

## Red Ribbon Week Addresses Substance Abuse

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SAFE's PRIDE Project Coalition kicked off National Red Ribbon Week on Oct. 20. The SAFE Coalition annually sponsors and promotes Red Ribbon Week within the Glen Cove School District. This year's event was made possible by funds through the Glen Cove Community Development Block Grant. Red Ribbon Week is a national drug awareness campaign created in 1985 aimed at addressing the importance of substance abuse prevention.

SAFE Board of Directors and coalition volunteers, along with members of the city and school administrations, showed their support by participating in Red Ribbon celebrations in the district's elementary schools and Finley Middle School. Students embraced the theme of living a healthy, drug free lifestyle and created posters depicting their interpretation of living drug free using this year's slogan "Keep Calm and Stay Drug Free."

Each elementary school held a special assembly to kick off Red Ribbon Week where students wore red ribbons and learned about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle.

All Middle School students enjoyed presentations by coalition members from the Glen Cove Police Department in their physical education classes. Lt. Chris Ortiz, Sgt. Ryan M. Nardone, and P.O. Sonny Bifone spoke to the students about the risks of using drugs and the important role that decision making plays in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Students listened intently while the officers



Gribbin students with police officers and teachers.



An officer speaks to the kids about substance abuse.

provided real-life stories from their extensive policing experience and students were given the opportunity to ask the officers questions about drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

In the classroom, Gribbin students were visited by the district's Student Athletes Leadership Team (SALT) who discussed the importance of healthy choices and good decision making.

SAFE's Coalition holds an art contest each year and the winners are announced at the Red Ribbon Week assembly by SAFE Board members and executive Director. The purpose of the art contest is to encourage children to commit to making good choices and to be aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol. Winning posters appear on display in the Children's Room of the Glen Cove Public Library.

"Red Ribbon Week is an effective way to impart healthy choices to children through a celebration of wellness. It fosters communication between youth and adults about the dangers of substance abuse in a positive fashion" said Georgie Connett, SAFE Board Chair.

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.safeglen Cove.org](http://www.safeglen Cove.org).