



For Immediate Release

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PRIDE Project Coalition

Talk to children about alcohol – they are listening

According to the US Dept of Health and Human Services, by age 15 the number of children who say they have tried alcohol is 50 percent. SAFE Inc. supports the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's program, "Talk. They Hear You," agreeing that the chance that children will use alcohol increases as they grow older. Studies indicate that the sooner you talk to children about alcohol, the greater chance parents and caregivers will have of influencing their decisions about not drinking.

Glen Cove youth and alcohol

SAFE and the Glen Cove School District administer needs assessments surveys every two years to determine alcohol and substance abuse use and the needs of our youth. The last survey, administered in January 2012, indicated alcohol is by far the most used substance among 6th graders, with 10.3 percent having used at least once in their lifetime.

The 2012 survey data shows that the 8th grade lifetime alcohol use rate is nearly three times as high as 6th grade lifetime alcohol use (30.5 percent in the 8th grade, compared to 10.3 percent in the 6th grade) but is lower than the Monitoring the Future (MTF) national average of 35.8 percent. Among the 8th grade class, 30-day use of alcohol for Glen Cove youth (15.9 percent) remains higher than the national MTF average of 13.8 percent.

Among the 12th grade the rate of 58.3 percent reporting past 30-day alcohol use is higher than the national MTF rate (41.2 percent) by 17.1 percent.

Binge drinking in Glen Cove School District appears to become a little more prominent in the 8th grade, where 5.9 percent of survey participants indicate an incidence of binge drinking.

SAFE and its Coalition of over 12 sectors of the community continue to collaborate on prevention initiatives to address these results. We will continue our efforts as long as the need exists.

Answer your children's questions

The questions may be difficult for parents and caregivers to answer so being prepared is the best thing that can be done. Children may even ask personal questions. Some questions parents should be prepared for are: Did you drink when you were a kid? Can I go to the party I was invited to? What if my friend's ask me to drink? Why do you drink? Why is alcohol bad for me?

- Did you drink when you were a kid? Parents should be honest and then explain that there was not all of the information that is available today regarding how harmful underage drinking can be. If something happened that made you realize just how bad a decision it was to drink share it with your child.
- Can I go to the party I was invited to? First acknowledge that you appreciate that your child has asked to go. Then ask if an adult will be present and if they think there may be drinking there. Discuss with your child what your expectations are that they not drink.
- What if my friend's ask me to drink? Help your child find an answer so they will be ready. Saying I promised my parents I wouldn't drink or I don't like alcohol are reasonable comeback lines. Tell your child that if they feel pressured they can always call you to pick them up from the party.
- Why do you drink? Explain to your child that there is a big difference between an adult drinking and a child. You can also share with them the reasons why you do drink saying you enjoy a glass of wine with dinner or when you socialize. You should also mention that it is legal for adults to drink and not for children.
- Why is alcohol bad for me? So many children don't believe what they hear from adults about how harmful it can be to drink. Have some articles, newspaper clippings, or sources available to discuss with them the medical proof that studies show that alcohol can be bad for their growing brain, can interfere with judgment and make them sick.

Contact SAFE Inc. for help

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.

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>.