

The focus of this year's No Tobacco Day is our youth. Each year, the World Health Organization (WHO) sponsors this important day, which this year falls on May 31. We must protect our youth from big tobacco marketing strategies and educate them on avoiding addiction to tobacco and nicotine. According to the WHO, tobacco kills more than 8 million people each year worldwide, and that number continues to grow. Tobacco is the single largest preventable cause of disease and death. It causes many types of cancer, heart disease, stroke, and lung disease, as well as other health problems.

Let's support the WHO this year by urging young people to reject tobacco ads and avoid products containing nicotine, such as e-cigarettes and vaping devices. Tobacco companies use many strategies when marketing to young people. They are wise in their design of vape devices, for example. They know what will appeal to kids. The same can be said for flavorings, they market what they know will appeal to children. They use paid celebrities and influencers to promote their products on social media. They strategically place these items in grocery stores and vending machines alongside sweets, snacks, and sodas to increase their visibility among young people. They also attempt to increase appeal by showing these items in movies and TV shows.

Most evidence indicates that many tobacco users begin during their teenage years, and those who start smoking or vaping earlier are more likely to become addicted.

Meigs County Health Dept. encourages you to become involved. Be an advocate and vote for the change necessary to fight cancer. Through advocacy, we can eliminate suffering and death due to cancer. Educate yourself, talk with the young people in your life, and keep the dialogue open over the years as they are growing up. Look to the American Cancer Society for volunteer opportunities. Attend local government meetings and get involved. If you smoke or vape, be a good example and quit!

For help quitting call 1-800-QUIT NOW.



Sherry Hayman, RN, Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist  
Sherry is retiring from the Meigs Co. Health Dept. on 5/31/23 with over 19 years of service