



**For Immediate Release  
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## **Grandparents for Prevention**

*Glen Cove Seniors Participate in a Life Saving Workshop*

On Tuesday, June 21, Police Officer Ryan Nardone of the Glen Cove Police Department delivered an important message to Seniors, empowering them to make a change in their community. “The world our teens are growing up in is very different from the world we grew up in,” stated Police Officer Nardone as he addressed the Seniors. “Our kids are facing many more pressures to use drugs and alcohol.”

Over 60 Seniors listened intently as Officer Nardone went on to explain that drug and alcohol use continues to plague our young people, including driving while intoxicated or under the influence of drugs. Every day, 5,400 kids under the age of 16 take their first sip of alcohol. Prescription drug abuse has surpassed most other types of drug abuse among teens, with more than 2.1 million between the ages of 12 to 17 reporting abusing prescription drugs in 2006. Officer Nardone explained that such behaviors put youth in danger and at a higher risk of other problematic behaviors – behaviors that could prove to be detrimental and possibly deadly if not properly dealt with.

As the participants listened to these staggering statistics, many had questions about how Glen Cove sizes up. Several Seniors reported that they view teens today as indulgent and impulsive, not recognizing the risks of using drugs and the potential fatal consequences. Many expressed concerns about the young people in their lives, voicing that they lack responsibilities and supervision, leading to a higher precedence of drug use.

Do Glen Cove youth have a problem with underage alcohol and drug use? According to the most recent Bach-Harrison Prevention Needs Assessment Survey, there are certainly areas of concern. Administered by SAFE, Inc. and the Glen Cove School District in January 2010 to grades 6,8,10, &12, this survey revealed that the percentage of students that reported being drunk or high at school is fairly high for 12<sup>th</sup> graders. Furthermore, drinking and driving rates are as high as 20% in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

According to the Assessment, most teens who abuse prescription drugs report getting them from friends or family, finding pills readily available in their own homes and those of friends and relatives. Officer Nardone encouraged seniors to secure their medications to prevent such circumstances. He instructed that seniors should pay attention to their grandchild’s behavior and looks for signs of drug use, such as mood changes, aggressiveness, signs of being withdrawn or changes in interests and personality. He encouraged seniors to use their unique relationship to speak to their grandchildren about the problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse

Taking the most preventive efforts possible means looking ahead toward emerging drug trends, and prescription drug use appears to be on the rise. When used improperly, prescription drugs present a major danger to teens, including respiratory distress, heart ailments, poisoning, depression and suicide. According to the DEA, "Painkillers now cause more drug overdose deaths than cocaine and heroin combined." This is a sign that preventive measures must be taken now to protect our youth from these deadly consequences.

SAFE and the Glen Cove Police Department continue to collaborate in taking proactive steps to stem the tide of abuse among youth and teens through prevention, education, treatment options, community awareness, and increased policing.

For more information regarding SAFE, Inc and the PRIDE Coalition, visit [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org). or call the SAFE, Inc office at 516-676-2008.

The presentation was a collaboration of SAFE Inc., the Glen Cove Police Department and the Glen Cove Senior Center. From left: Paula Castiglia, PRIDE Project Coordinator; Police Officer Ryan Nardone, Glen Cove Police Department; Dr. Sharon Harris, SAFE Inc. Executive Director and PRIDE Coalition Co-Chair; Lucy Vanhorn, Program Coordinator, Glen Cove Senior Center.

Police Officer Nardone addresses some of the Seniors questions and concerns about teen behavior and drug use.