

SAFE Uses Hard Facts To Fight Drugs

SUBMITTED BY SAFE, INC.

Every year SAFE's PRIDE Project Coalition participates in the National Drug Facts Week campaign by creating a program for students at Finley Middle School and Glen Cove High School. The hope is that if youth are armed with information they will either stop taking drugs or choose never even to try them.

SAFE's campaign this year included a visit from Staff Sergeant Dave You, who spoke to students about the dangers of marijuana and alcohol during an After 3 program using the firsthand experiences of people he knew to drive home his points.

"I feel that they learned a good amount about marijuana and alcohol, for example what the substances actually do to your body," said You. "And I think what they found most valuable were the real life stories that I told them about my old high school football teammate and my cousin. They were two true stories that unfortunately did not end well for either of them."

The sergeant added that these stories put the dangers of marijuana and drunk driving into perspective for the students.

The National Drug Facts Week



One of the children tried on fatal vision goggles to better understand how impaired your vision is when you drink alcohol.

campaign also included morning announcements over the loud speaker where drug facts were shared – kind of a wake-up call to start a student's day. Students also played the WreckEd card game in their health class. This game is an educational youth component of the PACT 360 Program. (PACT360 is a law enforcement-led community prevention education system designed to deal with and reduce existing drug issues.) Wreck-Ed encourages teens to think more introspectively about their decisions regarding drugs and alcohol.

This program not only encourages youth to look at their own behavior, but also to reach out and look out for their friends who may be making the wrong unhealthy decisions.

WreckEd began with a 10-minute video depicting what's going on every day with teens when it comes to drugs and alcohol. Former drug addicts talk about how their lives changed after drug use as it spiraled down. After the film teachers led a group discussion focusing on parts of the video and encouraged student discussion.

The campaign was also brought to the Glen Cove Boys & Girls Club where You did a workshop. He said the children, who were the same age as those he visited at Glen Cove High School, were "just as responsive as the middle school after school program" children.

National Drug Facts Week was launched in 2010 by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), part of the National Institutes of Health, to educate youth about the real facts about drugs. Teens are often swayed by incorrect information on the Internet, television, movies, from the music they enjoy, and their peers.

"SAFE's PRIDE Project Coalition seeks to educate youth and adults through alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention and education," said Dr. Sharon Harris, Director of SAFE, Inc. "Drug Facts Week is one of many initiatives the Coalition promotes to foster peer resistance skills and healthy lifestyles."

For further information on any SAFE, Inc. PRIDE Project Coalition and their initiatives contact Coalition Coordinator Aimee Abraham at 516- 676-2008 or visit www.safeglen-cove.org and www.facebook.com/GlenCovePrideCoalition.