

Preventing The Next Generation From Smoking

SAFE partners with GCSD and Tobacco Action at GCHS

Plans are under way for Glen Cove youth to learn all about the dangers of tobacco marketing during the second week of December. The SAFE Pride Project Coalition's School Committee will partner with the Glen Cove School District's health, physical education and athletic department and Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island to celebrate the Great American Smokeout by joining the statewide campaign, "We've Seen Enough," at Glen Cove High School.

Originally planned for November but postponed due to Hurricane Sandy, the program will offer a great deal for area youth. Historically, the annual Great American Smokeout is a day set aside for people to commit to quit smoking, or at least to devise a plan to do so. It is also an occasion to discourage youth from smoking. The "We've Seen Enough" campaign will empower youth because it offers them an opportunity to make a stand themselves.

"The initiative addresses point-of-sale marketing and advertising of tobacco products," explains Carol Meschkow, Nassau Project Coordinator for the Tobacco Action Coalition of LI. "The industry spends more than \$12 billion annually marketing their deadly products to our youth or as they call them, 'replacement smokers.' Research shows that exposure to tobacco marketing in stores is a primary cause of youth smoking. Further, young people are almost twice as likely as

adults to recall tobacco advertising."

The weeklong kick-off will begin with a review of all of the facts surrounding the dangers of tobacco marketing. Students will view the videos, *If Walls Could Talk*, and *Changes* in their health classes. The films are tailored for young people showing the power of advertising and how this advertising can lead them to make a decision to start smoking without them even realizing it.

Then, on Dec. 14, two student leaders from the Teens As Teachers Club will be at a table outside the cafeteria with SAFE Coalition co-chairs, Glen Cove City Councilman Tony Gallo and Dr. Sharon Harris, coalition coordinator, Aimee Abraham and Meschkow. They will give out prevention education materials, giveaways, and information about signing the anti-tobacco marketing petition poster. When they sign the 3-by-4-foot petition banner, students will be showing that they support the Anti-Tobacco Marketing Campaign. Nassau County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton is slated to attend to further support the campaign.

"The teens and parents of Glen Cove are exceptionally fortunate to have the SAFE PRIDE Project Coalition School Committee as a resource and partner with their outstanding school district," says Meschkow. "90 percent of adult smokers begin while in high school. Perhaps we can help to change that statistic."

For further information on any SAFE Inc. upcoming events please call 676-2008. SAFE Inc. is a not-for-profit tax-exempt substance abuse education and prevention agency located in Glen Cove. Visit www.safeglencove.org and www.facebook.com/GlenCovePrideCoalition.