



# TEEN DRUGGED DRIVING:

## Parent, Coalition and Community Group Activity Guide

## Identify, Educate, and Prevent Youth Drugged Driving

Americans are well aware of the terrible consequences of driving drunk and are familiar with the many successful drinking and driving awareness campaigns. With the dramatic increase of handheld phones and personal devices, campaigns and laws targeting talking or texting while driving have also gained prominence. Yet an often overlooked issue, especially among teens and young adults, is drugged driving.

A nationally representative survey by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), found that in 2007, approximately one in eight weekend, nighttime drivers tested positive for illicit drugs.<sup>1</sup>

According to the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), an estimated 10.6 million people aged 12 or older reported driving under the influence of illicit drugs in the past year.<sup>2</sup> Further, one in three drivers killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2009 who were tested and the test results reported, tested positive for drugs.<sup>3</sup> Among high school seniors in 2008, one in 10 (10.4%) reported that in the two weeks prior to their interview, they had driven a vehicle after smoking marijuana.<sup>4</sup>

Drugged driving is a public health concern because it puts not only the driver at risk, but also passengers and others who share the road. Drugs can impair drivers' ability to operate a motor vehicle just as substantially as alcohol and can prove just as deadly. This is true of drugs such as marijuana and cocaine, as well as psycho-active prescription and over-the-counter medications.

This drugged driving toolkit will serve to provide coalitions, prevention groups, and parent organizations with:

- Facts on the danger and extent of teen and young adult drugged driving.
- Parent and community activities for effective prevention.
- Resources to further assist in prevention activities.

## Facts About Teen Drugged Driving

Motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of death for 15- to 19-year-olds in 2007,<sup>5</sup> and the use of drugs or alcohol increase teens' crash risks. According to the 2009 NSDUH report, more than six percent of 16 or 17-year olds and nearly 17 percent of 18 to 20 year-olds reported driving under the influence of alcohol in the past year.<sup>6</sup> In a comprehensive study on unsafe driving by high school students, 30 percent of seniors reported driving after drinking heavily or using drugs, or riding in a car in which the driver had been drinking heavily or using drugs, at least once in the prior two weeks.<sup>7</sup>

1 U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Traffic Safety Facts. Results of the 2007 National Roadside Survey of Alcohol and Drug Use by Drivers. July 2009 DOT HS 811 175.

2 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Results from the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings, NSDUH Series H-41, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 11-4658. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2011.

3 U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Traffic Safety Facts. Drug Involvement of Fatally Injured Drivers. November 2010 DOT HS 811 415.

4 University of Michigan. 2008 Monitoring the Future Study. Unpublished special tabulations (December 2010).

5 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (extracted June 2011). <http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/leadcaus10.html>

6 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2010). Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables. Prevalence Estimates and Samples Sizes Table Types A, B, and N. Part 4 of 4. Rockville, MD. <http://oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k9NSDUH/tabs/Index.pdf>

7 O'Malley, P.M., and Johnston, L.D. Drugs and driving by American high school seniors, 2001-2006. Journal of Studies on Alcohol

## What Types Of Drugs Do Teens Commonly Abuse That Impair Driving

### Alcohol

Alcohol use remains extremely widespread among today's teenagers. Nearly three quarters of students (71%) have consumed alcohol by the end of high school, and more than half (54%) of 12th graders and one sixth (16%) of 8th graders in 2010 report having been drunk at least once in their life.<sup>8</sup>

### Illicit drugs

The proportion of young people using any drug has been stable or rising in recent years, due largely to increased use of marijuana—the most widely used of all drugs. In fact, about half of the high school seniors in the class of 2010 indicated they have tried an illicit drug and well over a third have used on one or more occasions in the prior 12 months.<sup>9</sup> As with alcohol, these drugs impair a driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle safely.

### Prescription drugs

Next to marijuana, prescription are the most commonly abused drugs by teens.<sup>10</sup> The most commonly abused prescription drugs by teenagers include painkillers (e.g. Vicodin; OxyContin), tranquilizers, and stimulants (e.g. Adderall; Ritalin).

## Parent And Community Activities For Effective Prevention

It is generally accepted that because teens are the least experienced drivers as a group, they have a higher risk of being involved in an accident compared with more experienced drivers. When this lack of experience is combined with the use of marijuana or other substances – which alter perception, cognition, reaction time, and other faculties – the results can be tragic. Teens whose parents enforce penalties for driving law infractions are more likely than teens whose parents do not enforce penalties to wear their safety belts (89% vs. 74%); require their passengers to buckle up (82% vs. 64%); obey stop signs (91% vs. 60%); and use turn signals (89% vs. 76%).<sup>11</sup> Parents and other caring adults also play an important role in educating youth about the dangers of drugged driving, so it's important to talk with teens about the risks and for parents to set clear expectations.

