



HEALTH AWARENESS

Kids Kick Butts In The Fight Against Tobacco Use

(NAPSA)—Thousands of young people nationwide recently gathered for the 15th annual Kick Butts Day. Altogether, more than 1,000 events took place in 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Sponsored by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Kick Butts Day is an annual celebration of youth leadership and activism in the fight against tobacco use. Kids are sending two powerful messages on Kick Butts Day: They want the tobacco companies to stop targeting them with marketing for cigarettes and other tobacco products, and they want elected leaders to do more to protect them from tobacco.

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and other public health advocates are calling on elected officials to support proven measures to reduce tobacco use and its devastating toll. As states struggle with record budget deficits, campaign members think state leaders should increase tobacco taxes both to prevent kids from smoking and to raise revenue to balance budgets and fund critical programs. Another campaign suggestion is the enacting of smoke-free air laws that apply to all workplaces and public places, and the implementation of well-funded tobacco prevention and cessation programs.

Tobacco use is the No. 1 cause of preventable death in the United States, killing more than 400,000 people and costing \$96 billion in health care bills each year. While the nation has made significant progress in reducing youth smoking, 20 percent of high school students still smoke.



During a recent Kick Butts Day, kids asked tobacco companies to stop targeting them when marketing their products.

On Kick Butts Day, kids turned the tables on Big Tobacco with events that ranged from “They put WHAT in a cigarette?” demonstrations to mock-funerals for the Marlboro Man to rallies at state capitols.

For example, students at Middle Park High School in Granby, Colorado, gave free turkey sandwiches at lunch to anyone who pledged to quit using tobacco “cold turkey.”

Students in the Steamboat Springs area participated in a Facebook and texting campaign to encourage area youths to become fans of Kick Butts Day and/or the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, helping raise awareness of the problems associated with tobacco use.

For more information, visit www.kickbuttsday.org and www.tobaccofreekids.org.