



# MEDIA ADVISORY

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917-6413

## Great American Smokeout pep rally takes place tomorrow

**Who:** Knox County Health Department (KCHD), Smoke-Free Knoxville, Parent Resource Center and Whittle Springs Middle School

**What:** Great American Smokeout pep rally

**When:** Thursday, Nov. 17 at 2:30 p.m.

**Where:** Whittle Springs Middle School, 2700 White Oak Lane

**Interviews:** KCHD Public Health Educator Kerri Thompson will be available for interviews

### Background:

At the pep rally, the partners will launch [#UNSMOKEABLE](#), a campaign successfully launched in Sullivan and Johnson Counties and created by Cumberland Marketing, to encourage and inspire youth to live a smoke-free life. The event will also include an educational skit and other youth-centered activities.

Created by the American Cancer Society, the Great American Smokeout takes place on the third Thursday of November every year. The national observation is designed to encourage smokers to use the date to make a plan to quit, or to plan in advance and quit smoking that day.

Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the U.S. Reducing tobacco use is one of the priority health issues outlined in KCHD's [2014-2015 Community Health Assessment](#). Tobacco use, particularly in youth and pregnant women, as well as the increased use of e-cigarettes and vaping products are two areas of concern outlined in the assessment. In fact, e-cigarette use among middle and high school students tripled from 2013 to 2014, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In 2014, more than 21 percent of Knox County adults were smoking cigarettes. And in 2013, approximately 18 percent of public high school students in Knox County reported they smoked.

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