The following activities are designed to raise awareness about drugged driving and give parents and community leaders tips and advice to identify the risks of drugged driving, to encourage local media to raise awareness of the perils of drugged driving, and to educate parents and teens about the issue.

and Drugs 68(6):834-842, 2007.

8 Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2011). Monitoring the Future national results on adolescent drug use: Overview of key findings, 2010. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan. <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-overview2010.pdf>

9 Ibid... <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-overview2010.pdf>

10 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2010). Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Volume I. Summary of National Findings (Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-38A, HHS Publication No. SMA 10-4856Findings). Rockville, MD. <http://oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k9NSDUH/2k9Results.htm#2.2>

11 Students Against Destructive Decisions and Liberty Mutual Group, "Summer Driving," 2007. Page 2. <http://www.sadd.org/teenstoday/teenstodaypdfs/TeenSummerDriving07.pdf>

## Activity #1

# Drugged Driving Prevention Night

Host a Drugged Driving Prevention Night at your facility or school, or team up with a local partner organization to hold the event at their facility. Include guest speakers who are local prevention/treatment experts, law enforcement, school representatives, and (if applicable) a local parent or teen affected by drugged driving. You may also want to host a roundtable discussion as well as provide information on local resources for parents and teens in your community.

### Step One

Find an appropriate, comfortable space to accommodate your group. Consider working with a facilitator to handle discussions and flow of the meeting. A facilitator could be a prevention expert or a law enforcement officer. Or, if conducting the Prevent Night in a more public forum, you may want to ask a local media personality – such as a popular news anchor or radio disc jockey – to serve as the facilitator for the evening. They will moderate the discussion and transition from speaker to speaker as well as solicit questions from the audience at the end of the event.

### Step Two

Secure participants from local law enforcement, prevention, school, and parenting organizations, and teens to serve as speakers and panelists for the evening. Your local Drug Free Communities program may be able to assist you with enlisting experts and other panelists – find out if your community has a program by going to <http://www.WhiteHouse.gov/ONDCP/fy-2011-new-grants>.

You may also want to invite important community leaders such as the mayor, school district superintendent, or chief of police to speak at the event.

In addition to contacting your local police department, you may want to find out if your community has a local drug recognition expert (DRE) available to speak. A DRE is a police officer trained to recognize impairment in drivers who have taken drugs other than, or in addition to, alcohol. Contact your DRE State coordinator to find out if an expert is available in your area – state contacts are available online at <http://www.decp.org/coordinators/state/find.cfm>.

### Step Three

Develop a list of local resources to offer to your community, including local support numbers, community substance abuse prevention and recovery experts, and prevention and treatment facilities in your area. The Office of National Drug Control Policy offers many customizable resources and templates to help you create these materials. They are available on The Anti-Drug.com website at <http://www.TheAntiDrug.com/resources/>.

### Step Four

Look for opportunities to collaborate with appropriate local businesses or community organizations that can help get the word out about your event and the dangers of drugged driving. These partners can help raise visibility of the event and disseminate your materials (materials and other resources are listed at the end of this toolkit). Consider organizations such as your local drug-free community program, libraries, physician groups, PTA, community centers, drivers education schools, vehicle dealers, and pharmacies.

## Step Five

Determine the topics, timing, and order of the speakers. General etiquette is to lead with the moderator followed by the rest of your speakers in order of highest-ranking official to least high. You may use the following as an example but you should shape the program to best suit your format, timing, and speakers:

- Moderator opening remarks about teen drugged driving (5 minutes)
  - » Welcome panelists and audience
  - » General overview of the issue of drugged driving (include relevant national and/or local statistics)
  - » Provide background on Drugged Driving Prevention Night – why you’re hosting it, partners involved, what audience will learn and who they will hear from/format
  - » Introduce first speaker
- Local law enforcement official or drug recognition expert (DRE) (5 minutes)
  - » Discuss the public safety threat of drugged driving; relay firsthand experience
  - » Provide an overview of what local law enforcement is doing to identify and stop drugged driving
  - » Discuss importance of educating teens and parents of the dangers and note prevention programs/efforts offered through local sheriff’s office
  - » Introduce next speaker
- Local school official (5 minutes)
  - » Discuss what local school(s) are doing educate teens about drugs, drugged driving and to deter substance use
  - » Highlight importance of extracurricular programs and positive alternative activities
  - » Discuss importance of family involvement and positive role models
  - » Introduce next speaker
- Local prevention expert (5 minutes)
  - » Highlight prevalent issues in local community, growing issue of drugged driving
  - » Discuss important role of education and prevention programs to thwart drugged driving and substance use among teens

