



**For Immediate Release: August 22, 2016**

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### **The Long Island Association for AIDS Care to host SAMHSA Town Hall Meeting**

On Tuesday, August 30, 2016, the Long Island Association for AIDS Care (LIAAC) will be hosting the 2016 Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings to Prevent Underage Drinking at the Brentwood Public Library.

Binge drinking and drinking at an early age is particularly prevalent among ethnic and racial minorities as a result of the consumption of alcohol being considered a ‘rite of passage’ and an accepted cultural norm within this age demographic’s social circles.

The Educated Choices, Healthy Options (ECHO) program will be participating in the 2016 Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings to Prevent Underage Drinking, an initiative sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The main goal of this meeting is to mobilize our communities to become educated and take action in preventing underage drinking. This forum will provide insights on topics related to drunk driving, underage drinking, the impacts of underage and binge drinking on the local economy, and the importance of early intervention as means to deter potential alcohol and drug use.

According to the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services Youth Development Survey: 2014-15 Report, approximately 50% of youth in grades 11 and 12 reported using alcohol in the past 30 days and about 25% reported binge drinking in the past 30 days. The New York State Department of Health also reported that in 2013, there were over 100,000 alcohol-related emergency room visits in New York State. Newsday reports that between 2010 and 2015, over 350 Long Islanders have died as a result of binge drinking.

For more information on the 2016 Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings to Prevent Underage Drinking, visit our Facebook events page at <https://www.facebook.com/LIAAC.inc/events> or call our toll free hotline at 1-866-236-3448.

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