

Press Release
June 7, 2019, 2019
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:
Dr. Sharon Harris 516- 676-2008
safeglencove@yahoo.com

SAFE Glen Cove Coalition Hosts Prevention Education Presentation

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is conducting an opioid prevention awareness campaign entitled "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE" to educate and update the community regarding opioid use and its consequences.

Mr. Steve Chassman, LCSW, CASAC, Executive Director of the Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (LICADD) returned to Glen Cove City Hall on May 22nd to continue to educate the public and SAFE Board and Coalition members about the current state of the nation's opioid epidemic, the potential impact of the legalization of marijuana, and vaping- the latest identified trend in youth substance use.

Mr. Chassman discussed the history of crisis and how the current generation is using more potent and therefore more potentially dangerous substances than what was used in the 60's and 70's. Mr. Chassman emphasized substance addiction as an illness and discussed prescription drug misuse/diversion, intervention strategies and treatment options. "People do not wake up one day and say I think I'll shoot heroin today". Opioid addiction most often stems from early misuse of marijuana and alcohol.

Referencing the American Psychiatric Associations Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th Edition, Mr. Chassman stated Addiction is defined as a chronic, relapsing disorder characterized by compulsive drug seeking, continued use despite harmful consequences, and long-lasting changes in the brain. It is considered both a complex brain disorder and a mental illness. Addiction is the most severe form of a full spectrum of substance use disorders, and is a medical illness caused by repeated misuse of a substance or substances.

Mr. Chassman stated "It's not what drugs people are taking - its why they are taking them in the first place". Childhood anxiety is on the rise. With social media it's all about the self-image — who's 'liking' them, who's watching them, who clicked on their picture, everything can turn into something negative causing tremendous stress and drug seeking behavior therefore transpires to provide relief of the anxiety and stress. The younger a child initiates alcohol and other drug use, the higher the risk for serious health consequences and adult substance abuse. Alcohol and other drug use in the adolescent population carries a higher risk for school underachievement, delinquency, teenage pregnancy, and depression.

Mr. Chassman went on to discuss the dangers of marijuana use and that certain individuals who are predisposed to risk taking behaviors will more likely become daily users later in life. THC effects specific parts of the brain called cannabinoid receptors. Short and long term marijuana use effects the parts of the brain that have the most

cannabinoid receptors that influence pleasure, memory, thinking and concentration, sensory and time perception and coordinated movement.

In reference to the legalization of Marijuana, Mr. Chassman stated that he was thankful that Nassau County and Suffolk County fought against it as we are still battling an opioid epidemic and well as the new trend of vaping in youth. He quoted a study by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), teens are using vaping devices in record numbers. Reported use of vaping nicotine specifically in the 30 days prior to the survey nearly doubled among high school seniors from 11 percent in 2017 to 20.9% in 2018. More than one in 10 eighth graders (10.9%) say they vaped nicotine in the past year, and use is up significantly in virtually all vaping measures among eighth, 10th and 12th graders. Reports of past year marijuana vaping also increased this year, at 13.1% for 12th graders, up from 9.5% last year.

Prior to the presentation, Georgie Connett, SAFE Board Chair and Strategic Planner welcomed the audience, a blend of representatives from the Mayor's office and City Council, Youth Bureau, School Administration, SAFE Coalition and SAFE Board members, parents and concerned citizens. Mr. Tony Gallo, Coalition Co-Chair presented Isabella Juarez a ninth grade student a prize for winning first place in an art contest conducted at Mr. Freitag's High School Graphic Arts Class to create a new opioid logo for the Coalition's campaign. Second place winner Jeanelly Arroyo was also recognized. The logo was displayed for the audience and will eventually be seen on billboards throughout the City.

Mayor Tenke spoke about how important educating the younger generation is on the opioid epidemic and acknowledged all the work that the SAFE coalition has done to educate the Glen Cove community. The Mayor then presented a certificate to Miss Juarez for her design and shared that he hopes that the sign will bring awareness and even save a life.

To learn more about LICADD please visit <https://www.licadd.org>. If you or a loved one is suffering with a substance use disorder please contact the LICADD hotline for help at 1-631-979-1700 or call the SAFE office at 516-676-2008.

To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the Opioid Epidemic at www.safeglencove.org.