



## **2024-2025 School Program**

### **EDUCATORS' GUIDE**

**(Grades 7-12)**



Information sheets, discussion questions, worksheets, and assessment tools to help educate youth about the perils of driving while impaired.

**One more tragedy is one too many.**

This program is designed to help eradicate the incidence of impaired driving, saving lives across Canada.

# A Message from MADD Canada

## Educators' Introduction, Grades 7-12

Thank you for choosing MADD Canada to help educate your students about impaired driving.

As a host of our 2024-2025 *School Program*, you have received this package of educational tools that can be used in a classroom setting. Many of the materials found in this guide could be covered prior to the school presentation in order that students already have a clear understanding of the effects of cannabis and/or alcohol on the body. Following the delivery of the MADD Canada *School Program*, these or other materials provided should be used in a timely fashion so the program is still fresh in the students' minds, ensuring they can benefit from discussion and debriefing.

**Section One** of this resource contains an educators' guide for class discussion. It includes an answer guide to many difficult and thought-provoking questions. As a facilitator, you play a key role in guiding a discussion in which all your students can participate. You do not need to be an expert in the subject of impaired driving in order to support this discussion. This section also includes post-presentation assessment tools, success criteria that can be used by the teacher in evaluating students' learning, and extension literacy assignments. The variety of assignments allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the message in various formats.

**Section Two** provides teachers with lesson plans about alcohol and cannabis, worksheets and information designed to ensure students understand the physical and mental changes that occur in the body if they choose to drink alcohol or use cannabis. It also includes current information with respect to the laws and penalties for impaired driving in Canada.

**Section Three** includes additional fact sheets and has in-class activities and questionnaires for your students. You can choose those that are most relevant to your group of students. **Section Four** addresses the belief that students can make a difference by providing ideas for their participation and leadership in achieving results in their own school and in the greater community.

This package includes 3 additional bonus videos. One is a 20-minute film entitled "*Too Close to Home*". These are heartfelt stories told by victims/survivors of impaired driving crashes. This video is designed to be watched in its entirety and followed up with a discussion of what the students learned and how they plan to stay safe if they find themselves in a similar risky situation. The second video, "*Lives Lost*", is a compilation of victim/survivor stories from previous *School Programs*. Each story can be chosen according to the type of victimization and watched individually. It is narrated by an emergency room physician who speaks of situations physicians encounter on a daily basis in the ER. At the end of the video, the doctor speaks about ways to prevent these tragedies. Finally, "*Not Ready to Go*", tells the story of teenagers who perished in a terrible crash after smoking cannabis.

You will be receiving a USB key when scheduling a presentation. This key contains this guide so that you can share it with your colleagues, the MADD Canada Youth Manual with lots of ideas for students to raise awareness about impaired driving, as well as posters and school announcements. We hope that you find these tools useful.

**\*\*Please note that all the school materials are available online at <https://maddyouth.ca/school-program/>, all videos can be found on YouTube except for Lives Lost.**

We appreciate your support and thank you for your efforts to educate young people and to stop impaired driving.



Dawn Regan,  
Chief Operating Officer  
MADD Canada

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# MADD Canada's School Program

## Overview

**MADD Canada's 2024-2025 School Program will reach Canadian youth with proven anti-impaired driving messages.**

### **CONSIDER THE FACTS UNDERSTAND WHAT CANADIAN YOUTH BELIEVE HELP DELIVER THE MESSAGE**

Youth across Canada are reporting higher levels of anxiety and substance use concerns, with less ability to handle stress. We now know that our youth are particularly at risk, citing school and managing their own mental health as their top stressors

Youth are also consuming more alcohol and cannabis, according to a Leger poll commissioned by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) and the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC). These statistics have huge implications for the incidence of impaired driving among youth.

In 2019, Woods-Fry et al. (2019) reported 15.7% of Canadian drivers agreed cannabis does not impair driving as much as alcohol. This number increases dramatically in the youth population. A study commissioned by DFK Canada in 2017 found that **over one third (37%) of teens feel that driving high is not as risky as drunk driving**. These results suggest there is a large proportion of young drivers who are unaware that use increases crash risk. Studies show that driving high nearly doubles the risk of a crash.

(<https://www.drugfreekidscanada.org/prevention/issues/drugs-and-driving/>)

Canadian children and youth have one of the **highest** rates of cannabis use among developed countries. It's the drug they use most after alcohol. Most young people see cannabis as a benign drug, far less dangerous than alcohol. They think driving under the influence of cannabis is risk free.

**Young people have the highest rates of traffic death and injury per capita** among all age groups and the highest death rate per kilometer driven among all drivers under 75 years of age.

More 19-year-olds die or are seriously injured than any other age group. This age coincides with the legal age for consumption of both alcohol and cannabis in most provinces and territories.

**Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among 16- to 25-year-olds.** Alcohol and/or drugs are a factor in approximately **55% of those crashes**.

