Central Michigan
District Health Department
Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities

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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local Media
From: Central Michigan District Health Department
RE: The Great American Smokeout®
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THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT®

This year Central Michigan District Health Department would like to recognize a day of change and encouragement. On November 19th, 2020, the American Cancer Society will be celebrating the Great American Smokeout® where millions of tobacco users will attempt to go 24 hours smoke free. This is an event that has been celebrated for the past 40 years on the third Thursday of November. Each year this day focuses on more than just a day of not smoking - but a day of change and a start to a new, healthier life. Our staff at Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) would like to encourage your participation in this year's Great American Smokeout®.

On this day we encourage you to try to make it 24 hours smoke free or reach out to family, friends, health care providers, or other supportive groups to create a plan to quit in the future. By making a decision to quit or creating a plan to quit, you are taking a step in the right direction to living a healthier life that can reduce the risk of cancer. This is also an opportunity to learn about the resources and tools that are available to help someone quit and stay quit.

Addiction to nicotine found in cigarettes is said to be one of the strongest and most deadly addictions a person can have. This can make quitting very difficult for some, especially those who have been smoking from a young age. The CDC reports that in 2018, nearly 34.2 million adults in the United States reported being current tobacco users and 16 million of those report that they are living with a smoking-related disease. Since 2005, the CDC reports a 7.2% decrease in the amount of people that report being smokers. While we are heading in the right direction, we need to continue to work hard to quit tobacco use for good.

Quitting tobacco use takes commitment and starts with creating a strong quit plan. It may take many attempts and will require a lot of support to be successful. While there are pharmaceutical treatment options available to help with quitting, it is important to speak with your healthcare provider to see what the best option is for you.

Another factor when developing your plan to quit or attempting to quit is to determine what your triggers are. Take some time to recognize what makes it difficult to not smoke and how can you change your routine to take your mind off smoking. For example, taking a walk right after dinner with your family or a friend or taking a snack with you on your way to work so you have something to keep you distracted are two options to change around your daily habits.

One of the most important things you can do throughout this entire process is to celebrate the small victories. Being able to cut down on the amount you are smoking in a day can be something worth celebrating. Decreasing tobacco use can improve a person's senses of smell and taste overnight. In addition, those small victories can go a long way in giving a real sense of success to many tobacco users. Studies show that if a tobacco-user can go 24 hours without using, they are more open to the idea of giving up tobacco, perhaps for an even longer period. Sometimes, small steps forward can work better than traditional "all or nothing" attempts. Whatever you choose, know there are resources and programs out there to help you throughout your journey to living smoke free.

For personal advice, local resources, and one-on-one counseling, try calling the Michigan Quit Now help line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visit the American Cancer Society® at www.cancer.org which offers more resources and tools to help turn your plan into action.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org, LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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