

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Are Nicotine Pouches Safer than Chewing, Smoking or Vaping?**

As e-cigarette use continues to be concerning among teens and adults, another type of flavored nicotine product is increasing in popularity – oral nicotine pouches and lozenges. This new category of "tobacco product" (without tobacco) is gaining particular traction in the youth market due to the wide array of youth-friendly flavors. Although advertising may make it look convenient and appealing, the fact remains that these products deliver varying amounts of the addictive chemical nicotine.

Nicotine pouches are placed between the lip and gum. They do not contain tobacco but do contain nicotine, flavorings, sweeteners and plant-based fibers. You may have seen these products under the brand names of Zyn, On! and Velo in colorful packaging, many looking like mint containers.

Although nicotine levels vary significantly across the spectrum of types, the fact remains that nicotine use during adolescence has been shown to impact learning, attention span and proneness to addiction (American Lung Association 2000). Zyn products, in particular, can deliver as much as 6 milligrams of nicotine per pouch. According to a Nielsen data report, Zyn nicotine pouch dollar sales in convenience stores increased a whopping 470% in the first half of 2020. Since research shows early age nicotine use and pleasurable initial experiences are linked to regular use and even lifetime nicotine dependence, this is a special concern for use in adolescence.

The long-term health impact of nicotine pouches is still unknown. Not technically categorized as smokeless tobacco, these products are not yet regulated as strictly by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as smokeless tobacco products or combustible tobacco are in the United States. Long-term data is yet to come, so we are unsure how reduced exposure may translate into reducing harm to our health. No current regulations exist that prevent or restrict flavored nicotine pouches and marketing restrictions are not as rigid as those on smokeless or combustible tobacco products. Side effects of use can include irritation of the gums, sore mouth, hiccups, nausea and most importantly, nicotine addiction which increases relapse risk with other tobacco products.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not consider nicotine pouches as a safe or effective way to quit due to lack of data to support this premise. Approved nicotine replacement therapies include nicotine patches, gum, lozenges, nasal spray and nicotine inhaler. There is significant evidence suggesting that the most successful attempts to quit include both cognitive behavioral therapy and medications.

The American Lung Association suggested the following help individuals stop smoking:

- Understand nicotine withdrawal – what it looks and feels like for you

- Find ways to physically and mentally deal with urges in a healthy way
- Delay or distract to avoid tobacco use
- Practice mindfulness – don't be on autopilot, but be aware of every time you choose to use
- Use visualization, deep breathing or meditation to focus your energy
- Try a new hobby or activity to keep yourself busy
- Change routines
- Avoid access to tobacco – don't have it around, pay at the pump, avoid high-risk social situations)
- Exercise – it increases endorphins and helps you to stay busy in a healthy way
- Drink plenty of water
- Choose healthy foods

If you or someone you know is struggling with nicotine or tobacco dependence there is help available. To get started:

For help Quitting smoking or vaping or to help a loved beat a Nicotine Addiction please visit the American Lung Association on their Website at: [www.americanlung.org](http://www.americanlung.org).

The New York State Smokers' Quitline assists thousands of New Yorkers every year in their attempts to break free from smoking and other tobacco and the service is free and confidential. Call 1-866-NYQUITS (1-866-697-8487) or visit them at: <https://www.nysmokefree.com/>.for Quit Help.

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).