

SAFE Helps Parents Combat Kids' Drug Use

SUBMITTED BY SAFE, INC.

SAFE Inc. held a number of Parent Universities within the Glen Cove School District over the course of the school year to help parents understand youth drug and alcohol use and how to actively help protect their children.

One Parent University focused on the Social Host Law. Lieutenant Christopher Ortiz joined Parent Committee Chair Laurent Caballero and SAFE Glen Cove Pride Project Coalition Coordinator Aimee Abraham at Finley Middle School at a PTA meeting to discuss what the law is all about and how parents can help to drive home the message that they will not accept underage drinking.

"It's never too early to have a conversation about drugs and alcohol with your children," Ortiz said. "We are seeing children younger and younger start to abuse drugs and alcohol in Glen Cove. And this is happening in every community."

Ortiz encouraged parents to speak to their children: Underage drinking is different now than it was in our day, he said. "Children binge drink and they are combining it with drugs. These combinations are deadly."

What's worse, Ortiz said, is the involvement of parents who throw parties, even purchasing kegs of beer, for underage children. Because of this Glen Cove passed the Social Host Law, which makes



Glen Cove Police Sergeant Christopher Ortiz, PTA treasurer Laura Farley, PTA president Janice LaRocca and Principal Nelson Iocolano joined SAFE Inc., Parent Committee Chair Laurent Caballero and SAFE Pride Project Coordinator Aimee Abraham at Finley Middle School at a Parent University (Photo by SAFE, Inc.)

parents who "host" legally responsible for the underage parties.

"Three years ago at a moving-up party, I found two kegs of beer and the parents watching television in their living room," Ortiz said. "The kids were drinking the beer in the back yard."

Some parents believe it is okay to have a party in their home because then "they know where their children are," Ortiz said. "That attitude is not okay."

Ortiz said that currently the major concern for Glen Cove Police is the sale of medication by

children, which they take from their relatives and then sell in school. "Even kids that are prescribed medication are selling their own medication," he said. "We are working hard to stop this in Glen Cove."

For further information on any SAFE, Inc. PRIDE Project Coalition and their initiatives contact Coalition Coordinator Aimee Abraham at 516-676-2008. SAFE Inc. is a not-for-profit tax-exempt substance abuse education and prevention agency located in Glen Cove. Visit www.safeglen Cove.org and www.facebook.com/GlenCovePrideCoalition.