

Underage Drinking and Drunk Driving Essay

*Drinking Underage is Illegal: An Ever-Growing National Addiction*

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Imagine waking up one morning to hear the words that your brother was in a fatal car accident the previous night. Unfortunately, for a fellow student at my high school, this tragic event came true. As State Police concluded their investigation and ruled that drunk driving was the cause of the deadly accident, I came to realize that the teenager was the brother of a freshman I was mentoring. Not only myself, but my entire school could not fathom the death, for it hit the student body hard and changed the way that students viewed drinking and driving.

With the tragic death, you would think that the school district would have assembled the student body for a memorial and what his death has taught us, but unfortunately, the school district did nothing of the kind. Instead, Fairview residents responded to the death with a variety of memorabilia to remember the loss of a life due to underage drinking and driving. Bumper stickers were produced in memory of the teenager and a book subject to drinking and driving was donated to the high school library. But for our local community to get the point across that underage drinking and driving may result in a loss of life, I do not believe the citizens had the right type of advertisement to discourage this behavior. To help discontinue the use of underage drinking, individuals need to think outside the box and be creative in advertising the circumstances of drinking and driving.

I believe the most effective way to educate teenagers is to present to them a real life experience. If I were the principal of my high school, I would have had an assembly in the auditorium to teach the student body about the life-threatening addiction that is growing nationally. What we need to implement and showcase to high schools across the nation is real-life experiences where individuals can relate to a traumatic incident in their

own life. If we had a presentation at our high school with my mentee speaking about the loss of his brother or other individuals speaking about a shocking true story about drunk driving, we can help decrease the use of alcohol-related accidents. It will be especially effective if a student was to present the story or information to the school, for teenagers can relate to individuals around their own age group. When adolescents sit down in a wellness class and listen to a boring lecture about D.U.I. statistics, it is not going to get the point across, but if we can bring the statistics to life and incorporate them in a school-wide presentation, students will be more prone to not drink and drive.

I can relate to this type of discouragement, because a presentation the night before my junior prom really made an impression in my life. The Prom Committee thought outside the box and presented a video to the high school pertaining to an innocent girl who was coming home from her prom. On her way home, she was struck by a drunk driver. She had third degree burns all over her body and her face was deformed from her skin melting in the intense heat as her car burst into flames. Fellow classmates were crying in the audience after watching this powerful video and it really left an impression to show the dangers of underage drinking and driving. Thankfully, no one that attended the prom that year ended up in an accident thanks to this influential video.

As I travel to the Swanson School of Engineering next year at the University of Pittsburgh, I plan on majoring in transportation engineering and will hopefully work for a State Department of Transportation. With my projected career, I would like to see more road signage pertaining to D.U.I. throughout not only the Commonwealth, but the entire United States. Currently, Pennsylvania is only one of the states that implements D.U.I. signage within its transportation department. I believe that if we can get the point across

to young drivers by recognizing the factors, we can significantly decrease D.U.I death and accident rates. Teenagers will be reminded that “You can’t afford it” when driving down the highway as they notice a slash through the D.U.I. text. The more we can remind individuals to not drink and drive, the more prone they will be not to do it.

I hope my words were able to be heard and will help influence the future of discouraging drinking and driving.