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Mississippi Tobacco-Free Coalition of Warren and Claiborne Counties Encourages Smokers to Quit for a Day

The Mississippi Tobacco-Free Coalition of **Warren and Claiborne Counties** urges smokers to quit for 24 hours on November 17 to encourage them to kick the habit for good. This is part of the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout, an annual one-day event held the third Thursday of each November. Smokers are encouraged to quit for a day, and make a plan to quit for good.

To commemorate this year's Great American Smokeout, the Mississippi Tobacco-Free Coalition of **Warren and Claiborne Counties** will hold an event on **November 17, 2011** in downtown Port Gibson. Activities at the event include free t-shirts and information for those wanting to quit tobacco use.

"Through this Great American Smokeout event, we want Mississippians to know that you can quit and there is plenty of help available for those who want to stop smoking permanently," said **Leslie Horton**, director of the Mississippi Tobacco Free Coalition of **Warren and Claiborne Counties**. "If you want to quit using tobacco, contact the Mississippi Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or www.QuitlineMS.com to receive free counseling and medications, such as the patch or nicotine gum."

According to Roy Hart, director of the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) Office of Tobacco Control, "the addictive ingredient in tobacco is nicotine, and tobacco products, especially cigarettes, are carefully formulated by the tobacco industry to satisfy the brain's nicotine craving for about two hours. While some individuals are able to break this addiction cycle on their own, most benefit greatly from counseling, over the counter nicotine replacement therapy or prescription medications. The fact is, an individual is twice as likely to successfully quit smoking with help from the Mississippi Tobacco Quitline."

Horton says the Great American Smokeout Event on November 17 is a great opportunity for smokers to quit smoking and start on the path toward a healthier life.

"Make the decision to quit, and designate the Great American Smokeout on November 17 as your quit day," said **Horton**. "Let your friends, family and coworkers know that you plan to quit and ask for their support and understanding. Nicotine withdrawal can cause feelings of stress and anxiety, and having a support network around you can help."

Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States. Each year in Mississippi, 4,700 adults die from smoking-related diseases, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

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