- » Highlight an experience from working directly with teens/teens in rehabilitation programs
- » Turn conversation back to moderator
- Moderator - lead roundtable discussion; call on participants to respond to questions (sample discussion guide located at the bottom of this section). (15 minutes)

## Step Six

Engage local media. In advance of engaging local media, secure a local substance abuse expert, law enforcement officer or drug recognition evaluator (DRE), parent and/or teen who would be willing to talk with the local media – your panelists may be good spokespeople.

Contact your local newspaper, TV, and radio stations, invite them to the drugged driving prevention night, and offer to connect them with your local spokespeople. Securing a local anchor, reporter or DJ to serve as the moderator may help ensure coverage from that station. Below is a media outreach letter that you may use as a template or example upon which to base your letter.

If your community has a Drug Evaluation and Classification Program – a training program to help officers identify drugged driving – you may want to ask if interested reporters may want to attend the next DRE training. If so, when you contact reporters you can offer them the opportunity to capture footage from the training along with officer or instructor interviews to support a follow-up news segment.

## Additional Resources

Several additional resources are included with this guide and are available online for downloading and printing at <http://www.WhiteHouse.gov/ONDGP/drugged-driving>. Resources include:

- Teens, Drugs & Driving Fact Sheet
- Tips for Preventing Teen Crashes
- Teen Tips for Driving “Above the Influence”
- Teen “Think It’s Harmless?” Poster
- SADD Parent-Teen driving contract
- Youth-designed drugged driving prevention poster

## Roundtable Discussion Guide

Discussing issues related to drugged driving and drug abuse can be a deeply personal and emotional experience. Consequently, it is important to keep the following tips in mind:

- Make all participants aware of the meeting length and purpose of the discussion
- Establish guidelines for the discussion (e.g., respect others' feelings and experiences, listen without interrupting)
- Form small groups and encourage participation from everyone
- Sum up the discussion at the end with thoughts about actions that parents and groups can take

The following questions are intended to be a guide in facilitating a roundtable discussion between small groups but may also be utilized in a panel session format for a larger audience:

- What sets drugged driving apart from driving drunk?
- Would you be able to recognize the signs of someone who is under the influence of drugs? How?
- Have you heard your child or their friends talking about taking illicit or prescription drugs to get high?
- To teens, have you heard your friends talk about taking drugs?
- To teens, what do you think parents can do to help keep kids away from drugs? What about preventing drugged driving?
- What do you think those in the education community can do to prevent drugged driving among their students?
- How can parents start a discussion with their teens about drugged driving and substance use?
- To teens, how do you resist pressure, particularly when it's coming from a friend? Is it difficult to do that?
- Has the media, celebrity culture, etc., influenced your perceptions of drug use? What about drug/alcohol use and driving?
- Do any of you know someone who has driven after taking a drug or alcohol?
  - » If so, ask them to relay the what happened and the consequences without disclosing too much detail (names)
  - » If not, ask if anyone can identify a recent incident in the news

## Sample Pitch Email for Media for the Drugged Driving Prevention Night

Dear XXX,

Did you know that that one in three drivers who were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2009 and were tested, tested positive for drugs? Further, more than six percent of youth aged 16 or 17 drove after taking drugs, and 30 percent of high school seniors report driving after drinking heavily or using drugs, or riding in a car whose driver had been drinking heavily or using drugs, at least once in the prior two weeks.

Americans are all-too-familiar with the terrible consequences of driving drunk and with the many successful drinking and driving awareness campaigns. With the dramatic increase of handheld phones and personal devices, campaign and laws targeting talking or texting while driving have also become prominent. Yet an often overlooked and ever growing issue, especially in teens and young adults, is drugged driving.

You are invited to [insert organization] Drugged Driving Prevention Night. Local prevention/treatment experts, law enforcement, school representatives, parents, and teens will discuss the prevalence and dangers of drugged driving, the challenges they face, and ways to prevent teen drugged driving. There will be great photo and video opportunities, as well as an interactive Q&A session.

