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# A Closer Look

# STTAC



**SOUTHERN TIER TOBACCO  
AWARENESS COALITION**

**Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben Counties**

**REALITY CHECK**

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*The Southern Tier Tobacco Awareness Coalition (STTAC) seeks to build  
healthier communities through tobacco-free living in  
Chemung, Schuyler, & Steuben, NY.*



## ***Erie County Passes Legislation to Protect Constituents from Tobacco and Secondhand Smoke***



Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz signed the Public Health Protection Act of 2018 Friday, December 28th at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.

The public health measure, which was approved unanimously by the legislature earlier this month , makes it illegal to:

1. Smoke in a vehicle with anyone under 18-years-old present.
2. Bans the sale of tobacco or nicotine-containing products in pharmacies and other healthcare institutions.
3. Bans smoking in or adjacent to NFTA bus shelters and public areas near them.

“As elected officials we are charged with protecting the health and safety of the public we serve, and the Public Health Protection Act is evidence of the seriousness with which we accept that responsibility. While the dangers of tobacco use have long been known, this Act takes protections against tobacco’s deleterious health effects to the next level, curtailing the usage and sale of tobacco products and e-cigarettes to protect children and non-smokers in public places,” said Poloncarz. “It is indisputable that tobacco use exacts a heavy toll on public health every year. I called for a prohibition on tobacco sales in Erie County pharmacies in my 2016 State of the County address and today I thank Chairman Savage, Legislator Mills, and former

legislator Burke for sponsoring this Act and the members of the legislature for moving this legislation forward. Together we are working to protect the health of Erie County residents today and in the future.”

Those smoking in vehicles with children present and smoking in or adjacent to NFTA bus shelters will be given warnings for the first 90 days, following the grace period violators can expect to be fined.

The first offense will be up to a \$50 fine, second offense up to a \$100 fine, third offense up to \$150 fine.

Pharmacies and healthcare institutions that sell tobacco or nicotine-containing products will face a civil penalty between \$300-\$1,000 for a first offense and \$500-\$2,000 for any subsequent violation.

Source: <https://www.wkbw.com/news/local-news/smoking-with-children-in-your-car-is-now-illegal-in-erie-county>

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## ***Altria-Juul Deal Is An Alarming Development For Public Health***



With a \$12.8 billion investment, Altria, the nation's leading tobacco company, now owns 35% of Juul Labs, maker of the country's most popular e-cigarette.

With the new investment, Juul is now valued at \$38 billion, according to [Altria's announcement](#). The company will remain independent, though it will now have access to Altria's "infrastructure and services," as well as retail space alongside its combustible cigarettes, direct marketing to cigarette customers through pack inserts and mailings and access to Altria's sales network.

The announcement that Altria is buying a stake in Juul is a truly alarming development for public health and brings together the two companies that have been the most successful in marketing their highly addictive products to kids.

The deal has raised eyebrows given Juul's long-stated mission of giving adult smokers a healthier alternative to cigarettes. (E-cigarettes typically deliver nicotine but contain fewer cancer-causing chemicals than traditional cigarettes. It's still unclear exactly how they affect health.) Both companies claim that, despite the investment's seemingly contradictory nature, it will help, not hinder, efforts to switch smokers. But Dr. Harold Farber, a pediatric pulmonologist at Texas Children's

Hospital and a member of the American Thoracic Society, says he is “amazingly worried” about what the partnership will mean for already record-high teen vaping rates. Pairing a company with billions of dollars and decades of experience in marketing with a lucrative startup already beloved by teens could get even more kids hooked on nicotine, Farber says.

“I’ve got a product that’s addicting a new generation of young people to nicotine and now I’ve got a company with the promotion, both dollars and experience, to throw behind getting this even more out there and even more popular,” Farber says. “To ask these companies to voluntarily not market to young people is essentially asking the fox to go out of the hen house.”

This deal also creates a political behemoth that is likely to increase the already huge sums these companies spend to fight regulatory and legislative efforts to discourage use of their products.

The Altria-Juul deal shows how far the tobacco industry will go to maximize profits and sell as many products as possible, including cigarettes. The FDA and other policymakers must be equally aggressive in working to reduce tobacco use and save lives. This deal underscores the urgent need for effective regulation of e-cigarettes and all tobacco products to stop tobacco companies from reversing decades of progress and addicting another generation of kids. To learn more about how you can protect local youth, contact us at (607)737-2858 or [sarahrobbins@chemungcountyny.gov](mailto:sarahrobbins@chemungcountyny.gov).

