

TACS SPEAK TO KIDS IN S. CHARLESTON

On Tuesday, August 9, five TACS members, Teens Against Cigarettes and Snuff, conducted a tobacco education presentation to around 35 youth and adults from the South Charleston Housing Authority.

The South Charleston Housing Authority in partnership with the South Charleston's Women's Club hosted a Health Fair. Along with TACS, were the South Charleston Fire Department, WV State Police and the Charleston K-9 Unit.

TACS members included Katelyn Clay, Whitney Hodges, Jaytese Westmoreland, Ja'Leeza Canada, Rosetta Tillet, and Adult Advisor Tim White.



TACS members shared information designed to inform and educate others about the dangers associated with using tobacco products such as cigarettes and snuff.

With several powerful visual aids such as real lungs that had been exposed to cigarette smoke, posters, games and hand-outs, the group learned valuable information such as how tobacco companies put over 4,000 harmful and cancer causing chemicals in tobacco products.

They learned that tobacco companies target kids to get them addicted to tobacco as early as they can. They learned that dipping one can of snuff is equal to smoking five packs of cigarettes.



They also learned that the average age of a new smoker in WV is 11 years of age while the national average is 13 years of age.

Students and adults in attendance were given the opportunity to come closer to the real lungs display and see up close and personal how tobacco causes cancer and other lung diseases.

The group really liked the TACS presentation and invited them to come back in the future. TACS members are getting geared up to have another very active year in the fight against big tobacco.



STUDENTS EARN FREE TRIP TO CINCINNATI

Thirteen students earned a free, two-day trip to Cincinnati, OH, to visit the zoo, a Cincinnati Reds Baseball game and Kings Island. These students, members of Operation Right Choice, were selected based on their participation in various prevention programs and events over the past year.

Over the past 12 months, these students were involved in hosting over 2,000 anti-tobacco education presentations throughout the region, they completed two ArtWorks projects, they provided leadership at two middle school teen institutes, they successfully completed two training programs: Project Towards No Drug Abuse and Project Towards No Tobacco Use, and the National Youth Sports Program.



These students also maintained a drug-free and tobacco-free lifestyle, stayed in school and out of trouble.

Day one was spent at the Cincinnati Zoo where the students were delighted to see so many different and exotic wild animals up close and personal.

Being able to watch and sometimes interact with the animals in a natural setting was awesome. The students were fascinated with the size, variety, and various species of each type of animal.

After the zoo it was off to the Great American Ballpark to see the Cincinnati Reds play the San Francisco Giants. This experience was a first for many of the students who had never seen a professional sports team play except on TV.

Hot dogs, cotton candy, slushies, and souvenirs were big treats for each of the students. Although the Reds lost, the game and the experience were priceless for the group.





Day two was spent at Kings Island where the lines were short and the temperature was mild. The students and staff rode rides like the Drop Zone, Delirium, The Beast, Son of Beast, Flight of Fear, Top Gun, and many more.

Tim White, ORC Coordinator, and Jodi Eggleton, youth mentor, accompanied the youth on the two-day trip.

For several of the youth, this was their first time to visit the theme park and especially ride rides with such height, speed and turns.

Although many said they would never ride this ride or that ride, by the end of the day, fears had been faced and rides had been conquered and each student left the park with memories that will last a lifetime.

Those students who attended this event were Paul and Russell Bailey, Katelyn Clay, Whitney Hodges, Josh Clark, Jaytese Westmoreland, Ja'Leeza Canada, Bianca Canady, Teresa Canady, Cierra Stubblefield, Raven Coco, Cynthia Nichols, and Rosetta Tillet.