We'd love to have you join us. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

(Insert contact info)



## Activity #2

# Drugged Driving Poster Contest

Drugged driving poses a serious threat on our Nation's highways. Studies show young drivers are particularly at risk of driving after drinking heavily or using drugs, or getting in a car with an impaired driver. Youth serving and community organizations can raise awareness about drugged driving by engaging local youth in a poster contest that challenges them to think critically about the dangers of drugged driving and develop creative visual expressions that communicate these risks.

### Step One

Establish the parameters for art submissions. This is an opportunity to shape the contest around your community's unique environment. For instance, you may ask the teens to include the local high school mascot, the community emblem or landmark, or reference to a special drugged driving event. To help guide teens in developing their submissions, suggested general parameters are:

- Should be 8 ½ x 11 and an original creation;
- Illustrates and leverages awareness of drugged driving;
- Encourages behavior change and sober driving;
- Is an original youth-led design;
- Does not infringe on copyrights – copying another's music, art, etc.;
- Does not include explicit language, corporate logos or name brands, or overt symbols of violence;
- Received by submission deadline.

### Step Two

Engage local partners. Work with local art clubs, movie theaters, malls, or other community spaces to host an art exhibit of the top submissions and an ongoing display of the best or most original art. Contact local businesses to ask for donated prizes for winning participants.

### Step Three

Promote the contest. This poster contest can be conducted among youth who participate in an organization's program, school-wide or community-wide so you should plan and promote accordingly.

You may want to create a colorful and eye-catching promotional flyer to post around your organization's facilities or distribute at local schools, or if conducting a community-wide contest, consider reaching out to local television and radio stations with the contest details. A sample flyer is included on page 9 along with sample copy you are welcome to use for your flyers. When promoting the contest, be sure to note the activity parameters, submission deadline and location, and prizes.

### Step Four

Collect submissions and select winners. You may wish to enlist other organizational and/or community leaders to help you judge the poster submissions. To ensure a fair selection of the winning submission(s), it may be helpful to establish a scoring system. Below is a sample of how the artwork could be scored.

- Project description (40 points)
  - » Appeals to youth
  - » Includes call to action
- Drugged Driving Theme (30 points)
  - » Raises awareness of the risks and dangers associated with drugged driving
- Presentation (Design and Quality) (30 points)
  - » Creative use of art style/techniques

## Step 5

Plan the unveiling. While the submissions are coming in, work with the local partners you secured during Step Two to plan an unveiling event. Components of the unveiling may include:

- A teen panel discussion about substance use, drugged driving, and living above the influence of drugs and alcohol
- Keynote speakers and leaders from the local community
- An opportunity for attendees to walk around and view the submissions
- Winning poster unveiling
- Refreshments

An optional discussion guide is included on the following pages to support a teen panel discussion.

## Step 6

Invite the local newspaper, TV, and radio stations as well as key community stakeholders to attend the event. You can use the media outreach letter from Activity #1 to help shape your outreach letter. You may want to extend a speaking role to high profile community stakeholders you invite.

It may be harder to draw media to a smaller scale event. Consider sending a picture of the winning submission along with the artist's name, age, and general information about the contest to local media as an alternative.

## Step 7

Host the event!

## Additional Resources

### Sample Promotional Flyer Text

#### Take a Stand Against Drunk and Drugged Driving

#### Are you ready to use your artistic skills to stand up to Drunk and Drugged Driving?

[Insert organization name] wants to see how you would inspire your friends and other teens in your community to stay above the influence of drunk and drugged driving. Submit your original POSTER DESIGN for a chance to have it showcased [insert how/where design will be displayed].

#### Contest Guidelines:

- Entrants must be 14-18 years old.
- Design should be 8 ½ x 11 and an original creation that illustrates and raises awareness of the dangers of drunk and drugged driving.
- Design should be creative, inspirational, unique and highlight a positive slogan or theme.

Grand prize winning poster will be featured on the [insert organization] Facebook or Web page [if applicable]!

