

Press Release

Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department



Web: health.hamiltontn.org

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

January 24, 2018

Hamilton County Students Educate Leaders About Their Interest in a Tobacco Free Campus Policy

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN – Local high school students recently met with two County Commissioners to show their support for a more comprehensive tobacco free campus policy for all Hamilton County schools.

The current Hamilton County school policy does not allow smoking inside school buildings, but does allow smoking on school grounds. The policy also does not prohibit e-cigarette use. A broader policy, the students said, would protect them and their peers from the harmful effects of tobacco and e-cigarettes.

“There is no safe level of tobacco smoke exposure,” says Hamilton County Mayor Jim Coppinger, “Children are the most vulnerable because they oftentimes cannot remove themselves from the exposures.



L to R: County Commissioner Sabrena Smedley; TN STRONG Youth Dereke Townsend, Desman Ware, Mike Green, Kory Lowell; and County Commissioner Chester Bankston

“I was very impressed with these fine young men and their presentation,” remarked Hamilton County Commissioner Sabrena Smedley (District-7), “I applaud them for their passion in taking a stand for what they believe.”

Hamilton County Commissioner Chester Bankston (District-9) said, “I was greatly impressed by the TNSTRONG presentation and look forward to seeing great things from these young men.”

The students are part of a statewide youth tobacco prevention movement called “[TNSTRONG](#),” whose mission is to make the next generation of Tennesseans tobacco free. The local teens have attended trainings on peer education and work closely with the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department’s Tobacco Prevention Program and the [Hamilton County Coalition](#).

The next step for the TNSTRONG youth is to request a meeting with School Board members, and to present at a School Board meeting to advocate for a comprehensive tobacco free policy for all Hamilton County school campuses.

TNSTRONG welcomes any Hamilton County students who want to join with them to take a stand and help make the next generation of Tennessee tobacco free. Local students, teachers, coaches, and parents can get more information by calling [Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department Tobacco Prevention](#) Coordinator Paula Collier at 423-209-8088. The statewide TNSTRONG movement can be followed on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

The [directly inhaled smoke](#) from cigarettes is known to contain numerous cancer-causing compounds. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug that negatively affects all major organs of the body. Secondhand smoke is the direct exposure to smoke exhaled and from the burning end of the cigarette. Third-hand smoke is the chemical residue and odors on hands, clothing, and surfaces containing many of the same compounds and nicotine found in the primary and secondhand smoke. Third-hand smoke is irritating to the eyes, nose, and throat, and can contribute to asthma attacks.

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