

Drunk Driving Not the Only Way Alcohol Leads to Teen Deaths



Two-thirds of underage drinking-related fatalities have nothing to do with a car.

Less than one-third of the 4,700 annual underage drinking-related deaths in the United States result from road crashes, according to a new study.

The findings show the importance of preventing underage drinking even if there is no risk of drinking and driving, according to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).

Analyzing 2010 federal government data, the group found that 32 percent of the drinking-related deaths among young people aged 15 to 20 involved traffic crashes, while 68 percent involved incidents such as murder (30 percent), suicide (14 percent), alcohol poisoning (9 percent) and other causes (15 percent).

"These data show that taking away the keys truly does not take away all of the risks when it comes to underage drinking," MADD national president Jan Withers said in a news release from the group.

"MADD hopes this information will inspire parents to have ongoing conversations with their kids about the dangers of drinking alcohol before age 21, especially since we know that a majority of kids say their parents are the biggest influence on their decisions about alcohol," she added.

MADD released the study as part of Alcohol Awareness Month and in advance of the group's third annual national PowerTalk 21 Day on April 21. The day is meant to encourage parents to talk to their children about alcohol, using MADD's Power of Parents handbook as their guide.

Despite increased public awareness, drinking and drugged driving continues:

- Nearly 13,000 people are killed each year in alcohol-related accidents
- Hundreds of thousands more are injured
- Alcohol-related crashes cost American taxpayers over \$100 billion
- Over 1.4 million arrests for DWI each year (less than 1% of 159 million self-reported episodes)

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of alcohol-impaired driving) and 780,000 are convicted

- Two-thirds of those sentenced to incarceration are repeat offenders

To learn more about the dangers of alcohol and driving, [click here](#).