



**For Immediate Release
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Don't Forget To Lock Up Your Meds!

SAFE's PRIDE Coalition Warns About the Dangers of Unauthorized Prescription Drug Use

If you have a youth in your life, you have most likely worried about the potential risks that drugs and alcohol may have on their well-being. The abuse of prescription medication by youth and teens is on the rise. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, over 6.2 million people nationwide age 12 and older report abusing prescription drugs.

However, what about Glen Cove? According to the 2010 Bach-Harrison Prevention Needs Assessment, unauthorized prescription drug use by youth and teens has the potential to become an area of concern in Glen Cove. A research tool designed to measure the risks faced by youth and teens in our community, this survey was administered to students in grades 6,8,10 & 12. The results revealed that approximately 7% of students have used unauthorized prescription drugs. Due to the fact that prescription drugs, when used as prescribed, can improve one's health, many teens believe they are a safe way to get high. The SAFE Inc. PRIDE Project Coalition knows the dangers of prescription drug abuse and is at the forefront of decreasing their availability for illicit use in Glen Cove.

According to SAMHSA, 4,047 children and young adults begin experimenting with prescription drugs every day across the nation. Furthermore, 70% of children nationally who abuse prescription drugs get them from family and friends. By leaving their prescription medications where children and teens can find them, many parents and caregivers are unknowingly making leeway for a potentially dangerous situation. Parents can prevent their children from abusing their medication by securing it in places their children can not access.

On Tuesday, March 15th, the PRIDE Coalition's Community Committee in conjunction with the Glen Cove Senior Center, launched their 2011 "Lock Up Your Meds!" campaign to educate Glen Cove citizens about the measures they can take to prevent prescription medication abuse in their home. The Coalition kicked off the campaign at the Glen Cove Senior Center, presenting to the members about the importance of safeguarding their medication. The Coalition distributed Medication Tracking cards that can be used to keep inventory of all household medications and reviewed guidelines for the safe and proper disposal of medications. Representatives from the Glen Cove Chemists and the Glen Cove Walgreens were on hand to show their support, answering questions from patrons and pledging their support of the campaign.

“If you ever have any questions about your medication, always contact your local pharmacy,” advised Mr. Jolly of the Glen Cove Chemist and active member of the Glen Cove Senior Center Executive Board. “You can never be too careful. Your pharmacist is on hand to assist you.”

“It has been shown that education and teamwork are the front line of defense in the battle against alcohol and drug abuse among our young people,” stated Councilman Tony Jimenez, PRIDE Community Committee Chair. “I want to thank all involved in bringing this valuable information to the public, particularly SAFE Inc. Executive Director and PRIDE Coalition Co-Chair Dr Sharon Harris, Coordinator of the Glen Cove PRIDE Coalition Paula Castiglia, and Community Committee member Carol Waldman, Executive Director of the Glen Cove Senior Center and SAFE Board member. I would also like to thank our local pharmacies for caring enough to take the time to be involved in this project.”

Both pharmacies have pledged support of the campaign, agreeing to attach a special sticker to all prescriptions of controlled substances during the month of March that read “Don’t forget to Lock Up These Meds!” reminding patrons of the importance of safeguarding medications. Both pharmacies will also have medication tracking cards on hand to distribute to their customers, which include information on prescription medication prevention and education.

“Parents can be the first line of defense in prescription drug abuse prevention,” stated Dr. Sharon Harris, SAFE Executive Director and PRIDE Coalition Co-Chair. “We are so fortunate to have had the opportunity to visit the Senior Center and spread this important message.”

SAFE Inc. is committed to eliminating teen drug and alcohol use in Glen Cove. Through a combination of prevention, education, and law enforcement efforts, SAFE Inc. combats the devastating effects that can result from underage drinking and drug use in order to build a safer Glen Cove.

To obtain a Medication Tracking card and other prescription drug resources, contact the SAFE office at (516) 676-2008. For more information regarding SAFE, Inc and the PRIDE Coalition, or to view SAFE Inc.’s Public Service Announcement, visit www.safeglencove.org. Want to follow the PRIDE Coalition on Facebook? Find us at <http://www.facebook.com/GlenCovePrideCoalition>.