

Press Release  
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FOR IMMEDIATE REALEASE  
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### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: The Great American Smoke Out**

The American Cancer Society designates the Great American Smoke Out (GASO) on the third Thursday of November each year by encouraging smokers to use the date to make a plan to quit or to plan on quitting smoking that day. By quitting, even for one day, smokers will be moving towards a healthier life – one that can lead to reducing their risk of cancer related illnesses.

Every year on this special day, the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition partners with the Tobacco Action Coalition of LI (TAC) the Glen Cove Youth Bureau and Glen Cove School district Health Education teachers to raise awareness of the need to educate students on the dangers of all tobacco products, reduce youth's exposure to tobacco marketing at their local retailers, and to protect the public from second-hand and drifting smoke outside while they recreate, dine or even on the grounds or doorways of places they frequently go.

On the week of November 14th, students enrolled in SAFE's Elementary and Middle School Life Skills Program facilitated by Ms. Monica Salinas, the Youth Bureau's After 3 program students and Ms. Amanda Sullivan's Middle School Health education students took part in GASO 2022.

This interactive week- long celebration discussed the dangers of tobacco, e-cigarettes and menthol, and highlighted concerns to limit tobacco marketing in local retail establishments and to ban tobacco imagery in the media as smoking is seen in many movies and tv shows as being cool. The following facts were discussed: The average age of initiation of a New Yorker smoker is 13; 64% of kids who shop in a store that shows tobacco starts smoking; Most youths find tobacco advertisements appealing; More than one million dollars is spent daily by big tobacco marketing their products; Between 2002 & 2019, 6 of every 10 PG-13 movies (56%) showed smoking or other tobacco use; Reducing tobacco products that appear in movies would prevent the initiation of tobacco use among young people.

Students received a power point presentation provided by Carol Meschkow- Community Engagement Manager (TAC) that discussed the history of when the first GASO event began, facts, statistics and other resources on tobacco uses in cigarettes and vaping products. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the state e- juice flavor ban includes menthol, however NYS law doesn't restrict the sale of menthol flavored combustable products. The presentation allowed the students to ask questions and comment on the videos presented within the power point. It allowed the students to take the opportunity to remind their friends and families that this day should be their first day towards quitting this deadly habit.

Kahoot!, a game-based learning platform, used as educational technology was also utilized to allow students to play learning games known as "kahoots" around GASO topics to test their knowledge about tobacco and smoking affects/ statistics. "Chalk the Walk" was another activity students' participated in as an opportunity to educate their peers by going outside and chalking a message to their classmates about the dangers of either Menthol or tobacco marketing and imagery. GASO 2022 concluded with class letters to the editor of local papers regarding the addition of Menthol to the state flavor ban. Afterwards, students signed the GASO pledge to stay tobacco free and continue to raise awareness in helping others begin their journey to quit smoking and received GASO 2022 wrist bans provided by SAFE.

SAFE is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned about tobacco use and vaping, seeking to educate and update the community regarding its negative consequences in collaboration with Carol Meschkow, Manager Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on [ww.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit the Vaping Facts and Myths Page of SAFE's website to learn more about how vaping is detrimental to your health [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).