

# SAFE Coalition Implements Peer Mentoring Program

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The Finley Middle School's eighth grade class was recently visited by members of Student Athlete Leadership Team (SALT), who discussed life skills they learned through their participation in after school activities and the impact those skills have had on their later lives. SALT members encouraged middle school students to get involved in after school activities be it sports or other activities that interest them as an alternative to idle time where many negative behaviors begin.

The School Committee of SAFE's Coalition is chaired by Denise Kiernan, director of health, physical education and athletics for the Glen Cove School District.

"The SALT mentoring program is for students at Finley Middle School to learn about healthy decision making skills while working with student leaders in the high school athletic program who demonstrate positive leadership skills," Kiernan stated. "This program encourages students to become leaders on and off the field."

As a part of the presentation, SALT team members, led by juniors Michael Payton and Sara Tenke, broke students into small groups to demonstrate the importance of team building activities. This gave students the opportunity to work together to accomplish a common goal. Students responded well to this activity, as they engaged actively and appeared to enjoy it.

SALT members also enjoyed the presentation.

Brittany Brown, a senior, stated that she "enjoys coming and mentoring younger students" and playing an active role in both her school and community. Brown and her peers believe that by sharing their personal stories they can help



**2014-2015 members of S.A.L.T. Seniors:** Nicole Bedell, Brittany Brown, Caitlin Brown, Andrew Gerin, Phil Grella, Gabrielle Heenan, Daniella Hugel, Michael Manzione, Kevin Shannon, Rosa Pangari, Sean Peet, Joe Reyes and Dylan Silas. **Juniors:** Grace Blinkoff, Jonathan Capobianco, Alex Casale, Gaetano Famiglietti, Geofferey Field, Christian Fillipone, Michael Hatala, Amanda Heavey, Brandon Leon, Kiara Vidal, Sabrina Magrini, Michelle Melfi, Sean Morrissey, Michael Payton, Sara Tenke, Kahlil Zachary. **Sophomores:** Jessica Bellomo, Safire Blisset, Grace Brady, Roselle Cacio, Alex Cota, Dominic Gaudio, Daniel Grella, Delwin Hernandez, Tristyn Hudson, Evangelica Markoulis, Kayleen Mesa, Michael Morra, Amara Philip, Rachael Ranieri, Brian Shannon, Kamia Washington and Alyssa Zangari.

younger students learn the importance of perseverance and overcoming difficult obstacles ranging from a sports injury to a difficult class.

SALT members created an open forum to allow eighth-graders the opportunity to ask an array of questions from bullying to how to become a member of SALT.

Caitlin Brown, who serves as the president of SALT, emphasized the importance of "extending our knowledge to the youth as student athletes,

about healthy lifestyle choices. Not only that, but developing a relationship with the children as positive roles models."

The SALT program will continue to visit the Finley Middle School throughout the year to discuss topics ranging from sportsmanship to the negative effects of alcohol and substance use.

For more information about SALT or other SAFE Coalition initiatives contact SAFE at 516-676-2008 or visit [www.safeglenecove.org](http://www.safeglenecove.org).