

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jonesville High School's Youth Engaged in Prevention Joins National Kick Butts Day Initiative March 21, 2012

Jonesville, MI – Young people from Jonesville High School are joining thousands of kids across the country who are taking part in Kick Butts Day, a nationwide initiative that helps kids become leaders in the effort to stop youth tobacco use. As part of the Kick Butts Day Celebration, Jonesville High School Students are Standing Up and Speaking Out Against Tobacco, they will have an information table, New Emerging Products display board and a Graffiti Wall for students and staff to pledge to be Tobacco Free!

Throughout the year, young advocates take part in a variety of activities to protect kids from tobacco including Kids Fest and many presentations throughout our community such as Tobacco Free Michigan, Board of Commissioners, Legislative Breakfast and the Exchange Club of Hillsdale.

"The tobacco companies make smoking look cool in their ads, but that's nothing but a lie," said Sterling Ladd 15. "There's nothing cool about bad breath, smelly clothes and tobacco-stained teeth."

"Kids are a powerful part of the solution to reducing youth tobacco use," said Matthew L. Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, which coordinates Kick Butts Day. "For Kick Butts Day 2012, kids are sending two important messages: they want the tobacco industry to stop targeting them with advertising and they want elected leaders at all levels to do more to protect them from tobacco."

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing more than 400,000 people every year. Every day, more than 4,000 kids try their first cigarette; another 1,000 kids become addicted smokers, one-third of whom die prematurely as a result.

"Strong tobacco-free policies, adequate funding for tobacco prevention programming, raising tobacco taxes, and providing resources to those who want to quit are proven methods for reducing the health and economic burden of tobacco use," noted Kelley Mapes, Tobacco Reduction Action Coalition Coordinator, Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency. "Kick Butts is an opportunity for our elected leaders to hear directly from young people on the support in place for these important opportunities to do more to protect kids."

For more information about the Kick Butts Day event and tobacco prevention in the community contact Kelley Mapes, Tobacco Reduction Action Coalition Coordinator at the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency 517-279-9561 ext. 103. For help in quitting tobacco use, talk with your healthcare provider or contact the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-784-8669. For more information on the national initiative, visit the Kick Butts Day website at kickbuttsday.org.

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