



NEWS RELEASE Mobile County Health Department

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251 N. Bayou St.

P.O. Box 2867

Mobile, AL 36652

www.MobileCountyHealth.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: David Mann, Public Information Officer, 690-8823, dmann@mobilecountyhealth.org

World No Tobacco Day is May 31

Do you need help quitting?

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death and disease in the United States. Smoking kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined.

More than one in five adult Alabamians smoke, with 7,500 dying each year from their own tobacco use. More than 22 percent of our high school students are current smokers according to the 2008 Alabama Youth Tobacco Survey. Tobacco use is costly to Alabama. Each year, the state spends \$1.49 billion in direct medical expenditures and \$2.24 billion in lost productivity - costs all related to tobacco.

Another important reason to quit smoking is to protect others around you. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that in adults who have never smoked, environmental tobacco smoke, also called secondhand smoke, can cause heart disease and lung cancer. There is no risk-free level of contact with secondhand smoke; even brief exposure can be harmful to health. In children, secondhand smoke causes harmful effects including ear infections; more frequent and severe asthma attacks; respiratory symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath, and respiratory infections; and a greater risk of sudden infant death syndrome.

Most smokers want to quit and have tried to quit. It's a tough addiction to break. If you want to quit using tobacco or to encourage someone else to quit, call the Alabama Department of Public Health's Alabama Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669), for free counseling, support materials, and four weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy patches.

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