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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Vapes: Myths, Fiction and Untold Harms

The International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health reports: 56.3% of vape posts on Instagram in 2016 were marketing ploys, as compared with only 1.3% of traditional cigarette posts. Marketed as a cool, less lethal alternative to cigarettes when they hit the North American market in 2008, e-cigarettes have taken off in an exponential way. By 2020, one in five high schoolers in the United States smoked vapes, which by 2022 equaled 2.5 million people countrywide. One in four smoked every day at that point, and 85% of them smoked flavored products other than unflavored tobacco. The tobacco industry has marketed heavily towards hooking the public on vapes, especially younger people. With so many people inhaling vape fumes and puffing clouds of aerosol, the question begs: What is actually in these products? What are people filling their lungs with? Are they safe? Dangerous? How do they even work? Where did the product originate from?

Experts at Philip Morris maintain some people might know the basic harms of regular combustible cigarettes that use fire at a high temperature, which produces liquid and solid particles suspended in gas, i.e., smoke. On the contrary E-cigarettes heat ingredients at a low temperature, which produces liquid only in gas, without the solid particles (mostly), i.e., an aerosol. E-cigarettes share a similar basic principle and process of heating something to produce pleasant fumes. The first electronic cigarette patent was filed in 1927. The first recognizable e-cigarette prototype came later, following yet another 1965 patent by Herbert A. Gilbert. In the 1990s R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company created the first "heat-not-burn" non-combustible e-cigarette.

Traditional cigarettes contain up to 600 ingredients, which when burned produce a mind-blowing 7,000 ingredients. Many are toxic, and 69 are known carcinogens, including arsenic (rat poison), cadmium (used in car batteries), ammonia (a household cleaner), and tar (in pavement). The Surgeon General says that e-cigarette aerosols still contain solid particles like nickel and lead, or else "ultrafine particles" that should not be inhaled. Additionally, the Surgeon General mentions diacetyl, a chemical response known as "popcorn lung," a condition that causes a narrowing of fine passageways in the lungs. The U.K.'s National Health Service (NHS) says that this is a myth.

The Truth Initiative indicated nicotine as the obvious dangerous chemical and says that the type of e-cigarette (vape pen, vape pod, box mod, etc.) affects how the body receives the drug. Unclear product labels compound this problem, as do black market vaping products. In a survey, the Vape Superstore found that 83.4% of respondents didn't know the health dangers of illegal vapes, and 34.1% didn't know the difference between legal and unregulated products.

Because nicotine is primary the chemical in most e-cigarettes it is marketed that vaping reduces nicotine dependency. According to researchers at Harvard University, dependency reduction is

contingent upon whether someone is already a smoker. For nonsmokers and teens, there is no controversy: don't start smoking and don't vape. This is because not only does nicotine have an extra detrimental effect on developing brains, but e-cigarette usage can encourage cigarette usage later on. For those who understand the escalating nature of drug and alcohol addictions, adult smokers should be aware that the balance of risks and benefits and the long-term health consequences of vaping are uncertain. Nicotine use not only encompasses obvious effects like cancer, but lung disease like emphysema, asthma, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, as well as heart disease, reduced appetite, increased blood pressure, nausea, and more.

There are some organizations who promote E-cigarettes as wellness vaping- are a type of holistic health product, i.e., "nutritional supplement diffusers." Doses of vitamin B12, melatonin, essential oils, companies with names like Inhale Health and Nutriair, proclamations to "fight off tumors," "organic asthma remedy, ADHD remedy, dementia treatment," "helps prevent a type of anemia," "treatment against anxiety and depression:" According to the FDA, these claims are unproven, unsafe, and may prevent or delay someone from seeking an appropriate diagnosis and treatment from a health care professional.

For Quit help the NYS Smoker' provides free and confidential services that include information, tools, quit coaching, and support in both English and Spanish. Services are available by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487), texting (716) 309-4688, or visiting www.nysmokefree.com, for information, to chat online with a Quit Coach, or to sign up for Learn2QuitNY, a six-week, step-by-step text messaging program to build the skills you need to quit any tobacco product. Individuals aged 13 to 24 can text "DropTheVape" to 88709 to receive age-appropriate quit assistance.

Please visit the American Lung Association on their Website at: www.americanlung.org. For help Quitting smoking/vaping or to help a loved one beat a Nicotine Addiction the American Lung Association is committed to helping educate, intervene, and prevent the use of tobacco and nicotine by the next generation. The Lung HelpLine, is available via phone or online and is ready to assist teens between the ages of 13 -17 in quitting tobacco, including vaping. Call 800-LUNGUSA or chat online through their website at Lung.org.

The Coalition and TAC have a history of providing prevention education to youth and adults to limit exposure to the impacts of tobacco marketing and to address the alarming rates of youth vaping. The partners are promoting their new campaign "Live Safe" to support the City of Glen Cove's embrace of a healthy substance free lifestyle while ardently continuing their ongoing efforts of advancing a Tobacco Free City.

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, marijuana use and vaping. The Coalition seeks 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 www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit the Vaping Facts and Myths Page, Youth Tobacco

Use and Underage Marijuana Use pages of SAFE's website to learn more about how smoking/vaping is detrimental to your health at www.safeglencove.org