

COMMACK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Hubbs Administration Center

P.O. Box 150

Commack, NY 11725

Debbie Virga
District Clerk

Telephone: (631) 912-2055

September 2020

Dear Friends:

The Commack Family Network – Safe Homes Program is entering its **23rd year**. Many things have changed over the last 23 years. One thing that hasn't changed is the dangers of underage drinking.

We need to take a stand against drugs and alcohol, but the Safe Homes Program is more than just about underage drinking and drugs. It is about helping our children with more protective factors. It is just the one of many tools to help parents raise healthy and positive children, where technology, substance abuse and pressure is causing anxiety. Research shows that one in five children suffer from anxiety. As a community, we need to be supportive of each other and be the “village” to help raise our children.

We must send a clear and loud message that we will not tolerate serving alcohol to a minor. We need to send a clear message that we not tolerate any substances that can harm our children. We need **all** families and community members to take the pledge.

The Commack Family Network – Safe Homes Program is a coalition of parents, educators and community members who feel strongly about the need to unite as a shield of protection for our children. **Now** is the best time to demonstrate our commitment and determination to protect our youth from the dangers of alcohol, vaping, substance use, bullying and the use of the internet safely. The most important aspect of the program is the message that each family member sends when it joins. Serving and knowingly allowing alcohol to a minor is legally and morally wrong and as members, we will not allow that to take place in our homes.

Many parents may feel that drugs and alcohol are not a concern of theirs because of the young age of their children. This should not be the case. The media is a great influence on our children and we need to be the greater influence. Children need to hear a loud and clear message from their parents that drug and alcohol usage, and bullying are not acceptable to them. It has been proven repeatedly that the younger you start with this communication, the easier it will be, as they get older. Also, please note that the Pledge has changed over the last year. Our committee, the Commack Coalition of Caring, would like the community to realize we are a community of caring for all of our children. Our concern for their safety goes beyond drugs and alcohol. When you read the Pledge, you will see it all encompasses, safety restraints when driving, proper locked storage for all firearms, safeguarding prescription medicine and safe backyards in regards to pool safety.

I urge you as a parent, to take an active role in the education of your child and to join your friends and neighbors in taking a stand against the illegal use of drugs and alcohol, and helping to enforce the safety and welfare of **all** our children. Please complete the attached form and return it to the address listed or to any main office in the school district. If you do not send back the form, I must assume you cannot abide by the pledge and your name will not be included in our directory. If you are already a member, please fill out the form so that I may update my records.

This year, we are not sending home hard copies. It will only be sent to you through email notification. The booklet, when complete will also be sent to you in electronic form, but if you would like a hard copy of the booklet, please request it, and one will be mailed to your home.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 631-912-2055. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Debbie Virga

Safe Homes Pledge

I pledge that...

- I will provide a secure, locked storage place for all firearms in my home.
- I will require all children riding in my vehicle to use age-appropriate safety restraints.
- I will actively chaperone any parties in my home.
- I will not serve nor will I allow anyone under the legal drinking age (21) to consume alcohol and/or other drugs in my home or on my property.
- Safeguard all prescription and cold medicine that could potentially be used by a child or teenager. e.g. cold and cough medicines.
- I will welcome communication with other parents in an effort to create a safer community for our children.
- I will insure a safe backyard in regards to pool safety.
- By signing this pledge I give my permission to have my name and phone number included in the SAFE HOMES directory which will be published and distributed to other SAFE HOME families.
- **Booklets will be sent via email.** Printed copies will be available upon request.



Family Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Preferred

Phone: _____

Signature: _____

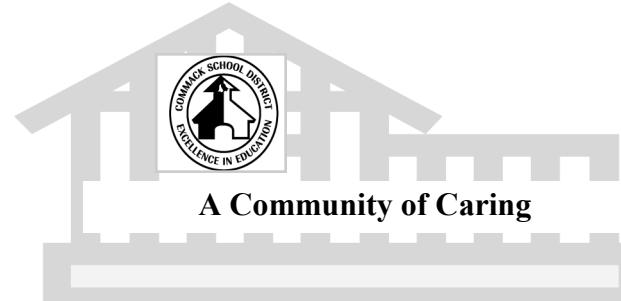
School: _____

This is a one-year commitment and must be renewed annually.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO MAIL THE PLEDGE IN AN ENVELOPE TO ANY MAIN OFFICE OR EMAIL YOUR COMMITMENT TO:
DVRGA@COMMACK.K12.NY.US**



www.commackcoalition.com



Sponsored By:

Commack School District

Commack Coalition of Caring

Commack Fire Department

Commack Ambulance Corp.