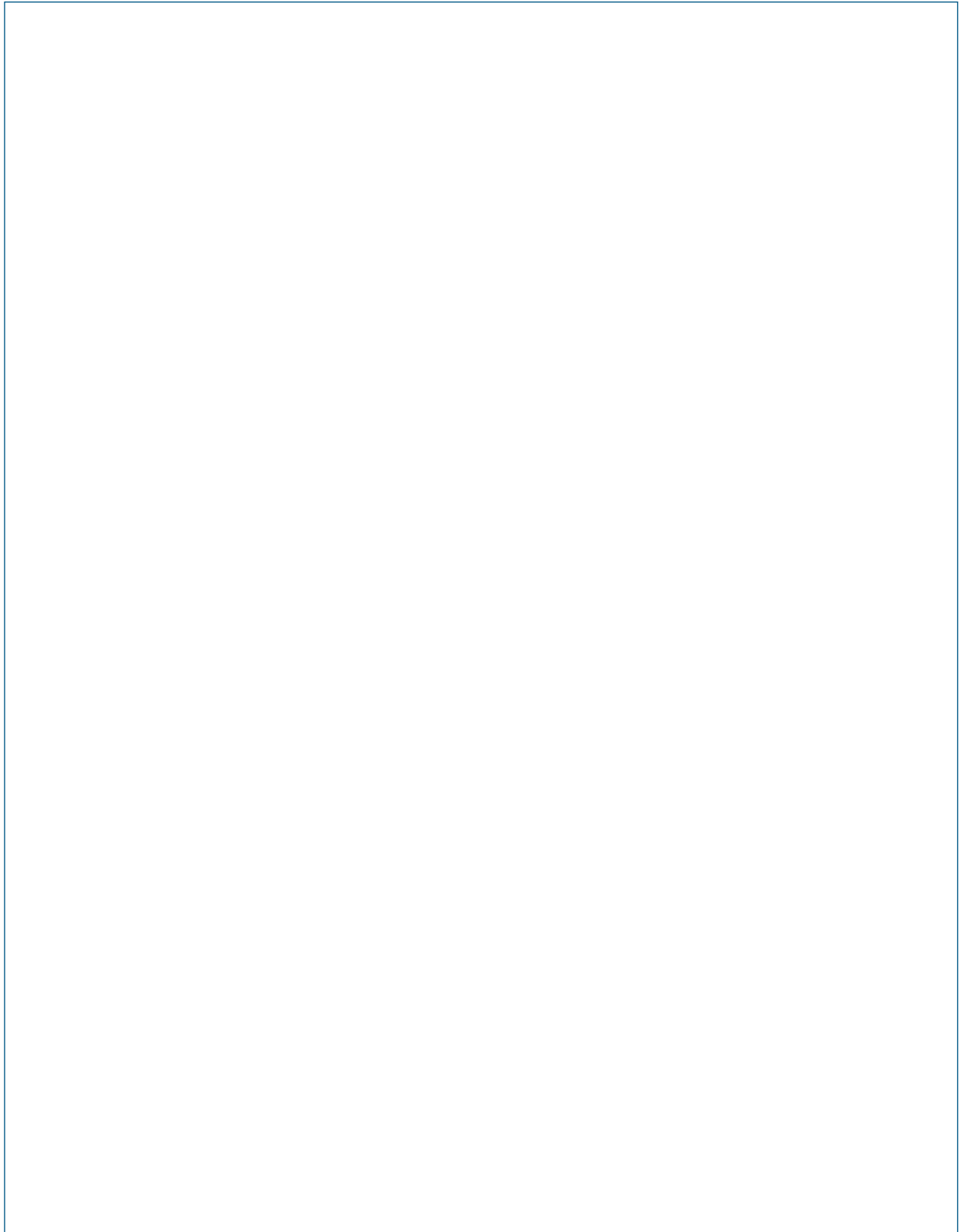
Contest runs month/day/year – month/day/year. Please submit/mail your poster design to:

[Insert organization name, point of contact, address and/or any relevant information]

Contact [insert contact information] for more contest details.



