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### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: The Truth About Tobacco Marketing and In-Store Promotion**

According to a recent report from The Truth Initiative, the tobacco industry spends a great deal of money promoting its products at the point-of-sale through displays and advertisements. In 2014, the tobacco industry spent over \$270 million dollars on this strategy.

Tobacco companies provide retailers with incentives for advertising their products, and many retailers take advantage of these incentives. Most retail stores participate in at least one cigarette company incentive program and nearly four out of five participating retailers report that the tobacco company supervises the location of marketing materials in their stores. Studies found that 96% of stores that sold cigarettes, including gas stations, convenience stores, and tobacco shops, had at least one tobacco marketing item, with an average of 29.5 items per store. These marketing items included branded signs, displays, shelving units, and functional items such as doormats.

The tobacco power wall, the area behind the cash register where tobacco advertising is concentrated and tobacco products are displayed, is invaluable for the industry in marketing its products in the retail environment. A study using mobile eye-tracking technology found that 72% of retail customers, regardless of smoking status, fixated on the power wall at some point during the time of selecting a candy bar to cashing out. Additionally, in the post survey, 96% of study participants indicated they noticed a cigarette brand, and 64% were able to describe a specific part of the tobacco wall or recall a promotional offer.

Youth are frequently exposed to tobacco product in-store promotion. Stores where adolescents shop frequently have been found to have more cigarette marketing than other stores in the same community. Studies show that youth are more likely to progress from never smoking to experimental smoking as the frequency of point-of-sale tobacco product advertising and promotion increases. Frequency of walking to school and stopping at tobacco-selling retailers, mostly gas stations and convenience stores, is strongly associated with current use of cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and cigars among youth, likely due to increased exposure to marketing both on the exterior and in retail stores.

The convenience store environment, where 70% of youth shop at least once a week, heavily promotes tobacco products. Convenience stores have more tobacco marketing and sell more cigarettes than any other type of retail store. Cigarette sales account for one-third of all purchases at convenience stores. About 92% of convenience stores have at least one tobacco branded

advertisement or display and most of the youth in the U.S. describe seeing tobacco product advertising and promotion all or most of the time when they visit convenience stores.

Tobacco industry marketing differentially appeals to people with the lowest income and education through point-of-sale advertising. There is more in-store tobacco advertising in predominantly racially diverse and low-income neighborhoods. The marketing of smokeless tobacco products is greater in rural neighborhoods and neighborhoods with more White residents. In California, for each 10 percentage point increase in the proportion of Black high school students, the proportion of menthol advertising in the neighborhood increased by 5.9 percentage points and the odds of a Newport promotion were 50% higher. This may account for the extraordinarily higher proportion of Black smokers who use menthol cigarettes as nearly 9 in 10 Black smokers (88.5%) ages 12 years and older use menthol cigarettes.

Researchers at The Truth Initiative say restricting the promotion of tobacco products at the point-of-sale would benefit public health. A recent modelling study suggests that restricting tobacco product displays and advertisements in the retail environment in the U.S. would reduce smoking prevalence by approximately 16% by the year 2065, thus preventing about 630,000 smoking-attributable deaths, 215,000 low birth weight births, 140,000 preterm births, and 1,900 infant deaths from SIDS.

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](https://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](http://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](http://www.truthinitiative.org).