

Town Distracted Driving Program Aims to Reduce Teen Deaths from Motor Vehicle Accidents

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Farmingville, NY - On March 25, the Town of Brookhaven Youth Bureau held its free Distracted Driving program at Town Hall. The event was provided by EAC Network, a not-for-profit human service agency with a network of 70 programs throughout Long Island and New York City. Guest speakers, including those from State Farm Insurance, provided a comprehensive curriculum as well as their own personal experiences about driving distractions. An emerging and deadly epidemic on the nation's roads, distracted driving-related crashes cause thousands of deaths and injuries every year. Nationwide, motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death in young people ages 16-24 and Suffolk County has the highest teen fatality rate in New York State.

To launch the Distracted Driving event and promote safe driving, Liberty Mutual Insurance donated a "crash car" to remind teens and adults about the dangers of distracted driving. The car is located at the entrance to Town Hall, which is near Sachem East High School where hundreds of students pass every day. Pictured left to right in front of the "crash car" are Brookhaven Youth Bureau staff members Amy Gironda and Josephine Lunde, Supervisor Ed Romaine, Liberty Mutual Executive Sales Representative Doug Carlen, Councilman Dan Panico and Youth Bureau staff member Lizabeth Derkevics.

"Distracted driving accidents can be prevented if only people use common sense while behind the wheel," said Supervisor Romaine. "I expect that those who attended the event walked away with a different perspective after hearing first-hand accounts of the tragedies that can occur and commend our Youth Bureau, the EAC Network and Liberty Mutual for their efforts to educate youngsters and save lives."

Councilman Panico said, "It is very easy in the fast paced world that we live in to want to answer that text or read that email, but all it takes is a second for a crash to occur and for your life, or other lives, to be tragically changed forever. It is not worth the chance and it is not worth the gamble. It can wait."