

Kickball tournament being held in conjunction with Kick Butts Day

First Posted: 1:16 pm—March 22nd, 2016

Staff Reports

On April 2, the Jackson County Tobacco Education Committee and Jackson County Community Health Action Team will host their 2nd annual kickball tournament at the City of Altus Ballpark on Katy Drive to celebrate tobacco-free living. The event will begin at 8:45 a.m.

The event is being held in conjunction with the annual Kick Butts Day. This event has kids demanding that tobacco companies stop marketing deadly products to them and is encouraging elected officials to help reduce youth tobacco use.

This year, Kick Butts Day focused attention on the outrageous marketing tactics tobacco companies still use to target youth. These tactics include:

- Splashy ads in magazines with large youth readership, such as Sports Illustrated, Glamour and Rolling Stone.
- Widespread advertising and price discounts in stores, which make tobacco products appealing and affordable to kids.
- Sweet-flavored tobacco products such as electronic cigarettes and small cigars that come in flavors like gummy bear, cotton candy, watermelon and fruit punch.

While youth cigarette smoking has fallen to record lows, the most recent government survey shows that e-cigarette use among high school students tripled from 2013 to 2014 (from 4.5 percent to 13.4 percent).

Nationwide, tobacco companies spend \$9.6 billion a year—over one million dollars every hour—to market tobacco products. In Oklahoma, tobacco companies spend \$181 million annually on marketing efforts.

In Oklahoma, tobacco use claims 7,500 lives and costs \$1.62 billion in health care bills each year. Currently, 18.5 percent of Oklahoma's high school students smoke.

On Kick Butts Day, kids joined in creative events that range from classroom activities about the harmful ingredients in cigarettes to rallies at state capitols.