

Press Release

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### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Long Island and the Opioid Epidemic**

According to Newsday, opioid overdoses for Nassau and Suffolk counties have decreased in 2018. Nassau and Suffolk County Police Departments and medical examiners report fatal overdoses decreased from a high 614 in 2017 to 483 in 2018. The epidemic, which began in 2010 on Long Island took almost 3,700 lives due to overdoses.

According to the Newsday article many people argue that despite the decrease, overdoses are still happening and people are dying. In the past nine years 3,685 people fatally overdosed on opioids just on Long Island. The Nassau police authorities arrested about 50 people linked to overdoses in 2018. In 2017 75 arrests were made. Just last year, 116 mid to upper level drug dealers were arrested that were believed linked to eight fatal and nonfatal overdoses. It is stated in the article that it is hard to build a manslaughter case because prosecutors must prove dealers caused the victims death and cases often settle for felony sale charges. An individual pleaded guilty to a second- degree manslaughter in 2016. He is the first person charged in New York State and was sentenced to 11 to 15 years.

Additional policing data indicates that from 2016 to 2018 there are more fatal overdoses in Suffolk County than Nassau County Nassau credits this to a policing strategy entitled 'Operation Natalie' after a 18 year old girl overdosed in 2017. The operation maps the locations of the overdoses and follows up with town hall meetings with treatment options. It is stated in the Newsday article that 2,000 meetings have taken place including meeting that was held at Hofstra University. These meetings open roads of communication and is an effort to start the decrease to the opioid epidemic Educating individuals on NARCAN has been successful and has saved many lives. More prevention education needs to transpire.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is conducting an opioid prevention awareness campaign entitled, "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE," in order to educate and update the community regarding opioid use and its consequences. To date, two NARCAN trainings in partnership with Nassau County Department of Health have been offered to Glen Cove residents and the Coalition will continue to so as the need indicates. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](http://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the Opioid Epidemic at [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).