

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH

January 16, 2019

Dear Esteemed Members of the Village Board of Trustees:

The Advisory Council on Youth wholeheartedly supports the Village's efforts to restrict the sale of ENDS (electronic nicotine delivery systems) to the fullest extent allowed by law.

After decades of effort, our nation has finally realized the harms of cigarette smoking and has seen a decline in smoking rates. In the early 1960's, roughly 42% of U.S. adults smoked. In 2018, the rate was 14%. Nevertheless, according to the Department of Health and Human Services, cigarette smoking still accounts for more than 480,000 deaths per year.

As most cigarette smokers are brand-loyal, tobacco companies realized that their best method of increasing sales had been to attract new smokers. Previous campaigns such as using cartoon characters (i.e. Joe Camel) or promoting sporting events (i.e. Virginia Slims) were likely aimed at children.

Similarly, Juul and other ENDS companies claim to produce a product aimed at helping adult cigarette smokers to quit. But the sale of flavors such as fruit, mango, creme brulee, mint and cucumber are likely geared toward children. Currently, restrictions are finally being put in place regarding certain, but not all, flavors. Nevertheless, for the week ending June 16, 2018, Juul's 52 week sales were \$942.6 million, according to a Wells Fargo analysis of Nielsen data. Much of that profit is from sales to minors.

According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse, in the past month 9.5% of 8th graders and 16.2% of 12th graders used e-cigarettes. Within six months of starting to use these products, 30.7% of teens are likely to start smoking cigarettes which are known to cause disease and premature death. Even for the ones who don't, many are likely to continue vaping as nicotine is one of the quickest and most addictive substances known. More than half of middle and high schoolers who use only e-cigarettes show at least one sign of nicotine addiction. In addition to the harms of nicotine, we are only beginning to learn of the potential harm to the brain and lungs of other chemicals inhaled from nicotine-containing vape pods. Furthermore, many youth are using e-cigarettes to vape marijuana, methamphetamine and other illicit drugs. A new report in the New England Journal of Medicine suggests that e-cigarettes serve as "gateway drugs," just as tobacco, alcohol and marijuana do. Studies indicate that use of nicotine can prepare smokers to graduate on to the use of harsher, more addictive drugs like cocaine.

With three pediatricians on our council, we hear countless stories of middle and high schoolers who will not use the bathroom all day at school because "they are just filled with kids vaping." In addition to the educational programs which are taking place in our schools, every effort to make dangerous products unavailable to children should be undertaken. The Village should pursue the strongest possible restrictions on ENDS products. These should not only include limiting their sales altogether, but strict enforcement and severe penalties for those found selling restricted products to youth.

In addition, because limiting sales in Scarsdale may for many youth provide merely an inconvenience, we urge the Board to appeal to neighboring towns to enact similar laws so our children do not merely walk a few blocks over the border to buy ENDS. And we urge the Board to appeal to New York State government representatives to pass stronger legislation at the State level ensuring we are not spending the next twenty-five years figuring out how to cure the nicotine addiction of a whole new generation.

Thank you for your foresight in protecting our community's youth.

Respectfully,

Scarsdale Advisory Council on Youth:

Jordan Copeland, Chair

Scott Altabet, L.C.S.W.

Scott Bookner, M.D.

Lynn Marvin

Deborah V. Tesler, M.D

Robin Schiff, M.D.

Priya Taori

