

Dear Coach,

The Tennessee Department of Health, in conjunction with **TNSTRONG**, would like to invite your softball team to take a leadership role in helping to keep Tennessee's youth tobacco-free.

TNSTRONG is a statewide, youth-led initiative to take down tobacco in Tennessee. **TNSTRONG** stands for "**TeNnessee Stop Tobacco and Revolutionize Our New Generation**". **TNSTRONG** is working to raise awareness about the harms caused by all kinds of tobacco products, prevent initiation of use, and provide support to youth who would like to stop using tobacco.

Thanks to the efforts of **TNSTRONG** and statewide anti-tobacco programs, youth use of cigarettes has declined from 20.9% in 2009 to 7.1% in 2019, but we still have work to do.

E-cigarettes are sometimes called "e-cigs," "vapes," "JUUL," "e-hookahs," "vape pens," and "electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)". E-cigarettes are one of the newest tobacco products on the market. The US Surgeon General recently declared the use of e-cigarettes among youth an epidemic. In 2020, more than 8 out of 10 current youth e-cig users use flavored e-cigs. Most adults and teens are unaware of the health consequences of using e-cigarettes. The majority of e-cigarettes contain highly addictive nicotine and include several cancer-causing chemicals. We'd like youth basketball to ban the use of ALL tobacco products by its athletes.

We need your help in putting an end to tobacco use in Tennessee once and for all!

What We ASK:

1. Sign the attached tobacco-free pledge, promising not to use **ANY** tobacco or electronic cigarette (vape) product.
2. Scan and email the signed pledge form to TNSTRONG.Health@tn.gov. Once we have received your completed Tobacco-free Team Pledge form, we will send you the "We Struck out Tobacco" banner.
3. When you receive the banner, have your team sign the banner and hang the banner on your outfield fencing or another area of prominence.
4. Take a picture of your team with the banner and post your picture to your schools/team social media pages, tagging #TNTobaccoFree and #TNSTRONG.
5. Forward a copy of your picture and a link to your social media page to our email address: TNSTRONG.Health@tn.gov

What You GET:

1. You will get one 3'x5' all-weather banner declaring your team tobacco free to hang on your outfield fencing or another area of prominence.

2. Once we have your team's picture, your team will receive a **TNSTRONG five- gallon bucket that is filled with 18 Diamond practice softballs.**
3. TNSTRONG and Tennessee Department of Health social media accounts will share and retweet your posts.

Help YOUR athletes become part of the FIRST tobacco-free generation!

Sincerely,

TNSTRONG Staff
Tennessee Department of Health
Tobacco Prevention and Control Team
TNSTRONG.Health@tn.gov



Need help quitting:

If you have members of your coaching staff who are using tobacco products, and need assistance with quitting, please refer them to our Tennessee Tobacco QuitLine (1-800-QUIT-NOW or online at www.tnquitline.org). There they will be paired with a "quit coach" who can support them through the quitting process. The QuitLine can also provide two weeks of nicotine replacement therapy (nicotine patches) at no cost to help them get started.

If you have players on your team who are using tobacco products including e-cigarettes and need assistance with quitting, please refer them to <https://teen.smokefree.gov> or text QUIT to 47848 to join a free text to quit program

School Name: _____

SOFTBALL

Pledges to Strike Out Tobacco!

I understand tobacco products have health risks and consequences.

I understand that tobacco in any form is harmful, including cigarettes, Juuls™, e-cigs, chew tobacco, snus, and any other product containing nicotine.

I pledge to say "NO" and never use tobacco or nicotine products!

#	Name (Please sign your name)	Position	Age

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Sport: _____ **Date:** _____

Head Coach: _____ **Assistant Coach:** _____

School Name: _____ **Middle School** **High School**

Contact Email: _____ **Contact Phone:** _____

School Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____