

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: National “Through with Chew Week” and “Great American Spit Out Day”**

Annually the third week of February is celebrated as “Through with Chew Week,” a campaign that raises awareness of the dangers of using smokeless tobacco i.e., chew, dip, snus and dissolvable tobacco. The aim is to encourage users to quit for the week or just one day. Every year the Thursday of the week is delineated as the “Great American Spit Out” when users are encouraged to quit for that day, or even longer.

The campaign began in 1989 by the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation, Inc. The objective was to provide a public education campaign on spit tobacco, coordinated with dentists, healthcare providers, sports coaches, and teachers. Chew contains at least 28 chemicals that have been found to cause cancer in the mouth, esophagus, and pancreas. Treating oral cancers can involve removal of tissue and bone including the tongue and jaw. Smokeless tobacco can also cause gum disease, tooth decay, tooth loss and the formation of white or gray patches inside the mouth called leukoplakia that can lead to cancer, heart disease, etc. On average, chew products deliver a higher dose of nicotine than cigarettes making the product more habit forming.

The National Institute of Health reports that most adult users of smokeless tobacco products average age of initiation is 13. The Tobacco Companies infuse tobacco products with sweet flavors that attract vulnerable youth to a life- long nicotine addiction and create a new generations of replacement tobacco users. Research has shown that 81% of kids who have ever used a tobacco product started with a flavored product. The Truth Initiative has reported mint-flavored chew is the most popular chew. More than 54% of youth aged 12-17 years old smoke menthol cigarettes. It was reported that 49.8% of high-school students and 42.3% of middle-school students who frequently used smokeless tobacco used flavored products.

Flavors create the impression that these products are less harmful, when they are easier to start and harder to quit. In 2020 the New York State passed a law that prohibited the sale of flavored e-cigarettes; this year the Governor proposed in her 2023 budget to expand that law to address all tobacco products including mentholated. The proposal also includes smokeless tobacco products. Researchers recommend that restrictions on flavored e-cigarettes be expanded to include all device types “to address the continued proliferation of flavors with youth appeal,” and that policies to eliminate menthol should be expanded to include other cooling additives. 280,00 NY Youth are projected to die prematurely from smoking. This is a statistic that should resonate with alarms bells for all health care professionals, alcohol and substance use prevention providers, parents and schools.

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 American Lung Association says the only thing that should go into your lungs is clean air, so if you’re inhaling anything, it could potentially be toxic to your lungs!

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, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. The Coalition is concerned about all combustible and electronic products with marijuana and tobacco. The Agency is employing environmental strategies to educate and update the community regarding the 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 [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](http://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or to learn more about electronic products 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).