

Press Release

April 5, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Dr. Sharon Harris

516-676-2008

safeglencove@yahoo.com

SAFE, Inc. Partners with Tobacco Action Coalition of LI in Calling for a Reduction of Tobacco Marketing for Kick Butts Day 2017

The School Committee of the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is pleased to once again be partnering for “KBD” with the Tobacco Action Coalition of LI (TAC), and the state’s “Tobacco Free Pharmacy” campaign to reduce our youth’s exposure to tobacco marketing and by bringing the danger to the forefront across the community. “Our local youth have stressed that they feel CVS’s decision to ban the sale of tobacco demonstrates the importance of this campaign in bringing awareness to the public and our elected officials of the need to reduce their exposure to tobacco marketing”, per Ashley Ferruffino- SAFE Coalition Coordinator. For the past several years the School Committee, Chaired by Denise Kiernan, Glen Cove School District Director of Health and Physical Education, Health Teacher and SAFE Coalition Co-Chair Tony Gallo and TAC are educating local youth on tobacco marketing techniques and are encouraging these young people to raise awareness with their peers and adult leaders regarding the problems of tobacco use in their community, and the misleading messages associated with tobacco sales in local pharmacies

In New York, \$235 million a year, or nearly \$650,000 a day, is spent on marketing tobacco products and 280,000 kids under 18 today in NYS today will ultimately die prematurely due to smoking. In fact, if the current smoking rates continue 5.6 million Americans younger than 18 who are alive are projected to die prematurely from smoking related diseases. Further tobacco marketing has been declared a youth epidemic by former Surgeon General Benjamin, so today we are encouraged to see our next generation step up and call for a reduction in youth’s exposure to tobacco marketing”.

“Tobacco sales in pharmacies is raising moral questions, as tobacco is the only consumer product that when used as intended, will kill at least one half of its long term users. Its displays in stores and trusted local pharmacies give youth the impression that tobacco products are easily accessible and tobacco use is acceptable.” said Carol Meschkow-Nassau Manager for TAC.

Smoking is deadly, and we need to work together to protect our impressionable teens from the lure of this dangerous product; that’s why Anthony Gallo has always asserted that the physical education and athletic department for the GC School district is particularly concerned. The department strives to motivate, and stresses that teens need to take a stand and speak out for themselves by advocating for causes that they believe in such as challenging local pharmacies to reconsider the display. Our newest partner, Amanda Sullivan-Health Teacher from Finely Middle School is equally eager to educate her students to the dangers of deceptive tobacco marketing and promotions, and to help teaching them at an early learning how be aware of these practices, and not to succumb to a life time of smoking, especially as the average age of onset begins with middle school youth at the age of thirteen.

According to Dr. Sharon Harris- Executive Director of SAFE, Inc. and Co-Chair of the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition, “a study recently released by the American Cancer Society found that smokers toll on health is worse than previously thought. The study found five additional diseases attributable to smoking and estimated that an additional 60,000 deaths each year in the US are due to tobacco use. This alarming statistic brings the total annual death toll to 540,000 people dying every year due to smoking related diseases. In NYS 108,500 High School students smoke cigarettes and each year 135,000 kids initiate their addiction as daily smokers”.

In New York State, 82 percent of retailers including pharmacies, convenience stores and gas stations occupy at least half of the space behind counters to openly display tobacco products for all to purview so for “Kick Butts Day 2017” we are continuing in our effort to advance a tobacco free community by asking all our community partners, parents and local

leaders to join the School Committee of the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition in letting our elected officials know our youths have seen enough tobacco marketing, and are banding together with the same message, “we want our children and youth to be the first tobacco free generation”.

To learn more about the harmful effects of tobacco marketing in retail stores and pharmacies visit:

www.tobaccofreenys.org. For Quit help contact the NYS Quit Line at 1-866-NYS-Quits.

For more information about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition visit SAFE Inc. at: www.safeglencove.org, or follow them on: www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or call 516 676-2008.