

Underage Alcohol Use is NOT a Minor Problem in Glen Cove

SAFE Inc. Calls Upon Parents to Start Talking Before They Start Drinking

As young people grow older, the chance that they will use alcohol increases. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a Federal agency, approximately 22.1 percent of 12-14 year olds report that they have used alcohol at least once. The number doubles for teens ages 15-17, who report they have used alcohol both in their home and someone else's home. The consequences of underage drinking are widespread and affect communities throughout the country.

According to the 2010 Bach-Harrison Prevention Needs Assessment, a research tool designed to measure the risks faced by underage drinking, it is a serious problem for youth and teens in the Glen Cove community. Glen Cove students grades 6,8,10 and 12 who participated in the 2010 Assessment revealed that the rates reported for using alcohol are above national norms, with 25 percent of students reporting taking part in binge drinking. Students reported a lower perception of risk for alcohol use along with a perception that "everyone is doing it", which may lead to internal pressure to be like "everyone else." Most high school seniors report that it is very easy for them to obtain alcohol and drinking and driving

rates are as high as 20 percent among this grade level.

Talking to the teens in your life about alcohol use now can help to protect them from the potential dangers associated with underage drinking and accidents related to drinking and driving. Creating a home environment that discourages underage drinking and supports open communication is the first step in providing your teen with the tools necessary to stay safe. Always maintain a clear, consistent message that underage alcohol use is unacceptable. Make sure your teen has access to a variety of alcohol-free alternatives that are safe and supervised.

SAFE, Inc. is dedicated to helping parents talk to their teens about underage alcohol use. Here are a few facts you need to know about underage alcohol use before talking to your teen:

- It is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to purchase alcohol.
- It is illegal for any adult to serve alcohol to anyone under the age of 21.
- Even having just one drink can affect your judgment, coordination, behavior, and sense of well-being.
- Alcohol can have lasting effects on the brain, especially on someone whose body is still developing.

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hol can impair the way a person learns and remembers, which can interfere with their academic performance, learning to drive, and performing at their job.

- If you drink, tell your child your reasons for drinking responsibly and in moderation. If you do not drink, explain your reasons from abstaining from alcohol.

- Even if your teen is not drinking, it can be dangerous for them to be around other people who are drinking underage. Always make sure your teen has an emergency contact they can call and alternative transportation if their driver is intoxicated. Review what to do in an emergency situation, including contacting the police and calling an adult for help. Remind your teens to always contact you during an emergency situation, regardless of whether they are worried about “getting in trouble.”

SAFE Inc. is committed to eliminating teen 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.

For a copy of “Start Talking Before They Start Drinking: A Family Guide” (SAMHSA) and additional anti-drug or parent resources, contact the SAFE office at 676-2008. For more information regarding SAFE, Inc and the PRIDE Coalition, community resources or to view SAFE Inc.’s Public Service Announcement, visit www.safeglencove.org.