



For Immediate Release

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David Wells Announced as Ambassador for National Anti-Tobacco Initiative

TeaZa® Energy's Operation Tobacco Free names former major league baseball pitcher David Wells as the first ambassador in their OTF Hall of Fame.

Clearwater, FL—October 27, 2015—[TeaZa® Energy](#), LLC announces today the ambassadorship of former Major League Baseball (MLB) pitcher, David Wells, for their prosocial initiative, [Operation Tobacco Free](#) (OTF). Wells is the first member of OTF's own "[Hall of Fame](#)" which will feature other prominent figures and community leaders. Wells played in the major leagues for 20 years with several teams including the Toronto Blue Jays and is best known for pitching the 15th perfect game in baseball history when playing for the New York Yankees. By lending his name and support to the campaign, Wells hopes to spread the message to kids in youth sports that it's not hip to dip.

OTF is a prosocial initiative launched earlier this month 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.¹

"I am committed to being part of the movement to get tobacco out of youth sports," Wells said.

Anti-smoking campaigns have sparked dramatic declines in US smoking populations 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 2014² at the time CVS removed all tobacco products from the shelves of all its 7,700 retail locations.³

But these efforts have not focused on smokeless tobacco use, which 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.⁴

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.⁵

“A lot of kids don’t even realize that dipping is highly addictive and causes major health problems. As a coach, I’m hoping I can influence kids to refuse to use tobacco in the first place,” said Wells who now serves as head coach of his alma mater’s baseball team at Point Loma High School in San Diego, California.

Being a veteran of the major leagues, Wells understands how deeply ingrained smokeless tobacco use is in baseball culture.

Some research indicates as many as 50% of high school athletes use smokeless tobacco on the baseball field at the JV and varsity level.⁶

In 2003, more than 1 in 3 major league baseball players used smokeless tobacco. Athletes are a large marketing source for smokeless tobacco, often seen on TV using it during a game.⁷

But baseball is starting to do an about-face on tobacco use.

The 2014 parotid cancer related death of MLB Hall of Famer and smokeless tobacco user Tony Gwynn, inspired conversations about change in tobacco use in baseball.

In April, San Francisco made history by becoming the first city to take tobacco out of baseball by signing into law an ordinance to prohibit the use of all tobacco products at all baseball venues and athletic fields within the city and county of San Francisco, including by fans and players. As of September, Boston and Los Angeles have also enacted similar laws.⁸

Wells became interested in supporting OTF through his friendship with Brent Agin, MD, Founder and CEO of TeaZa® Energy and Operation Tobacco Free. Dr. Agin’s inspiration to support the anti-tobacco movement grew from 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.

“As a baseball player, chewing tobacco is all around and tempting throughout the season. TeaZa not only is safe but beneficial in helping me and other users to keep pushing themselves while keeping their focus,” said [Bryce Bullock](#), a customer survey respondent who plays youth sports.

“TeaZa is a great product. I use it every day,” Wells said.

OTF’s sponsorship of youth athletic and health programs will build on the momentum toward ending smokeless tobacco use in the US. OTF will sponsor the team Wells coaches next season. OTF sponsorships provide a financial donation for equipment and supplies while giving kids on the team the opportunity to take the pledge to refuse to use tobacco.

To [apply for a sponsorship](#), [take the pledge](#) and [learn more](#) about OTF visit TeaZaEnergy.OperationTobaccoFree.com.

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.

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.

¹Substance 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>>.

²Let'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>>.

³CVS 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-cvsparmacy-locations>>.

⁴"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>>.

⁵"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>>.

⁶Cornish, 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.

⁷"Smokeless Tobacco." Smokeless Tobacco. American Cancer Society, n.d. Web. 16 July 2015. <<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/tobaccocancer/smokeless-tobacco>>.

⁸"Los Angeles City Council Ends Smokeless Tobacco Use at Sports Venues." Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Tobacco Free Kids, 8 Sept. 2015. Web. 14 Oct. 2015. <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/press_releases/post/2015_09_08_baseball>.