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Tobacco Free Partnership of Sarasota County wants you to know the facts in the fight against tobacco

SARASOTA - In honor of World No Tobacco Day on May 31, Sarasota County's Tobacco Free Partnership is commemorating the important progress made in the fight against tobacco while also shedding light on the latest facts released this year about tobacco use and its deadly consequences.

“In observance of World No Tobacco Day, the Tobacco Free Partnership and Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) are extending thanks to local decision-makers who have helped support policy changes aimed at preventing youth initiation of tobacco use,” said Jeanette Robinson, tobacco program manager with the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County. “Sarasota County has resolutions urging against the sale of flavored tobacco products passed by Sarasota County Commission; the cities of Sarasota, Venice and North Port; and Town of Longboat Key. These resolutions help protect our youth from tobacco products produced in flavors, such as cherry and grape, which are often considered starter products due to their appealing packaging, low cost and flavoring designed to mask the harsh flavor of tobacco.”

Every year on May 31, the World Health Organization (WHO) and tobacco control advocates around the globe mark World No Tobacco Day, highlighting the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocating for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Surgeon General released a report highlighting 50 years of progress in tobacco control since the first report on smoking and health was published in 1964. Despite this progress, tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease. The new report also added several health effects to the long list of cigarette smoking's serious consequences. The report concluded that smoking causes liver and colorectal cancer, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, erectile dysfunction, ectopic pregnancies, impaired fertility, cleft lip and cleft palates in babies of women who smoke during early pregnancy, age-related macular degeneration, and immune system weakness.



Click the image to find out more about SWAT and its effort to educate youth on the dangers of tobacco use.

“Tobacco is exacting a tremendous toll on our society, yet, I am encouraged by the progress made throughout the state and in Sarasota County,” said Tobacco Free Florida bureau chief Shannon Hughes. “An estimated 8 million American lives were potentially saved since the publication of that first surgeon general’s report in 1964. Today in Florida, we are implementing a nationally renowned program — Tobacco Free Florida — that is saving lives and saving the state millions of dollars.”

Tobacco Free Florida is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida’s tobacco settlement fund. Tobacco Free Florida is managed by the Florida Department of Health, specifically the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida.

For more information about resources to quit smoking or smokeless tobacco use, visit <http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/> or follow the campaign on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or Twitter at www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla. Residents can also call the Florida Quitline at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW to speak with a Quit Coach.

For details about the Tobacco Free Partnership of Sarasota County, which includes community members as well as SWAT youth, call 941-861-2805 or visit <http://www.sarasotahealth.org/tobacco/partnership.htm>.

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