

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Dr. Sharon Harris

516- 676-2008

[safeglencove@yahoo.com](mailto:safeglencove@yahoo.com)

### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Summer is Here-Be Mindful of Underage Impaired Driving**

Summertime, often seen as a carefree period, unfortunately, poses significant risks for young drivers, particularly concerning impaired driving. Key factors contributing to this dangerous trend include:

- **Increased free time:** School's out, and young people have more time for social activities and potential partying, which can lead to increased alcohol consumption and subsequent impaired driving.
- **Peak hours and days:** Late-night hours, particularly between midnight and 3 AM, and weekends (especially Friday and Saturday nights) are identified as peak times for impaired driving incidents, including those involving youth.
- **Holidays:** Festive occasions like New Year's Eve, Fourth of July, and Memorial Day see a spike in drunk driving incidents, increasing the risk for young drivers celebrating these holidays.
- **Peer pressure:** Teenagers are susceptible to peer pressure and may feel inclined to engage in risky behaviors, including impaired driving, to fit in or seek approval from friends.
- **Inexperience:** Young drivers have less experience with both driving and the effects of alcohol, potentially leading them to underestimate the dangers and overestimate their ability to handle a vehicle while impaired.

NIAAA Research indicates that alcohol use during the teenage years can interfere with normal adolescent brain development and increase the risk of developing alcohol use disorder. Youth at this stage of development have underdeveloped judgment as the teenage brain is still developing, particularly the prefrontal cortex responsible for decision-making and judgment, potentially making them more prone to risky behaviors like impaired driving.

Additionally, underage drinking contributes to a range of acute consequences, such as injuries, sexual assaults, alcohol overdoses, and deaths including those from motor vehicle crashes.

Alcohol is a factor in the deaths of thousands of people younger than age 21 in the United States each year. Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death for 15 - 20-year-olds. Drivers

under the age of 21 represent about 5 percent of licensed drivers but are involved in 14 percent of fatal crashes.

Data published in the 2024 Monitoring the Future (MTF) study indicated one in ten high school seniors reported driving after smoking marijuana within the two weeks prior to the survey. Despite a decline in youth drinking, evidence suggests that underage, impaired driving is increasing.

In NY State, more than 5,000 drivers under age 21 were arrested for DWI last year; over 8 percent of all such arrests. As a parent, you can't serve alcohol to your teen's friends under the age of 21 under any circumstances, even in your own home.

In 2006, the Coalition worked with the City of Glen Cove Mayor and City Council to adopt Nassau County's first "Social Host" Law, which makes it a violation for adults to permit alcohol use in their homes by persons under the age of 21. In 2007, the law was adopted county-wide. This law aims to prevent underage drinking and its associated risks by holding individuals accountable for providing alcohol to minors at social gatherings.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition was formed in 2003 to change societal norms about alcohol and substance use. The Coalition is concerned about excessive alcohol use in youth and adults and seeks to educate the community about its negative effects on one's health and wellness. The Glen Cove Police Department has been a longstanding member of the Coalition and works diligently to monitor alcohol sales to minors and provide prevention education to youth and adults about Social Host Law and its consequences throughout the year. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit SAFE's website to learn more about Alcohol and its negative consequences please visit [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), as part of the U.S. National Institutes of Health, supports and conducts biomedical and behavioral research on the causes, consequences, treatment, and prevention of alcoholism and alcohol-related problems. For more information please visit [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov).

For more information on underage youth impaired driving please visit <https://troopers.ny.gov/impaired-driving>.