

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TOBACCO KILLS TOO MANY VULNERABLE NEW YORK YOUTH

Great American Smokeout Spotlights Pressing Need to Help Change the Odds

The Great American Smokeout is an annual reminder that quitting smoking is critical for good health. Sadly, the most at-risk populations in New York haven't been able to quit on this day or any other. The use of Tobacco is still the leading cause of preventable disease and death killing nearly 24,000 New Yorkers every year and afflicting nearly 600,000 New Yorkers with serious disease directly attributable to their smoking. Tobacco is not an equal opportunity killer – there has been no reduction in smoking rates among low-income adults, adults with poor mental health, and those with less than a high school education.

The School Committee of SAFE Inc.'s PRIDE Project Coalition will continue their partnership with the Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island to address these concerns on Thursday, November 20, 2014 in celebration of G.A.S.O at the Glen Cove High School with students by bringing their attention to reducing their exposure to Tobacco Marketing. The Coalition is Co-Chaired by Anthony Gallo, GC HS Health Education Teacher and the School Committee is chaired Denise Kiernan-GC SD Director of Health, Phys Ed & Athletics.

Executive Director-Dr. Sharon Harris said, "SAFE's goal is early intervention and prevention education." Dr. Harris continued, "According to the 2014 Bach Harrison Prevention Needs Assessment Survey, Glen Cove's youth showed a rise in lifetime and 30-day Tobacco Use. Lifetime cigarette use continues to rise into the 10th grade (18.8%) and 12th grade (39.3%)."

The American Cancer Society, sponsor of the annual Great American Smokeout, estimates that 30 percent of cancers could be avoided if people stopped using tobacco. Quitting smoking is the single most important step you can take to reduce your risk of cancer and improve your health.

Per Carol Meschkow-TACLI Nassau Project Coordinator, "For our youth, reducing initiation is the greatest weapon in the effort to prevent addiction. The New York State Tobacco Control Program continues to focus their efforts on youth for a very clear reason. 90% of smokers smoke their first cigarette by the age of 18. It is during these formative years that our youth are most vulnerable to Tobacco Marketing especially at the Point-of-Sale and we are grateful to partner with SAFE and their Coalition Members to prevent the next generation of smokers." SAFE's Board and Executive Dr. Harris do an incredible job of brining together all of the community stakeholders on behalf of their local youth".

For more information on the Tobacco Action Coalition visit: www.breathefreely.org To get help quitting follow the icon for the NY New York State Smokers' Quitline or call 1-866-NY-QUITS.

For further information on SAFE, Inc and their initiatives contact SAFE at: 516-676-2008 or visit the website at www.safeglencove.org