

February 17, 2016

## **Smokeless Tobacco Use Remains High** *Tobacco Free Seminole and Tobacco Free Florida are raising awareness during “Through with Chew Week”*

**Contact:** Tiffani McDaniel  
Media Desk: 407-665-3374 and 321-200-7805



**Sanford, Fla.** – Tobacco Free Seminole and the Florida Department of Health’s Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida are raising awareness about the dangers of smokeless tobacco, like chew and dip, during “Through With Chew Week.” This public awareness campaign was created to reduce the use of smokeless tobacco among young people and help combat this deadly addiction. “Through With Chew Week” takes place February 14-20, 2016.

To raise awareness about the dangers of smokeless tobacco use, Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) from Lake Howell High School (4200 Dike Rd, Winter Park, FL 32792) is hosting the consciousness week at their school in Seminole County. “Through With Chew Week” will be celebrated with posters and morning announcements created by SWAT on February 15-20, 2016.

Although youth cigarette smoking rates in Florida are at an all-time low, 5.3 percent of high school students in Seminole County reported current use of smokeless tobacco products in 2014, according to the Florida Youth Tobacco Survey.

“Smokeless tobacco products contain harmful chemicals that are known to cause cancer,” said Dr. Swannie Jett, Health Officer for DOH-Seminole. “Youth who use smokeless products are more likely to experiment with other types of tobacco. Studies have shown that adolescent boys who use smokeless tobacco have a higher risk of becoming cigarette smokers.”

At least 28 cancer-causing chemicals have been identified in smokeless tobacco. Smokeless tobacco users have an 80 percent higher risk of oral cancer and a 60 percent higher risk of esophageal cancer and pancreatic cancer compared to non-users.

Currently, there is no scientific or medical evidence that proves smokeless tobacco use is an effective method to help people quit smoking. Floridians who want to quit any form of tobacco have access to free and proven-effective resources.

- **CALL:** Call Tobacco Free Florida at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW to speak with a Quit Coach® who will help you assess your addiction and help you create a personalized quit plan.
- **CLICK:** Tobacco Free Florida’s online cessation tool can be accessed at [tobaccofreeflorida.com/webcoach](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/webcoach).
- **COME IN:** In person help is available with the help of Area Health Education Centers by calling 1-877-252-6094 or visiting <http://www.ahectobacco.com/>

For more information, please visit [www.tobaccofreeflorida.com](http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com).

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Florida Department of Health in Seminole County  
Dr. Swannie Jett, DrPH., MSc, Health Officer  
400 West Airport Boulevard, Sanford, Florida 32773  
PHONE: 407- 665-3000