



## Tobacco Education

### Tobacco Education Program

- Southwest Oklahoma Community Action Group, Inc. receives grants from the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust to fund a Communities of Excellence program. This grant covers Greer, Harmon, and Tillman counties.

Since the first Surgeon General's report on smoking and health in 1964, medical experts have written 27 more reports for the Surgeon General on tobacco use. In each report, leading scientists have found that using tobacco causes people to become sick, disabled, or to die. Tobacco use is the single more deadly preventable disease killing 430,000 individuals (6,000 Oklahomans) in the United States annually. In 2006, Dr. Richard Carmona, Surgeon General, released a report on the health effects of secondhand smoke. The report underlined the risks of secondhand smoke exposure; at the time of the report's release, Dr. Carmona stated: "The debate is over. The science is clear: Secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance, but a serious health hazard." Secondhand smoke kills 53,800 individuals (700 Oklahomans) in the United States annually. The report encouraged the adoption of indoor smoking bans and noted that such bans did not appear to have a harmful economic effect on bars and restaurants.

The Big Tobacco Industry spends \$13.4 billion (\$245.8 million in Oklahoma) marketing its deadly products to consumers each year. The marketing is directed at target segments of the population which include, youth, low-income, and ethnic groups. Studies show that youth are two times more sensitive to tobacco advertising than adults and are more likely to be influenced to use tobacco by industry marketing than by peer pressure. One-third of underage experimentation with smoking is attributable to tobacco advertising by the industry.

The goals are:

- Eliminate secondhand smoke.
- Prevent youth use of tobacco products.
- Promote free cessation services.
- Reduce tobacco industry influences within the community.

Wave 2 covers Greer, Harmon, and Tillman Counties and is known as the Red River Tobacco Education Consortium (R2TEC). The vision of R2TEC is to partner with volunteers, businesses, organizations, and schools to reduce the impact of tobacco for a healthier future in Greer, Harmon, and Tillman Counties.

Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) is a youth component of these programs. SWAT is a statewide, youth-led movement for ages 12-18. SWAT mission is to empower and unite youth to resist and expose Big Tobacco while changing current attitudes about tobacco. Their statewide goals are to:

- Reduce youth access to tobacco.
- Reduce the amount of tobacco use displayed in movies and on television.
- Reduce the amount of event sponsorships by spit tobacco.
- Increase the number of Oklahoma school districts that adopt a 100% tobacco free policy on all school property.
- Reduce the number of restaurants and public places that allow smoking.

For more information, please visit the following web site: <http://ok.gov/stopswithme/>

### **Red River Tobacco Education Consortium (R2TEC) Contact Information**

Phone: 580-482-1290 TDD #: 1-800-927-9275 | Fax: 580-482-1293

E-mail: [Nathan.McGee@Socag.Org](mailto:Nathan.McGee@Socag.Org) | Director: Nathan McGee