## [The School Program Imparts Many Different Messages](#)

There are many correlated messages within MADD Canada's *School Program* beyond impaired driving. *The School Program* includes information about the dangers and consequences of smoking cannabis, mixing cannabis and alcohol, accepting rides from impaired drivers, peer pressure, alcohol abuse and binge drinking, the emotional toll on friends and families, and legal and financial consequences. There is also a strong message of personal responsibilities in choices and decision-making.

**The social costs, human tragedy and productive years of life lost among youth from road crashes are significant and 100% preventable.**

**See the Presentation, Continue the Education**



- Sources for these statistics and more information can be found in the Research Library on MADD Canada's website at [madd.ca](http://madd.ca).

## [MADD Canada's School Program Delivers Proven Results](#)

Delivered through Canadian schools since 1994, MADD Canada's *School Program* presents students with solid information and best practices to help them understand the issue of impaired driving from alcohol and drugs. The hi-tech presentation has proven to be an effective method to raise awareness and for providing safety strategies. In a 2022-2023 survey, conducted by Environics Research Group, among students who had seen the program, 92% said the program makes them want to make the right decision when it comes to impaired driving, 86% said that cannabis use will make someone drive a lot worse (increasing to 91% three months after they viewed the presentation) and 97% said they supported having a similar presentation at their school the following year. **Not only are students receiving the message, but it also is a message they are not forgetting.**



**HELP SAVE LIVES  
BY REACHING TODAY'S YOUTH**

Evidence shows that MADD Canada's strategy of educating youth to reduce fatalities and injuries is working. However, the costs are still too high. Families are destroyed. Communities are shaken. The emotional toll is immeasurable. With current constraints on school budgets and as economic variables in different Canadian communities influence the ability of individual schools to afford screenings, educators can help us to reach their students with proven programs. The goal of our *School Program* is to challenge up to 500,000 students in grades 7 through 12 from across Canada to make wise, safe, and healthy choices.

## ***Inform – Empower – Inspire – Change***

As an educator you know better than most that effective teaching means asking challenging questions, debating moral and ethical issues and discussing the pros and cons surrounding risky activities.

This guide is a resource for educators to bring the messages from the presentation into the classroom. We hope it will help you to get your students thinking about the seriousness of impaired driving and what they can do to stop it.

We know impaired driving is wrong; that it destroys lives and tears families apart. It is still the #1 criminal cause of death in Canada. Studies show that driving high nearly doubles the risk of a crash, and a study commissioned by DFK Canada in 2017 found that over one third (37%) of teens feel that driving high is not as risky as drunk driving, while one in four high school seniors say they have ridden in a car with a high driver.

Population surveys show **the number of Canadians driving after using drugs is on the rise. In fact, driving after smoking cannabis is now more prevalent among some younger drivers than driving after drinking. Equally as concerning as the numbers, is the misperception that many young people and some parents have, that driving under the influence of cannabis is safer than driving under the influence of alcohol.**

**Many young people think driving under the influence of cannabis is risk-free.** Yet studies have shown that smoking cannabis can produce unwelcome effects behind the wheel, including a shorter attention span, an altered perception of time and distances, and slower reaction times that impair the driver's ability to respond to sudden events in traffic

**Many young people also think that they will never be caught or charged for driving high. THIS IS NOT TRUE. There is a roadside test to detect impairment from drugs.**

As a result of Bill C-46, police can demand a sample of oral fluid at the roadside, to be used with approved drug screening equipment. It can detect the presence of some drugs, including THC, the main impairing component in cannabis. It can also detect cocaine in the body. These devices are fast, non-invasive, and accurate.



### **Health Canada Survey, 2022**

**23% of respondents had driven within two hours of smoking or vaping.**

**16% reported being a passenger in a vehicle driven by someone who had been using marijuana/cannabis in the last two hours**

**Respondents (gr.7 to 12 students) were on average 14.1 years old when they first used cannabis**

## Useful Tips for Educators

This guide was designed for you to go through the discussions and activities at your own pace with the option to repeat them as the school year goes on. Undoubtedly, you will encounter discussions during which your students will give what they believe are sound reasons for drinking underage, drug use (particularly cannabis), and driving impaired. We ask that you not shy away from these discussions and use this guide to encourage your students to look at their values, decisions, and the potential repercussions. This guide is not just about the facts; it's about providing young people with the tools to make sound choices when they feel under pressure.

- Before using this guide with students, consider your own attitudes and values about this subject. The program will be most effective if it is non-judgemental and objective.
- Make sessions participant-centered. Make questions and discussions relevant and meaningful to the student group in front of you. Every group will differ.
- Allow students plenty of time to discuss the issues.
- Allow them to speak freely and be open to their suggestions.
- Encourage personal goal-setting by each student, but goals that do not need to be shared publicly.
- If possible, consider outside special circumstances behind each student's behaviour such as difficulties with family, school, social groups, and personal stress. Their answers and reactions to the guide discussions and activities may reflect these circumstances.
- Be aware of cultural/ethnic/newcomer/literacy/religious issues that could affect students' views and understanding of the message being imparted.
- Acknowledge the pressures today's youth feel with respect to social media and bullying.
- Be careful about how much you sway the conversation by limiting or eliminating your own point of view.
- While you may be tempted to tell your own stories and experiences as a way to identify with your student group, it does not make you "cool" nor does it set the role model expected by students, from teachers. Likewise, students do not want to hear teachers pontificate. Allow students to guide the discussion in a way that is comfortable for them.

