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TOBACCO FREE FLORIDA IN ESCAMBIA COUNTY EXPOSES THE RISKS OF SECONDHAND SMOKE

Eighth annual Tobacco Free Florida Week educates residents of Escambia County, FL on the dangers of secondhand smoke on college campuses



Contact:

Media Desk: 850-595-6500 x6000

Public Contact: 850-595-6500 x1830

Pensacola, Fla. – The Florida Department of Health’s Tobacco Free Florida (TFF) program and Tobacco Free Florida in Escambia County (TFF-Escambia) are launching a new initiative, *Secondhand Smoke Exposed*, as part of the eighth annual Tobacco Free Florida Week, taking place May 8-14, to educate Escambia County, Florida residents about the dangers of secondhand smoke.

This year’s theme, *Secondhand Smoke Exposed*, focuses on dispelling the common myth that secondhand smoke is harmless. Breathing even small amounts of secondhand smoke can be dangerous. Tobacco smoke is found wherever a smoker is, including on university and college campuses.

“Students, faculty and staff deserve to learn and work in an environment that promotes health, not exposure to toxic smoke,” said Tobacco Free Florida Bureau Chief Valerie Lacy. “Implementing smoke-free policies on university and college campuses can improve the health of these communities and help make Florida a healthier state for all.”

Currently, more than 25 colleges and universities across Florida are 100 percent tobacco-free. On August 1, 2016, a 100 percent tobacco-free policy will take effect for all University of West Florida campuses.

Smoke-free campus policies protect students, faculty, and staff from involuntary exposure to secondhand smoke, which contains hundreds of toxic chemicals, including about 70 that are known to cause cancer. Research shows that smoke-free campus policies reduce exposure to secondhand smoke, significantly change attitudes toward tobacco, and contribute to a decline in cigarette use.

Tobacco Free Florida in Escambia County is raising public awareness about the benefits of smoke-free campuses. To help the local community meet this growing demand, TFF-Escambia offers planning assistance to university and college campuses considering, or in the process of making, the transition to a smoke-free environment.

Organizations interested in making their campus smoke-free should contact TFF-Escambia at 850-595-6500 ext 1830.

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About Tobacco Free Florida Week

The eighth annual Tobacco Free Florida Week takes place from May 8-14. Join the conversation on social media using #SHSExposed.

About Tobacco Free Florida

The Florida Department of Health's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Tobacco users interested in quitting are encouraged to use one of the state's three ways to quit. Since 2007, more than 137,000 Floridians have successfully quit, using one of these free services. To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida and the state's free quit resources, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com or follow the campaign on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or on Twitter at www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla.

Tobacco Free Florida's and Tobacco Free Florida in Escambia County's assistance with local tobacco free policy efforts are not lobbying, but are services to build awareness and support of jurisdictional voluntary initiatives to improve the health of Floridians.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, and community efforts.

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