

## **Drinking & Driving Kills**

### **TEACHER'S GUIDE**

#### **What teachers need to know:**

Driving may seem to be a single act, but it actually involves a great deal of multi-tasking. Drivers must be alert to other drivers while they are watching road signs, lights, lanes, etc. They must be able to make quick decisions based on ever-changing circumstances, and they must act on those decisions in a proper manner. Drinking affects each of these areas, which is why drinking and driving is such a dangerous, and often lethal, combination. Consider the following alcohol-related statistics from *The U.S Department of Health and Human Services and Mothers Against Drunk Driving*:

- Alcohol is involved in nearly half of all traffic crashes.
- There is approximately one fatal alcohol-related motor vehicle crash every 30 minutes.
- Although 16- to 24-year olds comprise only 15 percent of licensed drivers, they are involved in more than 25 percent of all fatal alcohol-related crashes.
- Nearly one-fourth of fatally injured teenage drivers were drinking prior to their crashes, with nearly two-thirds of these at legally intoxicated levels.

#### **Lesson Plan**

##### **Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Research the physical effects of drinking, the legal ramifications of drinking and driving, and the “facts” about alcohol
- Create factual statements to deter young people from drinking and driving.

##### **Materials:**

- Black/white board or overhead projector
- Research materials, including, if possible, access to the Internet
- Paper and pens/pencils

##### **Project and Purpose:**

Students will create a fact sheet to dispel myths about drinking and driving.

1. Before class begins, write each of the myths below on the board or on an overhead projector.
2. Divide students into small groups and assign each group one of the drinking and driving myths. Each group will research and find facts that prove the myth/statement false. The second part of their assignment is to rewrite the myth as a true statement.
3. Possible Internet resources include: Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Families First, Students Against Drunk Driving, What's Driving You? and the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information.
4. Give students time to complete their research, and then gather them together to share their “truths.” You may choose to write their new, true statements on the board.
5. Ask students: what is one new thing you learned from your research?

##### **MYTHS:**

- “Alcohol gets me pumped up. It’s a stimulant for me.”
- “Drinking coffee sobers me up right away.”
- “I always stay away from the hard stuff and just drink beer so I’m okay.”
- “I’m a big guy so I can handle my liquor better.”
- “Once I roll down the car window, I’m fine to drive.”
- “If I drink, I just drive slowly. That way it’s safe.”
- “All I have to do is splash my face with cold water and I’m good to go.”
- “A drink or two makes me a better driver because it heightens my senses.”

##### **Class Discussion Questions:**

1. What reasons do people give for drinking and driving? Do you think these are valid reasons?
2. Why do you think alcohol is socially acceptable in our society? Do you think it is a “rite of passage” for young people to drink, or can we expect teenagers to wait until they are of age? Why or why not?
3. Do you consider alcohol a drug? Why or why not? How would you convince someone of your opinion?

**Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. What are some alcohol-related risks? Does knowing the possible effects of alcohol make you not want to drink and drive? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever known anyone whose life or family was affected by drinking and driving? If so, how has that affected your view toward alcohol? If you don't know anyone personally, how does hearing about people who killed others or who were killed by drunk drivers affect your attitude toward drinking?
3. In what ways can you prepare yourself now to not drink and drive? How can preparation make refusal easier?

**Evaluation:**

- Did all students participate in the research and class discussions?
- Did students present their information and new, true statements?