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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**SAFE Glen Cove Coalition, Tobacco Action Coalition of LI and Glen Cove Youth Bureau:  
Working to Educate Youth on the Dangers of the Tobacco Industry's Marketing Strategies**

Kick Butts Day is a once a year National Day of awareness and youth activities that encourages and supports youth taking a stand against Big Tobacco. This year Kick Butts Day was celebrated on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 across the United States and internationally. This is the 23<sup>rd</sup> year since the day was first organized by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Students enrolled in SAFE's Life Skills Training offered via the Youth Bureau's After 3 Program participated in the event by engaging in prevention activities that included a slogan game, kick butts day quiz, and a breathing game through plastic coffee stirrer to experience what it is like to have lung disease.

A most recent U.S. Surgeon General Report calls smoking among youth a pediatric epidemic with the average age of a new smoker in New York starting at 13 years old. Alarming, the Tobacco Industry spends \$8.1 billion dollars marketing their products in stores and elsewhere in communities throughout the U.S.

Governor Cuomo recently announced in his State of the Union Address a compilation of tobacco control-related legislative initiatives for 2019 that addresses the ongoing use of combustible tobacco, and the spiraling trends in teen's use of electronic cigarettes. The Governor's proposal included:

- Raising the minimum sales age for tobacco and electronic cigarette products from 18 to 21.
- Ending the sale of tobacco and electronic cigarette products in pharmacies.
- Requires that e-cigarettes be sold only at retailers registered with the Department of Tax and Finance.
- Tax the sale of e-cigarette liquids as a disincentive to youth's access to these products.
- Restricting discounts provided by tobacco and electronic cigarette manufacturers and retailers.
- Restrict tobacco and electronic cigarette on retail store product displays.

The use of electronic cigarettes or "vaping" among youth has been acknowledged in The U.S. Surgeon General's report on E-Cigarette Use among Youth and Young Adults. Nicotine levels in most e-cigarettes are higher than in cigarettes. Kids are easily addicted to nicotine, and the developing adolescent brain is particularly vulnerable to addiction. The report concluded;

- Nicotine exposure during adolescence can cause addiction and can harm the developing adolescent brain.

- Adolescents and young adults who use e-cigarettes are at increased risk for starting smoking and continuing to smoke.
- With or without nicotine, the aerosol produced by vaping is unsafe.

Despite significant progress in reducing smoking, tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States, killing more than 480,000 Americans and costing the nation about \$170 billion in health care expenses annually. There is overwhelming evidence that the more young people see tobacco, the more likely they are to start smoking. The youth in our community have seen enough tobacco marketing!!

SAFE, TAC and the Glen Cove Youth Bureau has a long history of collaborating together to raise awareness of the problems of youth tobacco use and to enlighten and empower youth to reject the tobacco industry's deceptive marketing. SAFE Coalition's prevention efforts with TAC have been made within the community through the Mayor's office and City Council, schools, and religious organizations to protect kids from a lifelong addiction to tobacco. To learn more about the harmful effects of tobacco visit: [www.tobaccofreenys.org](http://www.tobaccofreenys.org) or for help with quitting contact the State's Quitline at: 1-866-NY-QUITS. For more information about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition and vaping facts and myths, please visit SAFE's website at: [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org), or follow them on: [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition).