



Drinking and Driving Facts

How big is the problem?

- In 2010, 10,228 people were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes, accounting for nearly one-third (31 percent) of all traffic-related deaths in the United States.
- Of the 1,210 traffic deaths among children ages 1 to 14 years in 2010, 211 (17 percent) involved an alcohol-impaired driver.
- In 2010, over 1.4 million drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. That's 1 percent of the 112 million self-reported episodes of alcohol-impaired driving among U.S. adults each year.
- Drugs other than alcohol (e.g., marijuana and cocaine) are involved in about 18 percent of motor vehicle driver deaths. These other drugs are often used in combination with alcohol.

Who is most at risk?

- Young people are most at risk.
- At all levels of blood alcohol concentration (BAC), the risk of being involved in a crash is greater for young people than for older people.
- Among drivers with BAC levels of 0.08 percent or higher involved in fatal crashes in 2010, more than one out of every three were between 21 and 24 years of age (34 percent). The next two largest groups were ages 25 to 34 (30 percent) and 35 to 44 (25 percent).

How can we help prevent deaths and injuries from impaired driving?

Effective measures include the following:

- Actively enforcing existing 0.08 percent BAC laws, minimum legal drinking age laws, and zero tolerance laws for drivers younger than 21 years old in all states.³
- Promptly taking away the driver's licenses of people who drive while intoxicated.
- Using sobriety checkpoints.
- Putting health promotion efforts into practice that influence economic, organizational, policy, and school/community action.

Sources:

- Month-by-Month Prevention, Promotion, Call to Action, and Planning Guide, SAMHSA
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired_driving/impaired-drv_factsheet.html