#### Sources

<sup>1</sup> [www.tobaccofreekids.org/press-releases/2018\\_12\\_20\\_altria\\_juul](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/press-releases/2018_12_20_altria_juul)

<sup>2</sup> <http://time.com/5485247/juul-altria-investment/>

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## ***Tobacco-Free New Years Resolution***



As 2018 comes to an end, many people are looking ahead to set resolutions for the New Year. What better way to improve your life than to set a tobacco-free goal? As soon as you quit, your body begins to heal itself from damage caused by smoking. Within 20 minutes the heart rate drops to a normal level, within 12 hours the carbon monoxide level in the blood drops, and within just two to three weeks the risk of having a heart attack drops.

Although quitting can be a challenge, kicking the habit for good is definitely possible. Businesses and housing complexes can also set tobacco-free goals that make it easier to quit smoking. Actions such as restricting tobacco marketing, establishing tobacco-free outdoor spaces, and adopting smoke-free housing policies are beneficial for the whole community. These policies are important because they reduce exposure to tobacco products, which reduces the temptation to pick up tobacco again. Tobacco-free policies also improve health by reducing exposure to the thousands of chemicals in secondhand smoke. Finally, these policies protect youth so that they are less likely to start using in the first place.

If you would like to set a tobacco-free goal for your business or housing complex, resources are available. The Southern Tier Tobacco Awareness Coalition (STTAC) is a local organization that provides free resources for implementing tobacco-free policies. Contact STTAC at (607)737-2858 to

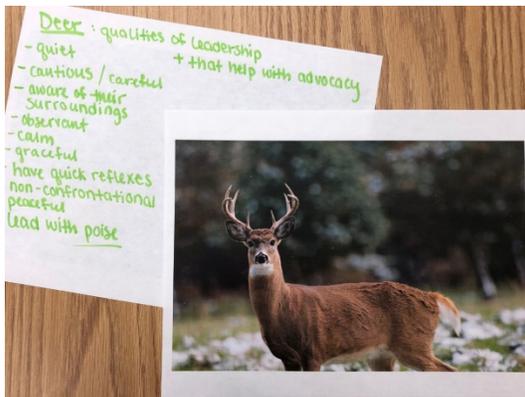
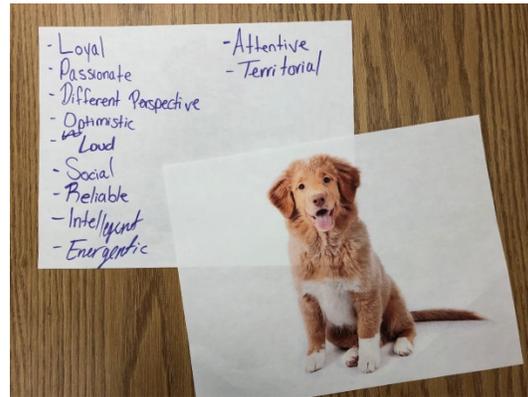
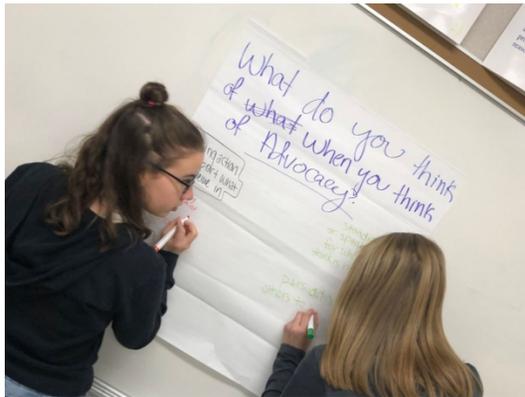
accomplish your tobacco-free goal and to make it easier for others to reach theirs.

Sources:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/i-want-to-quit/benefits-of-quitting.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://tobaccopolicycenter.org/tobacco-control/>

## ***Reality Check Youth Practice Leadership and Activism***



Reality Check meetings for the last few months have been focused on skill building in advocacy and leadership through a variety of activities. The youth at all three schools brainstormed what it means to be an advocate and what their leadership styles are. Reality Check finished up the 2018 season by sending Christmas cards to district legislators. Happy New Year from all of us with Reality Check of Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben!

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***WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH:***

January 8th - Corning Painted Post PTA presentation

January 15th - EHS Health Class presentations on e-cigarettes

January 16th - EHS Health Class presentations on e-cigarettes

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***STTAC IN THE NEWS***



Here in New York State, tobacco companies spend more than a half a million dollars every day to place promotions in stores where kids can see them. And the more they see, the more likely they are to start smoking.

**TAKE ACTION: CLICK HERE TO SIGN THE PETITION**

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