## Sample Promotional Flyer

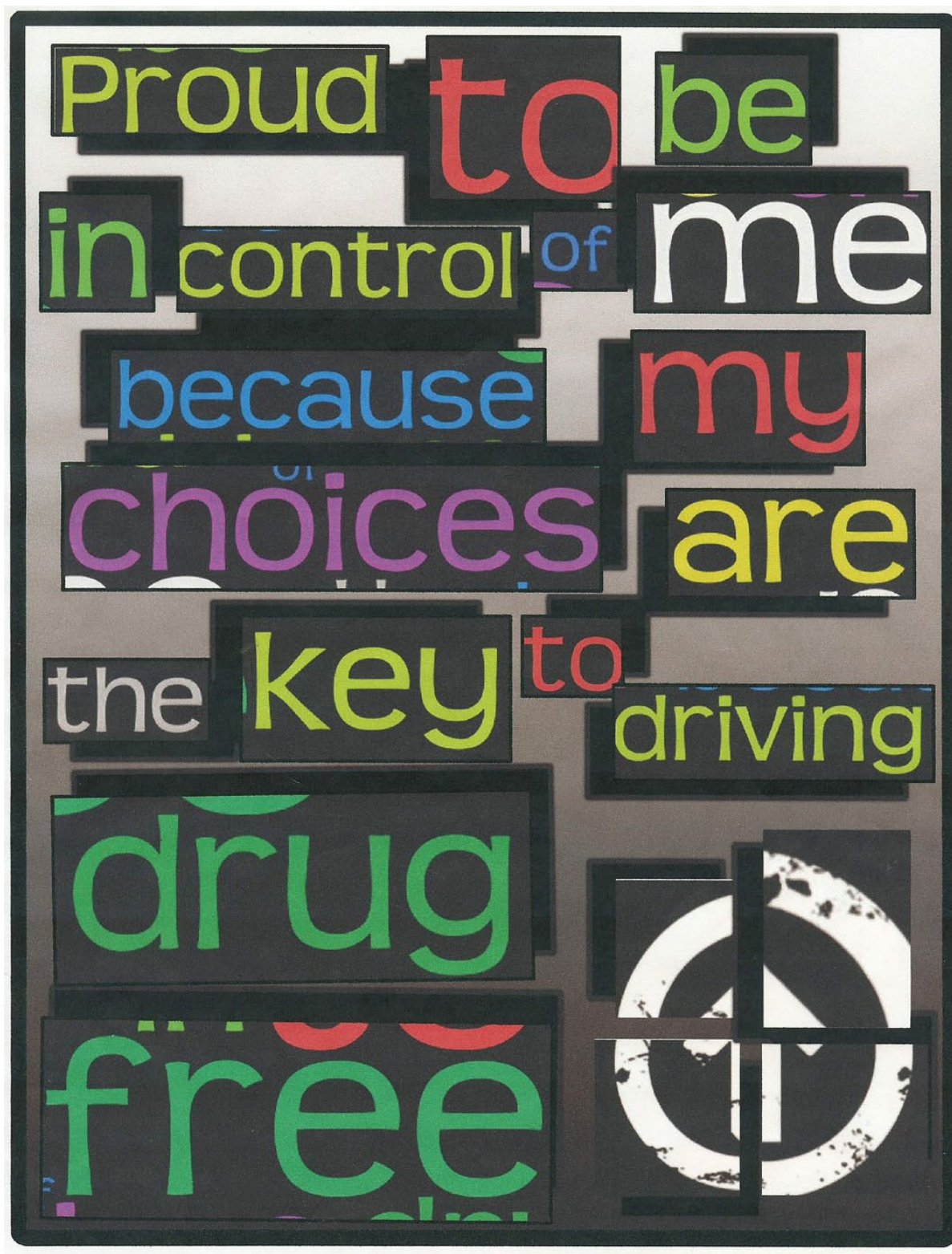


## Teen Panel Discussion Guide

- How do you cope with pressure, particularly when it's coming from a friend?
- Is it difficult to do that?
- What tools do you need to resist drug use?
- Describe the negative influences in your life.
- What about that is negative?
- What do you do about that?
- What kinds of influences do you think your friends face?
- How do they cope?
- How do you influence them?
- Have you heard friends or acquaintances talk about taking drugs?
- What do you think parents other adults can do to help keep kids away from drugs? What about preventing drugged driving?
- What sets drugged driving apart from driving drunk?
- Would you be able to recognize the signs of someone who is under the influence of drugs? How?
- Has the media, celebrity culture, etc., influenced your perceptions of drug use? What about drug/alcohol use and driving?
- How do you keep from being pulled into a negative direction?
- Do any of you know someone who has driven after taking a drug or alcohol?
- If so, ask what happened and were there any consequences? (No need to disclose specific detail such as names)
- If not, ask if anyone can identify a recent incident in the news
- What does Driving Above the Influence mean to you?

## Sample of a Teen Poster Submission

Poster created by Kaylen, age 17, East Grand Forks, MN



# TEENS, DRUGS & DRIVING

## PARENTS. THE ANTI-DRUG.

Drugged driving, or driving under the influence of drugs, is a significant public health and public safety threat and may be a bigger issue than generally recognized. According to the first-ever analysis of drug involvement from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) census, one in three motor vehicle fatalities (33 percent) with known drug test results tested positive for drugs in 2009.<sup>1</sup>

New and young drivers are the most at-risk for crashes on the roads and are at risk for the most harmful effects of drug use. As teens take to the roads, parents can take action by talking about the dangers of drunk, drugged, and distracted driving. It's important that our youngest drivers learn how to drive safely and make healthy choices.