Suffolk County Police Department

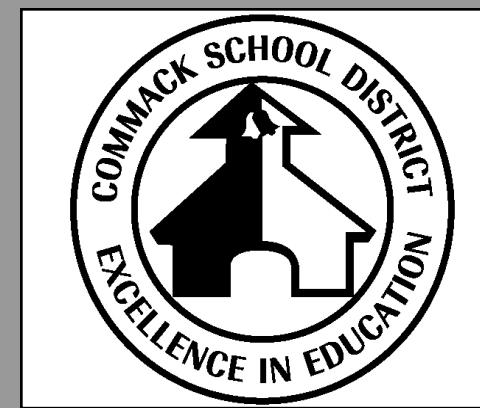
Town of Huntington

Town of Smithtown

**COMMACK FAMILY
NETWORK
SAFE HOMES**

For further information, please call
(631) 912-2055

Commack School District



**"A Community of
Caring"**

PLEDGE AGAINST DRUGS

PLEDGE AGAINST ALCOHOL

PLEDGE FOR OUR CHILDREN



**A Pledge for Parents and
Community Members**

For Information Call: 631 912-2055

Safe Homes Pledge

What is a SAFE HOME?

The SAFE HOMES Program is a successful national program that exists in more than 40 states. It is an effective way for parents to join together to provide a safer environment for their children. Safe Homes enables parents to take a united stand against drugs and alcohol abuse and other dangers. It empowers parents to create an environment in which drug and alcohol use by minors is not acceptable. Your child can no longer say, "You're the only parent with these rules," because you are part of a network of parents with the same rules.

How does the SAFE HOMES program work?

Parents sign a pledge agreeing to abide by the requirements of the SAFE HOMES program. Families who sign the pledge are listed in a directory that is distributed to all SAFE HOMES families. Parents can use this directory whenever their child is invited to someone's house. If the host family is a member of SAFE HOMES, parents should call to ensure that their child or children will be supervised while in that home and certain precautions will be followed. They also know that the host family welcomes communication from them and they can feel comfortable calling to ask any questions they may have about the activity or the environment.

Signed the pledge is a serious commitment.

SAFE HOMES is based upon the honor system, and anyone who signs the pledge is pledging on their personal honor to abide by it. You are making a public agreement with other parents that you will follow the SAFE HOMES principles. If you do not believe you will be able to abide by the pledge, please do not sign it.

After you sign the pledge, we ask that you discuss it with your family. Reread the pledge to your child and explain that you have signed the pledge because you want to protect them. As SAFE HOMES parents, we need to send a clear message to our children that we care enough about their safety to risk their displeasure. Use the SAFE HOMES program as an opportunity to discuss drugs, alcohol and other dangers with your child.

Parent guidelines for sending a child to a party or giving a party.

Going to a Party

- **Know where your child is.** Make sure you get the address and phone number where your child will be.
- **Personally contact the parents of the party giver.** Offer your assistance and support. Verify the occasion and that adults will be present.
- **Make sure alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are not permitted.**
- **Know how your child will get to the party and how she/he will get home.** Make these arrangements in advance. Remind your children that they are NEVER to let anyone drive them if the driver has been drinking.
- **Sleeping over at a party?** Call parents directly to be sure of these arrangements.
- **If you are informed that alcohol, tobacco or drugs are to be served,** you should discuss your disapproval with the parents. Explain the legal ramifications to them. Share this information with the other parents. And, of course, do not allow your child to attend that party.

Giving the Party

- **Plan in Advance.** Know in advance who the guests will be and do not have an Open Party. Set limits.
- **Agree to the rules in advance.** No drugs, alcohol, tobacco, party crashers, and no leaving the party then returning. Limit which rooms are to be used.
- **Know YOU are responsible.** It is up to you, the adult, to make sure all of these rules are followed.
- **Welcome and encourage calls from other parents.**
- **Notify your neighbors of the upcoming party.**
- **Notify the local police if it is going to be a very large party.**
- **Discuss the party afterwards** with your child, how it went, any changes needed for the next time.

SAFE HOMES = SAFE CHILDREN

THE SOCIAL HOST LAW STATES THAT IF YOU ARE AWARE OF THE CONSUMPTION OF ALCHOL OR DRUGS BY A MINOR:

- *First Offense-A fine not to exceed \$500.00, where such violation constitutes the person's first offense.*
- *Second & Subsequent Offense– Misdemeanor—fine up to \$1,000 and/or a term of imprisonment not to exceed one year.*

This law applies to any adult (including children) who are over the age of 18 and knowingly allow consumption of alcohol by minors (any person under the age of 21).

Illegal consumption of alcohol by minors should be reported without delay to 631-852-COPS (2677). Reports of a possible overdose, intoxicated or impaired driver, or other emergency should be called into 911 immediately. Information regarding future parties where alcohol or other substances will be unlawfully consumed can be:

- **Emailed to CSD Anonymous Alerts**
- **Called in anonymously to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-220-TIPS**
- **Texted in by texting "SCPD" and the message to "CRIMES (274637)**
- **Drug Tip Hotline 631-852-NARC(6272)**
- **Cancel The Keg 631-852-KEGS(5347)**
- ***If you need help immediately, you can call the Substance Abuse Hotline 24/7 at 631-979-1700***

Help put a stop to underage alcohol and drug use. Our kids need us to set limits for them. Its our job to help them grow up safe, healthy and drug-free. Joining SAFE HOMES helps to ensure Safe Children.

ALL Parents and Community Members are urged to participate in the SAFE HOMES PROGRAM.