



## For Immediate Release

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### **TeaZa® Energy, LLC Announces Launch of National Prosocial Initiative**

*Operation Tobacco Free helps kids understand why it's not hip to dip.*

Clearwater, FL—October 7, 2015—[TeaZa® Energy](#), LLC announces today the launch of [Operation Tobacco Free](#) (OTF), a prosocial initiative that serves to discourage tobacco use and inspire healthy lifestyles through education, community outreach and support of youth sports and health programs.

The campaign is focused on reaching smokeless tobacco users including some 535,000 kids age 12-17 who try smokeless tobacco for the first time each year in the US.<sup>1</sup>

“Our goal is to help kids understand why it’s not hip to dip,” said Brent Agin, MD, CEO and Founder of TeaZa® Energy.

The tobacco about-face is being felt across America.

Anti-tobacco campaigns have successfully whittled down the smoking population from 42% of American adults in 1964 at the time of the first *Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health*, to 18% of American adults in 2014<sup>2</sup> at the time CVS removed all tobacco products from the shelves of all its 7,700 retail locations.<sup>3</sup>

While cigarette smoking is on a sharp decline, smokeless tobacco use has remained steady among youth and adult populations.

A recent survey from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed that the use of smokeless tobacco among youth has held steady since 1999. In 2013, 14.7 percent of high-school boys reported current use of smokeless tobacco products.<sup>4</sup>

Big tobacco has responded to state enforced smoking bans by ramping up marketing efforts for smokeless tobacco products, advertising them as alternatives to cigarettes in places where smoking is banned.<sup>5</sup>

From 1998 to 2011, the top-five smokeless tobacco companies in the US more than tripled total advertising and marketing expenditures.<sup>6</sup>

Smokeless tobacco manufacturers have also increased the addictiveness of the product by changing free nicotine levels.<sup>7</sup>

Educating youth and smokeless tobacco users about the harms of smokeless tobacco use is an integral part of OTF's mission is to end smokeless tobacco use in the US.

Tobacco in any form is harmful, including cigarettes, cigars, spit tobacco and any other product containing nicotine. All tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, contain nicotine which is highly addictive. Chew contains at least 28 chemicals known to cause cancer and up to twice the amount of nicotine as a cigarette. Smokeless tobacco use can cause oral lesions, oral cancer, esophageal cancer, pancreatic cancer, heart disease, gum disease and death.<sup>8</sup>

"A lot of kids are introduced to dipping in youth sports, especially baseball. They don't understand how addictive it is or how much damage they are going to do to their health when they start. We want to help change that mindset in youth sports," Dr. Agin said.

Some research indicates as many as 50% of high school athletes use smokeless tobacco on the baseball field at the JV and varsity level.<sup>9</sup>

Dr. Agin's interest the anti-tobacco movement was sparked by consumer response to his innovative TeaZa® Energy pouches. The herb and vitamin mini-tea bags weren't intended to be an alternative to tobacco, but many customers say TeaZa® has helped them supplement or stop their tobacco habit.

"I have chewed tobacco since I was a teenager and I am now 56. I thought it was impossible to ever quit. I tried a zillion times and never made it past 2 days, until now. Thanks to TeaZa I have quit," said Mark Johnson, a recent TeaZa® customer survey respondent.

OTF will engage the public through [strategic partnerships](#), community outreach and sponsorship of youth athletics and health programs and events. Individuals representing teams and organizations can [apply for a sponsorship](#) or join the OTF community by [taking the pledge](#) to refuse to use tobacco at [TeaZaEnergy.com/OperationTobaccoFree](http://TeaZaEnergy.com/OperationTobaccoFree).

## About Operation Tobacco Free

Operation Tobacco Free (OTF) is a prosocial initiative sponsored by TeaZa® Energy that serves to discourage tobacco use and inspire healthy lifestyles through education, community outreach and support of youth sports and health programs. For more information visit: [TeaZaEnergy.com/OperationTobaccoFree](http://TeaZaEnergy.com/OperationTobaccoFree).

## About TeaZa Energy

TeaZa® Energy is an oral energy supplement formulated by a physician with natural ingredients. It is an herb and vitamin tea uniquely packaged in a small pouch for a safe delivery of smooth energy with no crash. TeaZa® Energy is available in 5 flavors: Peppermint, Black Cherry, Spicy Cinnamon, Coffee and Fire; and caffeine-free TeaZa® Chill with Relora is available in Cool Mint flavor. TeaZa® is produced, packaged and distributed out of Clearwater, FL. TeaZa® Energy is available online in the US and overseas and is in select retail locations throughout the US. For more information visit [teazaenergy.com](http://teazaenergy.com).

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<sup>1</sup>Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 2013, <<http://www.samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2013SummNatFindDetTables/DetTabs/NSDUH-DetTabsSect4peTabs1to16-2013.htm#tab4.10a>>.

<sup>2</sup>Let's Make the next Generation Tobacco-free: Your Guide to the 50th Anniversary Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Surgeongeneral.gov. Web. 16 July 2015. <<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/consumer-guide.pdf>>.

<sup>3</sup>CVS Caremark. CVS Caremark to Stop Selling Tobacco at All CVS/pharmacy Locations. CVS Health. N.p., 5 Feb. 2014. Web. 16 July 2015. <<http://www.cvshealth.com/content/cvs-caremark-stop-selling-tobacco-all-cvspharmacy-locations>>.

<sup>4</sup>"Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States, 2009." (n.d.): n. pag.Cdc.gov. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 13 June 2014. Web. 5 Oct. 2015. <<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/ss/ss6304.pdf>>.

<sup>5</sup>"Smokeless Tobacco." Smokeless Tobacco. American Cancer Society, n.d. Web. 16 July 2015. <<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/tobaccocancer/smokeless-tobacco>>.

<sup>6</sup>Boonn, Ann. "SMOKELESS TOBACCO IN THE UNITED STATES." (n.d.): n. pag. Tobaccofreekids.org. Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 9 Sept. 2014. Web. 5 Oct. 2015. <<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0231.pdf>>.

<sup>7</sup>Alpert, HR, et al., "Free nicotine content and strategic marketing of moist snuff tobacco products in the United States: 2000-2006," Tobacco Control 17:332-338, 2008,<<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18669556>>.

<sup>8</sup>"Smokeless Tobacco and Cancer." National Cancer Institute. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Sept. 2015. <<http://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco/smokeless-fact-sheet>>.

<sup>9</sup>Cornish, Audie. A Dangerous 'Ritual': Chewing Tobacco In Baseball. NPR. 20 June 2014. NPR. Web. 16 July 2015. <<http://www.npr.org/2014/06/20/323952306/a-dangerous-ritual-chewing-tobacco-in-baseball>>. Transcript.