

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Dr. Sharon Harris
516-676-2008
safeglencove@yahoo.com

2016 was another banner year for the Tobacco Action Coalition (TAC) and SAFE, Inc. in bringing tobacco awareness and working towards advancing a tobacco-free community.

Once again, the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition and Carol Meschkow, Nassau Manager of TAC partnered with the School District for youth engagement activities to draw attention to the need to reduce our youth's exposure to tobacco marketing for two national major days of tobacco awareness; Kick Butts Day and the Great American Smoke Out. The youths have been actively educating their peers and local electorate for the past several years on the need to raise awareness to the benefits of Tobacco Free Pharmacies in removing these products and their advertisements from local drugstore retail establishments. To seize control of the problem, the teens ran empowering programs using campaign materials supplied by TAC. After educating the students on the dangers of tobacco marketing, they mobilized to take a stand against "Big Tobacco" with tabling events, tweets to their peers, and a Letter to the Editor. Over the last several years it has been very rewarding to see many teen leaders emerge.

With the average age of onset at 13, this year's efforts were expanded down to the MS Health Classes and City of Glen Cove Youth Bureau's "After 3" Middle School Program, where the teens learned all about the efforts and money the tobacco lobby spends to market their deadly products where our youth are exposed to on a daily basis. The teens impressed us with their knowledge of the health risks associated with tobacco usage, and their resolve not to get lured into a lifelong addiction. The teens completed Comment Card expressing their concerns to their peers and local leaders, and brought home Pledge Cards supplied by TAC for their parents to sign as well. The Middle School teens from Ms. Sullivan's Health Class empowered themselves with knowledge, and wrote a strong Letter to the Editor. After a full day of school the Glen Cove Youth Bureau's "After 3 Program" was really engaged, and very eager to share what they knew on the topic, and to learn more about the campaign to reduce tobacco marketing.

In addition to the major days of tobacco awareness, TAC has been busy working with the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition attending various community events such as Family Awareness Day to interface and educate the families of the City on the dangers of tobacco, and positive solutions. To continue their ongoing efforts to bring environmental strategies to the community, identify tobacco use trends, and assist the youth with destructive decisions making and providing treatment for addictive behaviors the Coalition along with their community partners crafted, and collected survey data. As an active Coalition Member TAC was involved with the process. Survey data indicated the need for continued prevention education efforts, especially at the Middle School level where initial exploration begins.

Alarming the incidence of electronic cigarettes has risen exponentially since 2011, and in the Coalition's proactive fashion they have been busy gathering and sharing the trends, and have worked closely with TAC to raise awareness and dispense the information. Mayor Spinello and the City Council remains on the cutting edge as

Tobacco Control Champions and has adopted progressive legislation in the past few years to address the advent and explosive usage of vaping products and establishments.

Over the years since the Coalition and TAC have partnered together to promote a Tobacco Free Community the City of Glen Cove and the City's Housing Authorities and several local community agencies have partnered with the State's Tobacco Free Outdoor Initiative to protect the the public from the dangers of second hand smoke, and to help change the social norms associated with tobacco usage. This past fall the Glen Cove Youth Bureau joined their peers in the SAFE's Coalition by adopting a new entryway ban for their youth center.

Setting the ground work for 2017, the partners have started preliminary discussions with the City regarding a municipal entryway, reached out to faith based organizations to educate them on their role as community leaders in changing societal norms on the acceptability of smoking, and are hopefully to expand the Smoke Free Housing options further at the City's Housing Authority. In reflection 2016 was a tremendous year, and this coming year should see even more successes in advancing towards a tobacco free City!

To learn more about the harmful effects of tobacco visit www.tobaccofreenys.org. For more information about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition visit SAFE Inc. at: www.safeglencove.org, or follow them on: www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition.