

## **Press Release**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **National Prevention Week**

SAFE Inc., encourages Glen Cove Residents to get involved in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMSHA) fifth annual National Prevention Week, happening from May 15-21, 2016. National Prevention Week is an annual event that aims at increasing public awareness and prevention of mental and/ or substance use disorders. This week sends a positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health and that prevention works.

According to SAMSHA this year's theme "Strong as One, Stronger Together recognizes that one person can make a positive difference in their community, but when we all unite together we can achieve even more." It is important that as a community members are educated on both mental health and substance abuse resources that are available to them. Community members are encouraged to share #StrongerTogether and #NPW2016 on their social media in order to get the message out that prevention is important.

SAFE Inc. is the only prevention agency in Glen Cove dedicated to the elimination of alcohol and substance abuse in Glen Cove. The agency continues to work to change societal norms about alcohol and substance abuse through ongoing prevention, intervention and education activities and events. Through the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition, local substance abuse trends are identified and addressed to maintain an ongoing prevention effort.

In honor of this year's National Prevention Week SAFE Inc., the City of Glen Cove, Glen Cove Police Department and Glen Cove EMS have partnered to "Shed the Meds". Glen Cove residents are encouraged to dispose of unwanted or expired medications at Glen Cove Police Department on May 21<sup>st</sup> between 1-4 pm. According to SAFE Inc., Executive Director Dr. Sharon Harris "it is vital to safeguard and dispose of unwanted medication properly in order to prevent today's youth from engaging experimentation with both over the counter and prescription medication".

Mental Health and Substance Abuse prevention programs and initiatives are essential to reduce the potential negative impacts of behavioral health conditions and disorders on the individual, family and community. Often times an individual who is suffering from a mental health or substance use disorder will also experience impairments in other areas of his or her life including unemployment, homelessness, poverty or physical illness that in turn will go on to impact the community as a whole.

It is important that as a community we are aware that “behaviors and symptoms that signal the development of a behavioral disorder often manifest two to four years before a disorder is present” according to SAMSHA. Through early intervention individuals often are able to obtain better treatment outcomes than if a disease is able to progress without intervening. By intervening early on potential disorders or symptoms can be mitigated leaving to a healthier individual.

If you or someone you know is struggling with a mental health or substance use disorder feel free to contact the SAFE Inc., office at 516-676-2008 in order to obtain a free and confidential referral.

For more information on how to get involved visit SAMHSA at <http://www.samhsa.gov/prevention-week/about>. For further information on SAFE, Inc , the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition and their initiatives contact SAFE at: 516-676-2008 or visit the website at [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org)