Below are the most recent teen driving and substance use trends.

## THE FACTS

- ✓ Motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of death for 15- to 19-year-olds in 2007.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ More than six percent of 16 or 17 year olds and nearly 17 percent of 18 to 20 year olds reported driving under the influence of alcohol in the past year.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ In a comprehensive study on unsafe driving by high school students, 30 percent of seniors reported driving after drinking heavily or using drugs, or riding in a car whose driver had been drinking heavily or using drugs, at least once in the prior two weeks.<sup>4</sup>

30%

Of high school seniors report driving, or riding in a car, after drinking heavily or using drugs

3/4

Nearly three quarters of students have consumed alcohol by the end of high school

- ✓ Nearly three quarters of students have consumed alcohol by the end of high school. More than half (54%) of 12th graders in 2010 report having been drunk at least once in their life and about half indicated they have tried an illicit drug with well over a third having used on one or more occasions in the prior 12 months.<sup>5</sup>
- ✓ Next to marijuana, prescription drugs are the most commonly abused drug by teens.<sup>6</sup> The most commonly abused prescription drugs by teenagers include painkillers (e.g. Vicodin; OxyContin), tranquilizers, and stimulants (e.g. Adderall; Ritalin)
- ✓ In 2009, past month use of illicit drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol (including binge alcohol) was lower among youths aged 12 to 17 who reported that their parents always or sometimes engaged in monitoring behaviors than among youths whose parents "seldom" or "never" engaged in such behaviors.<sup>7</sup>

1 U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Traffic Safety Facts. Drug Involvement of Fatally Injured Drivers. November 2010 DOT HS 811 415.

2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (extracted June 2011). <http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/leadcaus10.html>

3 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2010). Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables. Prevalence Estimates and Samples Sizes Table Types A, B, and N. Part 4 of 4. Rockville, MD.

4 O'Malley, P.M., and Johnston, L.D. Drugs and driving by American high school seniors, 2001-2006. Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs 68(6):834-842, 2007.

5 Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2011). Monitoring the Future national results on adolescent drug use: Overview of key findings, 2010. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan. <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-overview2010.pdf>

6 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2010). Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Volume I. Summary of National Findings (Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-38A, HHS Publication No. SMA 10-4856Findings). Rockville, MD. <http://oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k9NSDUH/2k9Results.htm#2.2>

7 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2010). Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Volume I. Summary of National Findings (Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-38A, HHS Publication No. SMA 10-4856Findings). Rockville, MD. <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k9NSDUH/2k9Results.htm>



Think it's harmless to

**DRIVE HIGH?**

**In 2009, 18% of drivers killed in a crash tested positive for drugs.\***

**Research shows that drugs affect a driver's concentration, perception, coordination, and reaction time.**

**How's that for harmless?**

Get the facts at [abovetheinfluence.com](http://abovetheinfluence.com)



\*Drug Involvement of Fatally Injured Drivers, U.S. DOT/NHTSA, November 2010.

# TIPS FOR PREVENTING TEEN CRASHES



Getting a driver's license is an exciting and risky time for teens. The cause of many teenage crashes is often an issue of attitude and maturity. Parents and caregivers can help shape a responsible attitude about driving and take immediate steps to limit the potential dangers of teen driving.

**1 Remember you are a role model.**

New drivers learn a lot by example, so practice safe driving by obeying speed limits and demonstrating safe driving habits.

**2 Supervise as much practice driving as possible for at least six months.**

This will get a teen acclimated to the road before he or she takes a driving test to get a license. Let your teen drive in a wide variety of driving conditions to build experience and confidence.

**3 Start out slow.**

Start with slow moving traffic environments and gradually introduce your teen to more difficult driving situations such as highway driving, merge ramps and major urban areas. Parents need to assure their teens build up their experience before jumping into highway traffic.

**4 Require that your teenager wear safety belts at all times – no exceptions.**

If you wear your safety belt every time you drive, your son or daughter may adopt this behavior more readily.

**5 Make sure your teen is aware of potential safety issues as well as how to respond to safety or emergency situations.**

Keep a highway safety kit in the trunk of your teen's vehicle and review with them how to use its resources.

