



HOOKAH: Threat to Public Health

Hookah: Public Health Threat!

**Mary Martinasek, PhD, MPH,
CHES**

Hookah tobacco smoking, which involves smoking tobacco from a waterpipe, has been around for several centuries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. With the advent of maassel, a flavored tobacco, hookah smoking has spread from the Middle East to the U.S.

Data from the U.S. show that hookah smoking is not a waning fad. In fact, the number of current college smokers (15%) remains consistent since 2005, as does the number of college students who have ever tried hookah smoking (40%). Hookah bars typically populate college cities where college students find the atmosphere relaxing and smoking hookah, an affordable means of entertainment. Although hookah contains tobacco, many students are unaware of the toxic ingredients and are under the misperception that they are smoking flavored molasses. Additionally, students perceive hookah smoking as being a safe alternative to cigarette smoking and they believe that the smoke is filtered through the water.

Research has shown that the hookah smoking is addictive, does contain similar carcinogens as cigarette smoke and is an avenue for the transmission of infectious diseases such as oral herpes, tuberculosis, and mononucleosis. Unlike cigarettes, hookah smoking contains arsenic, cobalt and other heavy metals due to the burning charcoal. The charcoal also creates carbon monoxide which binds to hemoglobin, thereby depriving the body of oxygen. Several studies have found carboxy-

-hemoglobin levels at dangerous levels in patrons who have smoked hookah. Educational awareness and behavior change strategies, along with policy are needed to curb this public health threat.

Dr. Mary Martinasek was the guest speaker for the July TFPH meeting. She is currently a guest faculty at the University of Tampa and faculty at the University of South Florida. She specializes in social marketing, mixed method research inquiry and health program evaluation. Her research interests include the use of texting for smoking cessation in college students, waterpipe tobacco (hookah) smoking and the use of social media and technology for teen asthma control.

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“The truth that makes humanity free is for the most part the truth that humanity prefer not to hear” - Herbert Agar

Answer to Big Tobacco's consumer complaint of nicotine levels burning tender young mouths: Lower nicotine—create a 'starter' product.

~ Internal Memo Regarding the Lotus Project conducted by a major tobacco company



Students Working Against Tobacco

SWAT Activities

Candy Flavored Tobacco Resolution: A Reality in Hillsborough County



On August 3rd, 2011, Hillsborough County SWAT youth presented their local candy-flavored tobacco research findings to the Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners. SWAT board members made the presentation with the hopes that the board would adopt a county-wide flavored tobacco resolution aimed at encouraging retailers to make efforts at reducing the sale of flavored tobacco products to youth.



After the presentation, Maria Ayala (SWAT parliamentarian) and Andre Martins (SWAT Historian) fielded questions from the commissioners. Comments from the county commissioners included gratefulness, praise and admiration to the SWAT youth for such a thorough briefing on such a worthy cause. After a brief discussion, the board voted unanimously to adopt the resolution and thus the Candy-Flavored Tobacco resolution became a reality in Hillsborough County.



Hillsborough County commissioners mark the historic occasion in a photo with SWAT youth and TFPH members.

What is SWAT? ~Defending a Generation~



Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) is Florida's statewide youth organization working to mobilize, educate and equip Florida youth to revolt against and de-glamorize Big Tobacco. SWAT is a united movement of empowered youth working towards a tobacco free future. SWAT empowers Florida youth to educate their peers about the manipulative tactics of Big Tobacco so that together we can take a stand and make a change for the next generation.



Tobacco Prevention

Meet the New Tobacco-Free Partnership Staff



We welcome the new personnel to the TFPH staff:

- **Elizabeth Verdejo—SWAT Coordinator.** Elizabeth comes to the partnership with years of experience as an educator and is excited about working with the middle and high school youth on SWAT initiatives. Elizabeth can be reached at 813-367-5535 or everdejohcada@gmail.com
- **Gary White—Tobacco Prevention Community Coordinator.** Gary comes to the partnership with years of military nursing and public health experience & is excited about working with various community entities while advancing the goals of the partnership. Gary can be reached at 813-367-5504 or gwhitehcada@gmail.com.

Local SWAT Youth: State SWAT Representative

Two members of the new Hillsborough County SWAT Board attended a SWAT Regional Training held in Sebring, on August 27, 2011. The training was hosted by the Florida Bureau of Tobacco Prevention Program and facilitated by the State SWAT Youth Advocacy Board.

Our very own Hillsborough County SWAT Parliamentarian, Maria Ayala, was elected to the state SWAT Youth Advocacy Board. Congratulations to Maria!!

All who attended were invigorated and further equipped to carry on with the important anti-tobacco messages to their peers, schools, and communities.

Maria Ayala-Newsome High School, one of the newest members of the State SWAT Youth Advocacy Board.



- 88 people die from tobacco in Florida every day.
- 1 out of 3 smokers begin smoking before the age of 14.
- 90% of smokers start smoking before the age of 18.
- 100% of surveyed retail outlets in Hillsborough County sell at least 1 form of Flavored Tobacco products.
- 20.4% or nearly 20,000 middle and high school students in Hillsborough County have ever used flavored tobacco.





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Tobacco Free Partnership, Hillsborough

is a productive tobacco task force. TFPH provides leadership on community issues related to tobacco including prevention, cessation, second hand smoke, advocacy, and Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT). We invite you to join TFPH and assist in improving the health of Hillsborough County residents and all Floridians.

TFPH meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month, 3:30PM.

University of Tampa
Vaughn Center, Room 201
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For more information, visit our website: www.hcada.com

Community Tobacco Cessation Resources

- USF AHEC - 813-974-3507 <http://health.usf.edu/ahec/tobacco/index.htm>
- Gulfcoast North AHEC - 813-929-1000 <http://www.gnahec.org/html/tobacco.htm>
- University Community Hospital - Class registration: 1 (877) 482-4362 Program information: (813) 903-3741
- St. Joseph's / South Florida Baptist Hospital Baycare System - (813) 870-4747
- Moffitt Cancer Center's Tobacco Research and Intervention Program - (813) 745-1751
- American Lung Association - 1 (800) LUNG USA
- Hillsborough County BOCC Program - (813) 301-7050
- James A. Haley Veteran's Hospital - (813) 972-6216 (for Veteran's only)
- H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute - 813) 745-4630 (for Moffitt patients only)
- Florida Quit-for-Life Line 1 (877) 822-6669 www.floridaquitline.com

