intervention for increasing cessation.

## MMWR Highlights

### Background

- Well-designed tobacco education media campaigns with adequate reach increase cessation and reduce tobacco use.
- CDC’s Tips From Former Smokers (TIPS) tobacco education ad campaign was intended to encourage adult smokers aged 18–54 years to quit by making them aware of the health damage caused by smoking.
- A short-term goal of the campaign was to generate additional calls to 1-800-QUIT-NOW and additional visitors to [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov).

### Key Findings

- The quitline received a total of 365,194 calls during the TIPS campaign (March 19–June 10, 2012), a 132% increase—or 207,519 additional calls—compared with 157,675 during the same period in 2011.
- Weekly increases in calls compared with the corresponding weeks in 2011 ranged from 86% to 160%.
- The website received 629,898 unique visitors during the TIPS campaign (March 19–June 10, 2012), a 428% increase—or 510,571 additional unique visitors—compared with 119,327 during the same period in 2011.
- Weekly increases in unique website visitors compared with the corresponding weeks in 2011 ranged from 355% to 484%.
- Altogether, compared with 2011 data, 718,090 additional calls and unique website visitors were received during the TIPS campaign.