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Contact:

April Holman  
Executive Director, Kansas Coalition for School Readiness  
785-232-0550  
april@kac.org

## **Kansas children would benefit from plan to expand early education with tobacco cost increase, new report shows**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A proposal to expand early childhood education and fund it with an increase in federal tobacco taxes would provide 3,820 more Kansas children with access to high-quality preschool in the first year alone, according to a new report.

Additional Kansas benefits include:

- Additional funds provided for preschool in the first year: \$31.3 million
- Residents saved from premature, smoking-caused deaths: 11,500
- Kids who could be prevented from becoming addicted smokers: 21,000

The proposal to expand federal funding for early education programs would be paid for with a 94-cent per pack increase in the federal cigarette tax and a proportional increase in the federal tax on other tobacco products.

“Taken together, these two measures would help ensure a future of smart, healthy kids nationwide and in every state,” the report concludes.

The report, “Raising Smart, Healthy Kids in Every State,” can be found at [www.smarthealthykids.org](http://www.smarthealthykids.org). It details the educational and health benefits of the proposal nationwide and in every state.

Nationwide, the proposal would ensure that 2 million children in low- and moderate-income families have access to high-quality preschool and prevent 1.7 million kids from becoming addicted smokers.

Organizations releasing the report are the National Women’s Law Center, Save the Children, MomsRising, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, American Heart Association, American Lung Association and American Academy of Pediatrics.

### **Background**

The proposal would address two major challenges facing America’s children: Too few have access to high-quality preschool programs, while too many still smoke.



720 SW Jackson | Suite 201  
Topeka, KS 66603

P: 785-232-0550 | F: 785-232-0699  
kac@kac.org | www.kac.org

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Less than half of 4-year-olds are currently enrolled in public preschool programs, and many of these programs are not high-quality. Numerous studies show that children who have a high-quality preschool experience perform better on cognitive tests in elementary and secondary school, are more likely to graduate from high school, go to college, be employed and be in good health, and are less likely to become involved with crime or have to rely on public assistance.

The proposed increase in tobacco taxes would significantly reduce smoking and other tobacco use, which is the nation's leading preventable cause of death. Tobacco use kills more than 400,000 Americans every year and costs the nation \$96 billion in health care bills. Every day, more than 3,500 U.S. youth try their first cigarette.