

# Press Release

For Immediate Release

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## ***Keep Butts Away From Where We Play!***

**ALBANY, N.Y. (June 16, 2011)** - Today, Community Partnerships for a Tobacco Free New York launched a campaign to educate New Yorkers about the benefits of tobacco free outdoor recreational areas. The campaign raises awareness of the environmental impact of tobacco litter, dangers of secondhand smoke and influence on children when tobacco use is not restricted.

Tobacco litter is poisonous to children and wildlife. Discarded cigarette butts are the most common form of litter. Studies show they are toxic, slow to decompose, and costly to remove. Cigarette butts have been found in the stomachs of fish, whales, birds and other marine animals and can cause digestive blockages. Children routinely pick up these toxic butts and try to place them in their mouths.

“The Community Partnership has designed a paid media campaign to educate communities about why we need to adopt more tobacco free outdoor policies,” said Susan Kennedy, CP Media Project Coordinator. “Family recreation for children should not mean having to play among cigarette butts or being exposed to secondhand smoke”

“The U.S. Surgeon General has declared that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke,” said Irwin Berlin, MD board chair of the American Lung Association in New York. “When we consider that children have smaller lungs than adults and consequently breathe in 50 percent more air pollution, it’s clear that we need to do everything we can to expand smoke-free outdoor areas so we can reduce exposure and prevent tobacco-caused disease.”

Public support for outdoor tobacco use restrictions is growing. Currently outdoor tobacco use policies have been enacted in over 280 local municipalities throughout New York State. Local Community Partnerships can provide sample policies, signage and/or assistance in creating outdoor tobacco use policies. Visit [www.TobaccoFreeNYS.org](http://www.TobaccoFreeNYS.org) to learn more.

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