

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: National Prevention Week**

National Prevention Week (NPW) is a public education platform that promotes prevention year-round through providing ideas, capacity building, tools, and resources to help individuals and communities make substance use prevention happen every day. NPW culminates in May recognizing the important work that has been done in communities throughout the year to inspire action and prevent substance use and mental disorders.

The three primary goals of National Prevention Week are to involve communities in raising awareness of substance use and mental health issues and in implementing prevention strategies, and showcasing effectiveness of evidence-based prevention programs, foster partnerships and collaborations with federal agencies and national organizations dedicated to improving public health, and promote and disseminate quality substance use prevention and mental health promotion resources and publications.

SAFE encourages Glen Cove Residents to learn more about the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMSHA) tenth annual National Prevention Week (NPW), happening May 10th - May 16th by visiting their educational website. Each year around this observance, communities and organizations across the country come together to raise awareness about the importance of substance use prevention and positive mental health. This annual event aims at increasing public awareness and prevention of mental and/ or substance use disorders.

NPW sends a positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health and that prevention works. Given the COVID-19 Pandemic, prevention is of the utmost importance. NPW is traditionally held each year during the third week of May—near the start of summer, an important time for school, communities, and prevention professionals to re-focus on prevention. Adolescents and full-time college students most often use substances for the first time during June or July, according to SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

The timing of NPW is most fortuitous as this population has been displaced due to COVID-19 and the annual opportunities for the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition and the Glen Cove School District to host prevention-themed events before the school year ends, raising awareness about this important issue among students and their families has been hampered. These are key periods of social transitions, a risk

factor for youth substance use, and an opportunity to develop or strengthen the community, school, and family bonds that protect young people from substance use.

NPW covers many issues: Preventing prescription drug and opioid misuse; Preventing underage drinking and alcohol misuse; Preventing illicit drug use and youth marijuana use; Preventing youth tobacco use (E-cigarettes and Vaping) and Preventing suicide. SAFE will address these important topics through their Life Skills Training Program (LST) for Elementary and Middle School students and will also highlight New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (NYSOASAS) #VirtualHighFive campaign-messages written on hands to unite in the plight to stay home, do the right thing, and stop the spread of COVID-19.

LST is an evidence-based drug prevention program that incorporates interactive learning, social skills building, and specific drug use prevention-related information in order to provide adolescents and young teens with the confidence and skills necessary to successfully handle challenging situations. The curriculum dovetails with the NPW message. Given the COVID pandemic constraints, the program is offered via virtual instruction and facilitated by SAFE's Social Worker and LST Instructor, Francesca Carbone as part of the Glen Cove Youth Bureau's After-3 program.

The New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) is a State agency whose mission is to improve the lives of all New Yorkers by leading a comprehensive premier system of addiction services for prevention, treatment, and recovery. For more information about OASAS please visit <https://www.ny.gov/agencies/office-addiction-services-and-supports>.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is charged with improving the quality and availability of treatment and rehabilitative services in order to reduce illness, death, disability, and the cost to society resulting from substance abuse and mental illnesses. For more information about SAMHSA please visit [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov).

SAFE is the only alcohol and substance use prevention, intervention and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. To learn more about SAFE and joining the LST Zoom instruction please visit [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org). To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition and National Prevention Weeks themes, please follow us on [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition).