

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Take Down Tobacco Day Formerly Kick Butts Day 2026

For 35 years, the United States activists for Take Down Tobacco Day, also known as Kick Butts Day has continued to use their efforts of *“empowering individuals to stand up and speak out against the tobacco industry.”* This is a nationwide youth-driven day of advocacy to stand up to Big Tobacco, expose how the industry targets kids, and call for policy change and to raise awareness, protect youth from nicotine addiction, and hold the tobacco industry accountable.

Students enrolled in SAFE’s Life Skills Training (LST) program participated in the event. LST is an evidence-based prevention program offered via the Glen Cove Youth Bureau’s After 3 Program that is developmentally designed to promote mental health, positive youth development, alcohol, drug and tobacco use resistance skills.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), scientific evidence shows that tobacco company advertising and promotion influences young people to start using tobacco as youth often find the ads appealing which can increase their desire to smoke.

A 2025 report from The Truth Initiative maintains that youth are especially affected by tobacco marketing, advertising and promotional efforts by tobacco companies influence the initiation and progression of tobacco use. Studies show that tobacco use is associated with both exposure to retail advertising and relatively easy in-store access to tobacco products. Frequent exposure to tobacco product advertising and retail marketing over time normalizes tobacco and smoking for youth and makes them more likely to smoke. In fact, Truth Initiative researchers say youth who are more frequently exposed to point-of-sale tobacco promotion have 1.6 times higher odds of having tried smoking and around 1.3 times higher odds of being susceptible to future smoking, compared to those exposed less frequently. Exposure and attention to the retail store tobacco sales wall, the area behind the cash register where tobacco advertising is concentrated and tobacco products are displayed is associated with future smoking susceptibility.

Facilitated by Ms. Monica Salinas and Supervised by Mr. Spiro Tsirkas, Executive Director of the Glen Cove Youth Bureau, a variety of facts and statistics regarding the issues within the big tobacco

industries was discussed and youth were encouraged to utilize their various educational venues to learn about the disheartening tactics that these companies do to lure children into buying their products, as well as profiting off of adult's addictions -regardless of the known issues smoking causes. As part of the activity, students created mock social media posts promoting healthy eating habits and positive alternatives to smoking, highlighting creative ways to make healthier lifestyle choices.

"We are very thankful and grateful for our partnership with SAFE. The students are truly interested in the topics discussed. LST Coordinator Monica Salinas does a great job keeping the students engaged by taking serious subject matter and making it fun for the students. Life Skills Training has been a big part of our program for over 15 years" said Mr. Tsirkas.

In 2023, the Coalition's Community Committee embarked on an effort to draft and propose a new law restricting incoming retail stores that sell tobacco and other drug paraphernalia to B2 District areas as strong and effective laws and regulations were needed to protect youth from deadly addiction by reducing access to tobacco, vaping products and other harmful substances. With the assistance of the City Attorney, Tip Henderson, that effort came to successful fruition at the City Council meeting whereby the proposed law was passed unanimously.

Keep aware, stay informed and avoid unhealthy behaviors. "Live SAFE!". The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition works diligently to protect youth and inform parents through prevention education to avoid the negative consequence of nicotine addiction.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. The 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.

