



Yolo County Anti-tobacco Youth Coalition

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Woodland Based Anti-Tobacco Youth Coalition Expands to Esparto With Help of \$10,000 REACH Grant

[ESPARTO/WOODLAND, CALIF.] January 26th, 2009 – In a continued effort to increase youth awareness about the dangers of tobacco use and the tobacco industry's youth marketing tactics, the Yolo County Anti-Tobacco Youth Coalition (YUFA STAR) has expanded their youth coalition based in Woodland, to Esparto. The first meeting of the Esparto YUFA STAR coalition took place this past Monday, January 26th at the RISE Office near the Supermarket. A great turnout of 35 Esparto Middle School and High School students attended the event. Youth participants had the opportunity to learn about the youth coalition and how tobacco affects your body while playing a fun interactive Jeopardy game.

This all started when YUFA STAR 3-year members, Kate and Rebecca Markel, who attend Esparto High School and the Woodland YUFA STAR invited their EHS classmates to a Woodland YUFA STAR meeting. The EHS students were not able to attend because of the distance, and the idea to bring the youth coalition to them was born. Yolo County Health Department staff applied for a \$10,000 REACH Program Improvement grant from the Sierra Health Foundation in the summer of 2008 and was approved. The grant helps cover transportation costs and new youth trainings involved with the expansion.

The Esparto YUFA STAR youth coalition will meet every minimum day Monday in Esparto during the school year: February 23rd, March 9th, March 23rd, April 20th, April 27th, May 4th and May 18th at 1:00pm at the RISE Office on 17313 Fremont St. Each meeting will feature a 30-minute training on varying public health and tobacco education topics, a demonstration, a new media project, snacks, and a fun icebreaker game.

Facts about tobacco use and teens from The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids website:
<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0001.pdf>

- Each day, more than 3,500 kids in the United States try their first cigarette; and each day another 1,000 kids under 18 years of age become new regular, daily smokers. That's 400,000 new underage daily smokers in this country each year.
- 90 percent of all adult smokers begin while in their teens, or earlier, and two-thirds become regular, daily smokers before they reach the age of 19.

- Roughly one-third of all youth smokers will eventually die prematurely from smoking-caused disease.
- Nationwide, tobacco use kills more than 400,000 people and costs the nation nearly \$100 billion in health care bills each year, and 23 percent of high school students smoke. In California, tobacco use claims 37,800 lives and costs the state \$9.14 billion in health care bills a year, and 15.4 percent of high school students smoke.

YUFA STAR was founded in Woodland, CA in 2001 from federal tobacco settlement money. Since its creation, the youth coalition has been involved in many community-changing activities in Woodland, such as advocating for the Smoke-Free Yolo County Fair and Woodland's 20-Foot No Smoking Policy, organizing annual "Strike Out the Hype" Bowling Nights, and tabling at various local events with their interactive trailer. YUFA STAR then expanded to West Sacramento in 2007 and has now expanded to Esparto in 2009 with the help of the REACH grant.

The Sierra Health Foundation is a private philanthropic organization investing in and serving as a catalyst for ideas, partnerships and programs that improve health and quality of life in Northern California. The foundation's REACH youth grant program supports healthy development of youth for their successful transition to adulthood. Sierra Health is committed to helping youth succeed by increasing participation in quality programs and activities, providing opportunities for youth to develop leadership and decision making skills, and helping communities take positive action for youth. For more information about Sierra Health and its programs, please visit www.sierrahealth.org.

For more information about the Yolo County Anti-Tobacco Youth Coalition (YUFA STAR), contact Jessica Estrada at (530) 666-8617 or visit the Yolo County Health Department Tobacco Prevention Program's website at <http://www.yolocounty.org/Index.aspx?page=132>

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