



Cornell University
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NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
March 16, 2009

Reality Check Teens Plan Kick Butts Day 2009

Teens across Otsego County will speak up against cigarettes and spit tobacco on Kick Butts Day 2009, set to take place on March 25 nationwide. Students in Cooperstown, Morris, Laurens, Edmeston and Richfield Springs will host school activities designed to raise awareness about youth smoking issues. Teens are especially spreading the word about the way tobacco companies target young people in movies, magazines and stores.

“We are really looking forward to doing Kick Butts Day. We’ve got a lot of things we want to do,” said Cassandra Bourassa, 14, a student in Richfield Springs. “We are targeting younger kids from 6th grade on down. We have games and our health teacher, Jodi Bard, loaned us Mr. Mouth. It shows what tobacco does to the inside of your mouth,” she said.

Kick Butts Day is traditionally a time when smokers make an effort to quit cigarettes, or at least reduce the number of cigarettes they smoke per day. The desire to quit is great in New York State, particularly after legislators imposed a new cigarette tax last spring. In June 2008, more than 9,750 people contacted the New York State Quit-line compared with 2,500 calls the previous June. The New York State Quit-line (1-866-NY-QUITS) gives free counseling and nicotine replacement therapy, such as patches or gum.

In Otsego County, Reality Check is sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension. They have used grant funds to obtain t-shirts and activity guides for Kick Butts Day. Materials are obtained from The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, a national organization that is changing public attitudes and public policies regarding tobacco use. The campaign strives to prevent kids from smoking, help smokers quit, and protect everyone from second-hand smoke. Its site provides the latest data, state specific fact sheets, special reports, a tobacco ad gallery and more. See [The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.org](http://TheCampaignforTobacco-FreeKids.org) for more information.