

Family Links Inc. receives \$32,000

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Family Links Inc. was recently awarded \$32,000 from the Alabama Department of Public Health-Tobacco Control Branch for tobacco education and prevention efforts in Calhoun County.

The grant began Oct 1 and will end June 30, 2012. Family Links received funding to continue and

strengthen the existing youth empowerment project “Clean Air for Life.” The goal of the project is to reduce the youth tobacco use rates in Calhoun County by engaging youth and the general public through community presentations, and policy advocacy activities to raise awareness of the dangers of tobacco use and exposure. The project will educate and empower youth in the “YEP!” (Youth Empowerment Program) curriculum. YEP! students are from the Saks High School Student Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) group. Sixth-grade students from the Calhoun County school district will also be educated through the use of the research-based prevention program called (Botvin) Life Skills. The Life Skills program will target approximately 330 sixth-graders across three schools in the Calhoun County School system who will receive 15 lessons of education in the Life Skills curriculum in a classroom setting.

The grant couldn't come at a better time. Family Links will be promoting the Great American Smoke Out Nov. 17. This national tobacco awareness day is aimed at empowering smokers to join together and choose this day as their “quit date.” Students at Saks Middle School will have a special Great American Smoke Out class on this day to learn how to challenge their loved ones to quit and support them in the process.