

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 the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition will continue their partnership with the Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island to address these concerns on Tuesday, November 17, 2015 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 and educating their peers on the inconsistent messaging associated with pharmacies selling tobacco products. 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.

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 including exposure at pharmacies that are still selling tobacco products. "As a result of the youth's advocacy, we hope that they will be instrumental in encouraging their peers and those they care about that smoke, to take this day as a first step toward quitting like a champion" said Meschkow.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition annually partner's with the TACLI to impart prevention education as well as implement environmental strategies such as no-smoking signage throughout public and private city wide facilities. "This partnership had produced incredible results by bringing together all of the community stakeholders on behalf of the local youth. The Coalition is

fortunate to have Ms. Meschkow as an instrumental member, helping to prevent the next generation of smokers" said Dr. Sharon Harris, SAFE Executive Director and Coalition Co-Chair. For more information on the TACLI 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