
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NEWS ADVISORY
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TOBACCO PREVENTION EVENT OFFERS KINSTON TEENS THE CHANCE TO BE “BUTT-KICKING” TV STARS

TRU ROAD TRIP TEAMS WITH KINSTON INDIANS FOR RALLY AND TV SHOOT ON JULY 9

(Kinston, NC) – Kinston-area teens will have a chance to star in a new series of teen tobacco use prevention TV commercials when the Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered. (TRU) Road Trip comes to town on Saturday, July 9, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. in the parking lot just outside the Grainger Stadium gates.

TRU, the state’s teen tobacco cessation initiative sponsored by the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF), is teaming up with the Kinston Indians and eastern North Carolina health advocates to host a night free of secondhand smoke and spit tobacco. This event, which is free of charge, will also include prizes, messages promoting good health and even an opportunity to become a TV star. Saturday’s game marks the Indians’ first-ever tobacco free night.

The Road Trip is traveling to six North Carolina cities and towns this summer, carrying with it thought-provoking exhibits on the dangers of tobacco use and a television crew gathering teen testimonials for new TV commercials that will air in the fall. Visitors will also have a chance to win prizes, including tickets to Carolina Hurricanes games and the TJ Maxx 2004 Tour of Gymnastics Champions.

Teens from Craven, Edgecombe, Lenoir, Martin, New Hanover and Pamlico counties are scheduled to join Kinston-area youths at the baseball game and TRU Road Trip festivities.

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Specific youth groups include:

- Craven/Pamlico/Lenoir County's American Stop Smoking Intervention Study (ASSIST)
- EYES Incorporated of Wake County
- Lenoir County Health Department
- NC Spit Tobacco Education Program (NCSTEP)
- Pitt County Peer Educators
- "Question It!" Youth Empowerment Club of Green Central High School
- Question Why? East Youth Empowerment Center

The TRU Road Trip will also distribute materials encouraging the adoption of 100% Tobacco Free School (TFS) policies, which prohibit smoking anytime, anywhere on public school grounds. In the Kinston area, Carteret, Craven, Jones, New Hanover, Onslow and Pender counties have a 100% TFS policy. Beaufort, Duplin, Greene, Hyde, Lenoir, Pitt and Wayne county schools are not yet 100% tobacco free on a county-wide basis.

"The dangers of tobacco use are impossible to ignore," said Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, HWTF chairperson, during a June press conference in Raleigh announcing the TRU Road Trip. "We need to get tobacco products out of our children's reach and out of our schools." Lt. Gov. Perdue noted that when the first TRU TV campaign launched in April, visits to the campaign's Web site, www.realityunfiltered.com, shot up 140 percent from the site's previous high mark and that traffic has remained higher in 2004 than in 2003. "Teens are definitely interested," Lt. Gov. Perdue said. "Now is the time to act."

The TRU Road Trip's schedule as it treks through North Carolina is as follows:

- Winston-Salem (June 25, 2 - 7 p.m. at the State Games TRU Block Party in the Fairgrounds area of the Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum)
- Kinston (July 9, 5:30 - 8 p.m. outside Grainger Stadium, Kinston Indians baseball game)
- Durham (July 17, 3 - 6 p.m. at the American Tobacco Historic District)
- Fayetteville (July 24, 1 - 4 p.m. at Cross Creek Mall)
- Wilmington (July 30, Legion Stadium, Wilmington Sharks baseball game) (Time TBD)
- Hickory (August 27, 5:30 - 8 p.m., L.P. Frans Stadium, Hickory Crawdads baseball game)

ABOUT THE NC HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND:

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$55 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$78 million to fund a prescription drug assistance program. For more information, please visit www.hwtfc.org.

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