

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Dr. Sharon Harris

516-676-2008

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition and TAC Partner with RM Finely MS for World No Tobacco Day

To Celebrate World Health Day 2017 (WNTD) the School Committee of the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition and the Tobacco Action Coalition of LI (TAC) have partnered once again with the RM Finely Middle School to continue their efforts towards enlightening teens of the dangers of smoking; and how to recognize and avoid the marketing tactics of the tobacco industry in their local retailers. The School Committee is chaired by Denise Kiernan, Director of Health and Athletics for Glen Cove School District.

World No Tobacco Day was first introduced by the World Health Organization (WHO) to be celebrated annually as a recognized event all over the world with a goal of making people aware of all the health complications suffered by the use of tobacco products for chewing or smoking, and more currently the addition of vaping to prevent future health hazards, and to hopefully make the whole world free of tobacco and ultimately a healthier populous worldwide.

According to the WHO “Tobacco use kills at least one out of every 10 people worldwide every year whereas the number of tobacco users all around the world is 1.3 billion” It has been projected that around 100 million premature deaths can be prevented by people reducing tobacco use by 20-25% by 2020 through anti-smoking efforts and measures such as banning TV or radio advertising for tobacco, launching new and effective public awareness campaigns displaying dangers, and policy work to stop smoking in public places and change the social norms associated with the acceptability of smoking.

Sadly, the age of onset has dropped down to 13 years old with the former Surgeon General declaring smoking a pediatric epidemic. Today it is even more essential to educate young teenagers before they succumb to the lure of tobacco products. Each day 3,200 youth in the US under the age of 18 become daily smokers and almost 1/3 will die prematurely. According to the Bach Harrison Prevention Needs Assessment conducted by the Coalition and the School District in 2014, by the time students reach the 8th grade, 9.8% of them have tried smoking at least once in their lifetime.

The theme for 2017 is “Tobacco – a threat to development”. Young children with maturing lungs are 50 percent more susceptible to nicotine, and as the brain doesn’t fully develop until the age of 25, many of the critical area such as those for controlling impulses are not fully formed.

It is lethal, and often referred to as a brain “wanting” disease which can never be cured however can be fully arrested. It binds the brain dopamine pathways just like other illegal drugs, meth, alcohol, heroin and etc. It prepares the brain to send false message about the need of nicotine to the body as necessary, similar to other survival activities like eating and drinking food and

liquids.” Per Carol Meschkow- TAC Manager “Based on the volumes of research and data the most important thing we can do for our youth is make them aware of the dangers, teach them about Point-of Sale tobacco marketing practices, the necessary skills to avoid taking their first puff and how to advocate for themselves. The tobacco industry places most of their advertising in stores where 75 percent of teens shop at least once per week. Further stores located near schools contain 3x the amount of these advertisements which are all prominently displayed in our children’s purview.”

Health Teachers Amanda Sullivan and Matt Carbone’s classes will be participating in an engaging program in recognition of WNTD. The Students will be educated on the dangers of tobacco products and the marketing tactics the tobacco industry uses in their local retailers. The youths will participate in an interactive learning program, and will be taught necessary life skills in advocacy to take a stand against “Big Tobacco”. To conclude the lesson the class will be making a collective class poster to take a stand against the Tobacco marketing in their local retail establishments. As this year’s theme is sustainable development the youth will be doing their part as guardians of the environment to speak out in one voice for a reduction in second- hand smoke and butt litter, while sending a strong message they have “Seen Enough”.

“The Coalition is concerned about the health and welfare of the residents of Glen Cove and implements alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention education workshops and events on a year-round basis at school and in the community. It seeks to change societal norms about the acceptability of using such products and along with TAC will to continue to convey the vital message that Nicotine addiction is very bad for our general health” reported Dr. Sharon Harris- Executive Director of SAFE and Co-Chair of the Coalition with Co-Chair Anthony Gallo, Health teacher.

For more information about SAFE, Inc. and the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition visit the website at <http://www.safeglencove.org> or our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition> or call 516-676-2008. For more information about TAC and the dangers of tobacco use visit: www.tobaccofreenystate.org. For Quit help call: 1-866-NY-Quits.