**6 Be clear that teens should never use their cell phones or text while they are driving.**

If it is necessary to use a cell phone, instruct your teenager to pull safely over to the side of the road to make an emergency call.

**7 Limit nighttime driving.**

Many teen car crashes take place between 9 p.m. and 12 a.m. so it's best for beginning drivers to be restricted to driving during the day initially, and gradually be introduced to night driving as they gain experience.

**8 Limit the number of passengers allowed in the car when your teen is driving.**

Having more passengers in a car increases the chance of greater risk-taking, primarily because of greater peer pressure and more distractions.

**9 Discuss realistic consequences of drug and alcohol use.**

Remind them that it is illegal for teens to drink alcohol – and illegal for anyone to use illicit drugs. Discuss how drugs and alcohol can impair their senses, affect perception, and cause delayed reaction time. It's important to note that even one drink or joint can impact the senses, as can prescription drugs taken with a physician's order. Make it clear that alcohol, marijuana or other drug use when driving is completely unacceptable.

**10 Choose safe vehicles for your teenagers.**

Look for automobiles with high safety ratings (air bags, crumple zones, etc.) and review federal statistics and consumer-report literature to help evaluate the safety rating of a vehicle.

**PARENTS.**  
THE ANTI-DRUG.

For more information, visit:  
[www.theantidrug.com/resources/impaired-driving.aspx](http://www.theantidrug.com/resources/impaired-driving.aspx)



# TIPS FOR DRIVING “ABOVE THE INFLUENCE”



## A POSITIVE ATTITUDE MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Many teen crashes aren't caused by a lack of skills or knowledge but by attitude and maturity. Be sure to develop and practice a responsible driving attitude.



## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT.

Work with your parents to get plenty of supervised practice for at least six months before you take the driver's license test – consider asking them to establish a set practice schedule with you. Practice driving in different conditions so you know what to expect in inclement weather, heavy traffic, urban and rural situations and night driving. Ask your parents what tips they have for handling these situations. The more experience you have prior to your driving test the more confident you will feel behind the wheel.



## UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF DRIVING “ABOVE THE INFLUENCE” OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL.

Drinking alcohol or using drugs when driving is totally unacceptable. Not only is it dangerous, it's also illegal and can cost you your license. Just one drink or one joint causes a chemical effect on the brain that can impair the senses and affect judgment and reaction time. Prescription drugs taken with a physician's order might also affect your senses so be aware of any potential side effects before getting behind the wheel and never take a drug that wasn't prescribed for you.



## LIMIT THE NUMBER OF RIDERS.

Limit the number of friends you drive in your car if you're a new driver. Your risk of a fatal crash increases with each additional passenger and overcrowding your car can leave riders without seatbelts.



## DRIVE WHILE THE SUN IS UP.

Stick to daytime driving when you first get started. Your risk of a fatal crash is three times higher at night per mile driven.



## TAKE IT SLOW.

Save the highway and other fast-moving, heavy traffic situations until you've had plenty of supervised practice. Gradually take on more difficult driving situations – such as merge ramps, major urban areas and rush-hour – once you're more comfortable with your driving capabilities. Don't forget, speeding is the #1 reason new drivers lose control of their vehicles.



## TIME FOR STORMY WEATHER.

Rainstorms, snow, sleet and ice can create scary and dangerous driving conditions, even more so for inexperienced drivers. Get as much supervised practice on the road during poor weather conditions as you can.



## STOW AWAY THE CELL PHONE.

Talking or texting on your cell phone while you're driving is a dangerous activity. If it's necessary to use your phone, pull safely over to the side of the road before even picking it up.



## IT'S ALL ABOUT THE RIDE.

Talk with your parents about what family vehicle you will drive. Larger cars with fully equipped safety features such as airbags and anti-lock brakes will offer better protection in a crash. Seatbelts come standard in all vehicles and save thousands of lives each year. Plus, a majority of states have seatbelt laws that require drivers and passengers to buckle up. Play it safe – wear a seatbelt every time you get in the car and save your cash for something other than tickets.



[abovetheinfluence.com](http://abovetheinfluence.com)

## Download

Go <http://www.WhiteHouse.gov/ONDCP/drugged-driving> to download the Teen Drugged Driving: Parent, Coalition and Community Group Activity Guide and supporting materials.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) also offers a host of resources, including the “Power of Parents” handbook, available at <http://www.MADD.org/powerofparents>.