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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MARCH 3, 2005**

**TEEN ADVOCATES RALLY IN NEW BERN TO STOMP OUT TOBACCO**  
**KEYNOTE PRESENTATION BY LT. GOV. BEVERLY PERDUE**

**(New Bern, NC)** – Get ready, New Bern! On Saturday, March 5, more than 200 teen tobacco prevention advocates will assemble at the New Bern Convention Center for **STOMP 2005**, an all-day youth summit sponsored by the Question Why Youth Empowerment Center of Eastern North Carolina and TRU (Tobacco.Reality.Unfiltered.), North Carolina’s first-ever statewide teen tobacco use prevention and cessation campaign.

**STOMP 2005** will feature: a keynote address by Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, chair of the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF); a town hall meeting designed to increase awareness of the state’s teen tobacco use prevention and cessation initiatives and the 100% Tobacco-Free School movement; a slate of interactive games; and a special awards ceremony honoring teens who have taken a leadership role in encouraging their school districts to adopt the 100% Tobacco-Free School policy.

“Conferences, like **STOMP 2005**, allow us to share messages with teens about the dangers of tobacco use,” said Terry Quinn, Question Why’s training coordinator. “Having teens educate their peers about tobacco use and how it impacts their lives and bodies is a wonderful way to prepare our future leaders.”

According to the state’s 2003 Youth Tobacco Survey, more than 68 percent of coastal high school students admitted that they’ve tried a tobacco product, and more than 34 percent of coastal high school students currently use a tobacco product. As a result, more than 200,000 people under the age of 18 in North Carolina will die prematurely due to tobacco-related illnesses.

**Who:** Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, chair of the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund

Teen Advocates from eastern NC:

- NicoTEEN FREE WAY with the Chowan Regional Health Care Foundation
- New Hanover Coastal Horizons
- Advocates from 15 northeastern counties: Chowan, Craven, Bladen, Brunswick, Green, Halifax, Hertford, Martin, New Hanover, Northampton, Perquimans, Pitt, Onslow, Tyrell, and Washington counties

**What:** **STOMP 2005 Teen Summit**

*Meeting Activities:*

*Keynote Presentation from 10:30 a.m. to 10: 45 a.m.*

*Teen Town Hall Meeting from 11 a.m. - noon*

*Award Ceremony from 1:15 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.*

*Interactive Games*

**\*\*All activities will take place in the Colonial Capital Ballroom ABC\*\***

**When:** **Saturday, March 5, 2005, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

**Where:** **New Bern Convention Center**  
203 South Front Street in New Bern

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**ABOUT QUESTION WHY:**

Question Why is a statewide education, advocacy and training *movement* funded by the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund. The Question Why movement began in January 2001, with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the vision of committed adults from the NC Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch and local agencies. It is named “Question Why” because “Every change starts with a question.” Three Question Why Youth Empowerment Centers reach North Carolinians statewide – Asheville, serving 26 western counties; Durham, serving 37 central counties and Wilmington, serving 37 eastern counties. Each center has adult staff and up to nine youth staff. To learn more about Question Why, visit [www.questionwhy.org](http://www.questionwhy.org).

**ABOUT TRU:**

Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered., commonly known as **TRU**, is North Carolina's first-ever statewide youth tobacco prevention multi-media campaign that uses testimonials of real North Carolina teens as well as hard-hitting facts to dissuade young people from using tobacco. This campaign is part of the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund's (HWTF) teen tobacco use prevention initiative. Funded at \$28 million from HWTF, this grassroots initiative includes the **TRU** media campaign, as well as a grant program including 70 grants (50 community-based grants, 4 statewide grants and 16 tobacco free school mini-grants) to a total of 55 organizations. To find out more about **TRU**, please visit [www.realityunfiltered.com](http://www.realityunfiltered.com)

**ABOUT THE NC HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND:**

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$127 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$78 million to fund a prescription drug assistance program. For more information, please visit [www.hwtfc.org](http://www.hwtfc.org).

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