

SAFE Coordinates Prevention Education Workshop

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When it comes to teens and drugs, it is all about choices and consequences. In honor of National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week, the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition's School Committee participated in a week-long campaign by creating a program for students at Finley Middle School and Glen Cove High School (GCHS). The committee's efforts were targeted at arming students with the facts to help them make the right choices surrounding drugs and alcohol.

"The school committee understands the importance early on regarding the truth behind drinking and drugging," said Ashley Ferrufino, SAFE Glen Cove Coalition liaison. "Teens often don't understand the progressive nature of substance abuse and the long term effects of early use."

The campaign included providing drug facts every morning during the traditional morning announcements. During health classes, students played the WreckEd Card game, an



Ashley Ferrufino, SAFE Coalition liaison; Tony Gallo, SAFE Coalition co-chair, Trevor Murray and Jordan Stierle, speakers from Michael's Hope; and students at Glen Cove High School

educational game designed to teach teens to think more introspectively about their decisions regarding drugs and alcohol. This program encourages youth to look at their own behavior and to look out for their friends who may be making unhealthy decisions.

This year GCHS students had the opportunity to listen to a nonprofit organization named Michael's HOPE. According to founder Paul Maffetone, the goal of this organization is to present "stories from those who have

been directly affected by addiction."

"We aim to raise awareness of the current epidemic we are living through, how addiction comes to pass for many and very passionately for us the tremendous hopes of being a helping hand in ending the negative stigma connected to addiction as a whole," said Maffetone. "We have a saying here at Michael's HOPE which represents everything we stand for: 'The ugliest disease lies in the most beautiful people.'"

Speakers Trevor Murray and Jordan Stierle spoke to students about their own struggles with substance abuse, the progressive nature of the disease and living a life of recovery. Both discussed how their own substance use led them to do things they never imagined doing. The coalition facilitates these presentations in an effort to continue to work to change societal norms about alcohol and substance abuse through ongoing prevention, intervention and education activities.