

For Immediate Release:
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Contact: Manhasset CASA
Cathy Samuels 267-7548



Manhasset CASA and Manhasset Public Schools Continue its Work to Reduce Youth Tobacco Use

Manhasset CASA was recognized on behalf of the Manhasset School District for their youth tobacco use prevention efforts by Tobacco-Free Healthy Schools Project at a May 7 breakfast sponsored by Western Suffolk BOCES. Keynote speaker Nassau D.A. Rice expressed her appreciation for schools and their impact on prevention.

Over 100 educators, health agency and government representatives in attendance celebrated Manhasset's work to create a tobacco free environment for youth, staff and the entire school community.

District Attorney Rice said, "Our children spend half of their day in school. It is the hub of their academic and social lives and it must have a strictly-enforced tobacco-free policy. School is where peer pressure is felt most intently and can do the most damage, so it is imperative that we educate them on the dangers of tobacco and set a proper example for them to follow."

Manhasset Secondary School is one of Long Island's 65 secondary schools that participate in Western Suffolk BOCES' Tobacco-Free Healthy Schools Project. These schools are provided free technical assistance and tools to develop and implement strong tobacco policies. The Project is part of the New York State Department of Health Tobacco Control Program's statewide efforts that contributed to a significant reduction in high school students' tobacco use from 40% in 2000 to 13.8% in 2006.

Collaborating with Manhasset CASA, Manhasset Public Schools adopted a Comprehensive Tobacco-Free School Policy in 2009. Superintendent Charles Cardillo said, "Our district is committed to supporting the health and wellness of our students and with Manhasset CASA, we will continue to work together to reduce youth tobacco use, prevent initiation and eliminate exposure to second hand smoke."

By law, all students learn about tobacco in their classrooms, and all schools don't allow tobacco to be used on school grounds. But, studies have shown that a school with a formal written policy that is regularly and strongly enforced report lower rates of smoking among adolescents. Also, compliance with policies is increased when the ban applies to everyone, not just students.

Cathy Samuels, Manhasset CASA, Project Director is acting on behalf of the Manhasset Public Schools as liaison for the project. For more information about the Tobacco Free Healthy Schools Project or Manhasset CASA, call (516) 267-7548.



Nassau County Commissioner of Health congratulates Manhasset CASA on behalf of Manhasset Public Schools for its work to reduce youth tobacco use.

Left to Right: Dr. Maria Carney, Nassau County Commissioner of Health; Cathy Samuels, Manhasset CASA Project Director; Gail Volk, Nassau County Coordinator Tobacco-Free Schools, Western Suffolk BOCES