

Reward reminder visits test local businesses

On June 12 the Cherokee Nation Regional Prevention Coordinator (RPC), in partnership with the Wagoner County Tobacco Use Prevention Coalition, Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) and the Wagoner County Family Service Council conducted Tobacco Reward Reminder Visits (RRVs) in the Wagoner County communities of Wagoner, Coweta, and Broken Arrow. RRVs are an evidence based prevention strategy to reduce youth access to tobacco by rewarding tobacco retailers who ID properly and refuse sale. RRVs are an opportunity to educate tobacco retailers about the risks and potential negative impact tobacco sales have on our youth in the community.

Regardless of whether ID is checked or money is exchanged, if a clerk puts tobacco in arm's reach of the minor decoy, rings up a price on the register and then communicates that price, it is counted as a sale. It is the clerk's responsibility to properly check ID and refuse sale before retrieving tobacco products. Because youth are told to present their real ID, which shows that they are underage, the clerk only has to read the yellow box on the vertical ID. This yellow box tells the clerk the exact day, month and year the decoy will turn 18.



Of the 18 RRVs conducted, there was only one sale to a minor decoy. The retailers who denied the sale of tobacco to a minor were: One Fine Stop (Shell) of Wagoner, Dollar General No. 3328 and No. 13860, Jennings Grocery, Stop N Go of Wagoner, Toppers Store, Mack's One Stop U.S. 69, Rocky Point Trading Post, Dollar General (U.S. 69 and 690 Rd.), Kum N Go (Oklahoma 51), All Stop of Wagoner, and CJ's One Stop (Oklahoma 51). Also, Sticks 66 of Coweta, Kum N Go and Quick Trip No. 50 of Coweta, Quick Trip No. 33 and Mighty Mart of Broken Arrow.

Regarding the one sale, when asked why he made it, the clerk stated he looked at the decoys birth date and the wall calendar; he did the math in his head, then realized after the sale she was under age. The retailer was reminded to follow State law prohibiting the sale of tobacco to youth under 18 years of age and received a packet of educational information to help store employees make wiser choices when selling tobacco products. The RPC will follow up with the retailer who sold to offer additional merchant education, such as Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) Tips for Merchants. This teaches managers how to train their employees on proper ID checking.

Regional Prevention Coordinator Region 5 is funded by the ODMHSAS Strategic Prevention Framework state Incentive Grant (SPF-SIG project), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) and ODMHSAS.

Wagoner County Tobacco Use Prevention (WCTUP) is a Communities of Excellence in Tobacco Control grantee funded by the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET). To join the efforts of WCTUP, contact Johnna Sue Blair or Monica McCrary at 918-485-3022.