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TOBACCO FREE FLORIDA IN BROWARD COUNTY CALLS FOR UPDATES TO TOBACCO FREE SCHOOL POLICIES

Contact:

Paige Patterson-Hughes

Public Information Officer

Paige.Patterson-Hughes@FLhealth.gov

Fort Lauderdale, Fla. – Tobacco Free Florida in Broward County is working with the local school board to review its tobacco policy to ensure all students, faculty, staff, and visitors are protected from exposure to tobacco, including new and emerging products. The program is actively collaborating with Broward County Public School board and have made strides in identifying and supporting the benefits of a comprehensive tobacco free school policy and hopes to raise awareness of free and effective tobacco cessation and prevention resources available to schools. With the introduction and widespread popularity among youth of new nicotine delivery products such as electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), these policies must be kept up to date to protect the health and wellness of the area’s children and teens frequent.

After reviewing the local tobacco free school policies, Broward County Public Schools is continuing to set a strong example for school-based tobacco prevention.

The current tobacco policy of Broward County Public Schools includes the following provisions:

- Purpose Statement/Rationale of a tobacco-free school environment
- Key Terms, such as “Tobacco” and/or “Tobacco Use” are clearly defined
- Definitions that cover all tobacco/nicotine use
- Promotion of tobacco products is prohibited
- Required Policy communication and dissemination
- Required tobacco prevention education courses
- Narrow exception is included for the allowance of limited use of FDA-Approved cessation products
- Opportunities for cessation access provided to students
- Staff and Visitor Enforcement addressed and clearly defined

Local organizations, including Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) and other community-based groups are available in every county to help school districts review tobacco free school policies to ensure alignment with current best practices and support implementation efforts for maximum effectiveness. These include working to prioritize protecting people from secondhand smoke/vapor exposure, counteracting influence from the industry, increasing access to cessation resources, and allowing for a supportive, cessation-focused approach to discipline. Tobacco Free Florida is dedicated to keeping these standards for comprehensive tobacco free school policies up to date, helping address threats to today’s school-aged children.

Across the state, Florida Department of Health’s Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida provides free tools and services for Floridians 18 years of age or older who are considering quitting. The Quit Your Way

program offers Phone Quit and Web Quit options. Group Quit classes are also available for every county in Florida in-person or virtually and all tools and services provide free nicotine replacement therapy such as patches, gum, and lozenges where medically appropriate. Services can also be accessed by calling the toll-free number 1-877-U-CAN-NOW (1-877-822-6669) at any time.

For more information on how you can help prevent youth from using tobacco and e-cigarettes in your schools, contact the Florida Department of Health in Broward County's Tobacco Prevention Program, at 954-467-4700 or TobaccoPrevention.DOHBroward@flhealth.gov.

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About Tobacco Free Florida

The Florida Department of Health's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since the program began in 2007, more than 295,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. There are now approximately 451,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida than there were 10 years ago, and the state has saved \$17.7 billion in health care costs. To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit TobaccoFreeFlorida.com or follow the campaign on Facebook at Facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or X at x.com/tobaccofreefla.