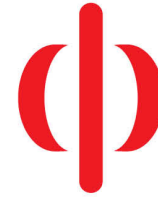


CHICAGO TOBACCO PREVENTION PROJECT



**RESPIRATORY
HEALTH
ASSOCIATION®**
of Metropolitan Chicago

Press Release

**For Immediate Release
June 29, 2011**

**Contact: Jamila Johnson
(312) 628-0225**

National youth smoking prevention tour hits Taste of Chicago this Thursday -- special giveaways, engaging activities, life-saving message --

The **truth** tour is teaming up with the Chicago Tobacco Prevention Project to bring its distinctive orange "truth truck" and dynamic truth tour riders to the Taste of Chicago this Thursday, June 30, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. near the intersection of Jackson and Columbus. The bright orange truck is rigged with a DJ booth and sound system, dance floor, flat screen, lounge area and more, in order to give teens the knowledge needed to make informed choices about smoking.

"About 80 percent of adults who smoke began smoking before the age of 18," said Dr. Bechara Choucair, commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health. "In Chicago, more than one in 10 teens report smoking," he continued. "We're working to reduce teen tobacco use by changing youth attitudes about smoking through messaging that communicates both the short- and long-term effects of tobacco use, as well as the benefits of a smoke-free lifestyle."

Locally, the Chicago Tobacco Prevention Project, led by Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago and the Chicago Department of Public Health, seeks to reduce the city's youth smoking rate by 25% through a comprehensive outreach program. Strategies include hard-hitting, counter-tobacco commercials and policy efforts designed to decrease youth access to tobacco products and reduce exposure to secondhand smoke.

"Bringing the **truth** truck to Taste of Chicago gives this important message high visibility, and it complements other local efforts to reach youth through hard-hitting TV commercials and community activities," said Joel Africk, president and CEO of Respiratory Health Association.

As part of its annual nationwide summer tour, **truth** will make more than 50 stops across 29 states this summer. At each stop, the truth zone will feature a fun and engaging atmosphere, allowing truth tour riders to discuss tobacco issues with teens in a non-preachy way. Additionally, truth tour riders will conduct exciting activities such as fashion shows, dance contests and educational games.

To interview **truth tour riders** or speak with a Chicago Tobacco Prevention Project representative, please contact Jamila Johnson, at (312) 628-0225 or jjohnson@lungchicago.org.

###

About the Chicago Tobacco Prevention Project: As the delegate agency for the Chicago Department of Public Health, Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago oversees the Chicago Tobacco Prevention Project. Funded by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control, the comprehensive program includes hard-hitting media, outreach to vulnerable population groups, and policy efforts that reduce exposure to secondhand smoke. For more, visit www.lungchicago.org/ctpp.

Resources: Legacy is a national public health foundation created to prevent youth from smoking and help people quit smoking. Legacy is responsible for the development of the nationally-recognized truth campaign. For more, visit www.thetruth.com or www.legacyforhealth.org.