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CONTACT: Dr. Sharon Harris 516- 676-2008

safeglencove@yahoo.com

SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: The Truth About the Concentration of Nicotine in E-Cigarettes

A study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine reveals that total nicotine content in U.S. e-cigarette sales has increased by nearly 250% since 2020, with the sharpest increases found in disposable e-cigarettes. These products are not only highly popular among youth, based on findings in other research, but now contain significantly more nicotine at a lower cost. The latest study, conducted by the CDC Foundation and Truth Initiative highlights the growing public health threat posed by today's evolving e-cigarette market.

From February 2020 to June 2024, while the number of e-cigarette units sold each month rose by just 34.7%, the total monthly nicotine content sold soared by 249.2%. This massive increase is largely driven by disposable devices which have gotten bigger and cheaper, delivering more nicotine at price points more accessible to young people. As found in other research, many of these products now deliver nicotine levels equivalent to a full carton of cigarettes in a single device. Higher levels of nicotine in these products are also associated with higher dependence, as stronger chemical hits lead to stronger withdrawals, putting young users at high risk of future nicotine addiction.

Researchers maintain measurements that consider both e-liquid volume and nicotine concentration paint a more realistic picture of the size and strength of e-cigarettes being sold in stores and measuring e-cigarette sales in milligrams of nicotine, rather than just counting products, is critical to understanding the public health impact.

Key Findings of the study:

- Bigger devices, cheaper nicotine: The nicotine content in disposable e-cigarettes jumped by 2,364.5%, while cartridge-based devices increased by just 1.3%. By mid-2024, disposables contained nine times more e-liquid than cartridge-based devices and were nearly four times cheaper per milligram of nicotine.
- Disposables dominate: Disposable e-cigarettes, favored by youth, accounted for 74% of nicotine content sold and 58% of units sold by mid-2024.
- Flavored products remain widespread: In 2023, nearly 90% of nicotine sold came from non-tobacco flavored products, which, based on other research, remain a key driver of youth use.

A disposable e-cigarette today contains significantly more nicotine than it did just a few years ago, posing greater addiction risks—especially for young users. These findings raise serious concerns about youth access and affordability because disposables are not only the most popular e-

cigarette product among youth, but they're also the cheapest way to obtain large amounts of nicotine and they come in appealing flavors.

These findings build on prior research published in Tobacco Control which first sounded the alarm on e-cigarette products increasing in size and strength while simultaneously decreasing in cost. Understanding how much nicotine is being sold provides a clearer picture of potential public health impact and can help inform stronger policy and public health strategies to address the risks associated with increasingly potent and cheap nicotine products, particularly among young people.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned with all combustible and electronic products with tobacco. The Agency employs environmental strategies to educate and update the community regarding the negative consequences of smoking and vaping. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or to learn more about electronic products visit the Youth and Tobacco Use and Vaping Facts and Myths Pages of SAFE's website to learn more about how vaping is detrimental to your health at www.safeglencove.org.

The Truth Initiative is the nation's largest nonprofit public health organization dedicated to preventing youth and young adult nicotine addiction and empowering quitting. Research is conducted through the Truth Initiative Schroeder Institute that produces independent research to provide evidence for policy change and leadership in cessation research. For more information, please visit www.truthinitiative.org.