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Greene County Public Health

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Press Release

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Greene County Public Health Encourages Smokers To Quit Smoking During The Great American Smokeout®

The 47th Annual Great American Smokeout® is November 17, 2022

XENIA, OH – Greene County Public Health (GCPH) is encouraging Greene County residents to commit or recommit to healthy, smoke-free lives by participating in the American Cancer Society’s 47th Great American Smokeout® on Thursday, November 17, 2022.

“For people who use tobacco and nicotine products, the most important thing to improve their health is to quit,” said Alayna Romer, Tobacco Cessation Specialist for Greene County Public Health. “Whether you are a teen, young adult or someone who has been a lifetime smoker, we are showing our support for people to take those first steps toward making a plan to quit.”

“It is important for anyone who uses tobacco products to quit, but if someone who is pregnant smokes or vapes, that adds an additional level of risk to their unborn baby, too,” adds Shernaz Reporter, with the Baby & Me™ Tobacco Free program through GCPH. Studies show a relationship between tobacco and miscarriage. Smoking during pregnancy can cause tissue damage in the unborn baby, particularly in the lungs and brain, and some studies suggest a link between maternal smoking and cleft lip. It can also lead to preterm delivery, low birth weight, and a higher risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States, accounting for 30% of all cancer deaths. In fact, smoking cigarettes kills more Americans than alcohol, car accidents, HIV, guns, and illegal drugs combined. Smoking not only causes cancer but also damages nearly every organ in the body, including the lungs, heart, blood vessels, reproductive organs, mouth, skin, eyes, and bones.

Addiction to nicotine in cigarettes is one of the strongest and most deadly addictions one can have. While cigarette smoking rates have dropped (from 20.9% in 2005 to 12.5% in 2020), about 30.8 million Americans smoke cigarettes. More than half of adult cigarette smokers report having made a quit attempt in the past year. In 2018, 55.1% of adult smokers (21.5 million) said that they had made a quit attempt in the past year, but fewer than one in ten adult cigarette smokers succeed in quitting each year. In 2018, 7.5% of adult smokers (2.9 million) successfully quit smoking in the past year.

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Quitting is hard. It takes commitment and starts with a plan, often takes more than one quit attempt, and requires a lot of support. Getting help through counseling and/or prescription medications can double or triple your chances of quitting successfully. Support is also important. Smoking cessation programs, the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line, the American Cancer Society's Freshstart program, Nicotine Anonymous meetings, self-help materials such as books and pamphlets, and smoking counselors or coaches can be a great help.

Greene County Public Health is partnering with the American Cancer Society, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide support as people make their plan to quit. More information is available at cancer.org/smokeout or by calling 1-800-227-2345.

The Baby & Me™ Tobacco Free program provides support to pregnant people throughout the pregnancy and afterwards to stay quit. When someone enrolls in the program, they will attend four prenatal smoking cessation sessions, agree to take a monthly CO2 breath test, and stay smoke free after the baby is born. Successful participants can earn up to \$350 for free diapers and wipes. Quitting smoking is the single most important thing that you can do for your health and the health of your baby.

“At Greene County Public Health, we are committed to helping the people in our community be healthy and happy,” said Romer. “During this year’s Great American Smokeout®, we hope everyone will join us – and encourage their friends, family and colleagues to join us – in committing or recommitting to smoke-free, nicotine-free lives.”

If you're struggling with quitting, call Ohio's Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW for support. For more information on cessation services provided by Greene County Public Health, please call 937-374-5600 or visit the website at www.gcph.info.

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