



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: **3-12-14**
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Health Department asks youth to Kick Butts

Kick Butts Day is March 19



Stanton- The Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) is asking youth to Kick Butts on March 19.

In its eighteenth year, Kick Butts Day is one of activism that empowers youth to stand up and speak out against tobacco use, the number one cause of preventable death in the United States.

It's no secret that tobacco use causes terrible and deadly diseases, including many forms of cancer, heart disease and emphysema (a lung disease that makes it hard to breathe). In fact, the U.S. Surgeon General has found that tobacco use damages nearly every organ in the human body.

The facts:

- In the U.S., nearly 90 percent of all smokers start while in their teens or earlier.
- Every day, another 1,000 kids become regular smokers, one-third of whom will die prematurely from a smoking-caused disease.
- Other forms of tobacco, including cigars and smokeless tobacco are also harmful and addictive.
- Secondhand smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals, including at least 69 that cause cancer. It causes heart disease and lung cancer in nonsmoking adults and respiratory problems, sudden infant death syndrome, low birth weight, ear infections and more severe asthma attacks in infants and children.
- Secondhand smoke kills 50,000 people in the U.S. each year.

As unsettling as these statistics are, there is hope- we can win the fight against tobacco by providing tobacco education, encouraging kids to avoid cigarettes and other tobacco products, helping current tobacco users quit, and protecting everyone from harmful secondhand smoke.

A lot of progress has actually been made in reducing smoking by both youth and adults in Michigan. Adult smoking has been cut by more than half since the 1960s, and youth smoking has been cut in half since 1997. However, when looking at smoking rates (see chart) among youth in MMDHDs three counties, we can see that smoking continues to be a problem; with Clinton County being the exception. We can speculate as to why the rates are as high as they are, but one thing is very clear- we still have a lot of work ahead of us.

Percentage of students who smoked cigarettes on one or more of the past 30 days

	7th grade	9th grade	11th grade
Clinton	0.5%	3.3%	10.1%
Gratiot	1.6%	9.4%	18.0%
Montcalm	2.6%	18.8%	19.2%
Michigan	n/a	9.7%	13.3%

2- Kick Butts

This March, kids are encouraged to make a stand against tobacco and encourage their friends and family to do the same. Those who need cessation assistance should speak with their healthcare provider or take advantage of these resources:

- The Michigan Department of Community Health Tobacco Quitline 800-784-8669
- www.becomeanex.org
- The American Cancer Society 800-227-2345
- www.smokefree.gov :cessation tips for teens, as well as phone and text apps

Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.
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