### Covid-19: The Emotional and Mental Impact on Teenagers

**It is important to recognize the impact Covid-19 has had on teens' mental and emotional health over the past few years. A general sense of lack of control over their own lives due to disruptions in both their school and social lives has left many teens vulnerable to mental and emotional health issues. It is imperative that teens understand their need for social interaction may now be that much stronger. Anxiety surrounding school performance may drive or accentuate their need to feel successful in other ways; by ensuring, they fit into a social group. These factors may in turn lead to more partying, more rebellious behaviour and ultimately dangerous decision-making.**



## Program Introduction

### Prior to Viewing the Film

The presenter or teacher is encouraged to introduce to the students the name of the film and to reflect on the various meanings that the title could have, in the context of a film about impaired driving. The presenter should also introduce the idea of a double-entendre with respect to the title of the film. Ideas might include:

- The literally
- Metaphorically
- Metaphorically a choice being made that could have *positive or negative* consequences

Ask the students to consider all the occurrences in their lives where a decision they or someone else made, was or could easily have been some version of the film. Be sure to instil the idea that the concept is not limited to negative outcomes

#### Positive

- Getting a job
- Achieving good grades in school
- Changing peer groups or breaking up with someone who does not share your values
- Choosing to follow a positive role model with respect to rules and values
- Being respectful of others; not following the lead of others who may bully, taunt, tease, call names etc.
- Choosing inclusion rather than exclusion

#### Negative

- Taking on a life-style that includes a lot of partying, drinking, and/or using drugs and the impact those behaviours might have on your school or work life, and personal health
- Driving with someone else or driving yourself, while impaired
- Quitting sports, drama, music, or other activities that were positive character builders and at one time were important to your overall well-being
- Adopting a negative attitude – conflict with parents, teachers and other authority figures who really do care about you. Exhibiting disrespectful behaviour to others who care about you

**Responsibility** Discuss with students the concept of responsibility and what it means in the context of their lives.

- being responsible means taking control over a situation
- having the courage to make decisions for yourself that might be unpopular with others
- being given power or authority to make decisions for others (e.g., a younger sibling)
- being a leader which in turns means having influence over others
- responsibility means accepting praise when it's due and blame or fault when there are poor outcomes
- accepting and dealing with feelings of remorse when a decision results in negative consequences
- being accountable to not just others, but to yourself, for choices, decisions, actions, and inactions.

## Peer Pressure

It is important that students are reminded that peer pressure at all levels (grade 7 – 12) rarely comes in the form of outward taunting, teasing, name calling, and daring. In middle school, students are often finding their way with peer groups, often moving from one group of friends to another. By the time students have reached mid-high school, their groups are much more stable. The choices being made are often driven by the group or by the leaders in that group who organize things to do. Here in lie the opportunities for either good or risky choices. The pressure to comply is subtle, making it difficult for teenagers to identify when in fact, they are being pressured or manipulated into an action, decision, or behaviour with which they may actually feel uncomfortable.

Ask the students to watch for examples of subtle peer pressure in the film and to think about how the character might have been able to identify what was really going on. Ask them to consider that if the pressure on each of the characters had been more visible, would the choices have been different, and could the tragedy have been avoided?

## Mental Health

It is important to point out to students that mental health issues may have driven the choices each character made; particularly social anxiety and the need to fit in. While there are some overt indications of this, what was at play behind the scenes in each person's mind must be a consideration when trying to understand their choices. (Also refer to [“Useful Tips for Educators - Covid-19 Mental Health and Teens, page 5 and comments in the introduction p.1”](#))

Additionally, it cannot be ignored that post-traumatic mental health issues will affect each of the characters for the rest of their lives. The teenagers involved will have to live with the fact that they played a role in ending two lives. Mental issues including anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts are some examples of these consequences.



*The School Program* is seen through the eyes of teenagers who believe their behaviour is simply about having a good time. It is a very realistic depiction of the subtle nature of a teen's need to belong, and the choices he/she makes as he/she tries to fulfill that need. It examines the role of alcohol and cannabis in their lives, and the resulting tragic consequences. The fatal decision made by a teen who was normally very responsible, and the aftermath for those left behind will forever be etched in the viewer's mind.

This program will have an enormous impact on Canadian students. It is hoped they will rethink their own decision-making when it comes to partying, lying to parents, their own and others' alcohol and cannabis consumption, and especially about driving while impaired.



# SECTION 1

## POST- PRESENTATION PROGRAM MATERIALS

### Questions for Group Discussion



**The questions in this guide focus not only on the visible occurrences the audience sees in the film, but also on the important issues that occur behind the scenes. Students may be more forthcoming with their ideas if the discussion occurs in small groups immediately after the film. Each group could report back to the larger group after groups of two-three questions.**

- The concept of responsibility is discussed; how each of the main characters play a role in the final outcome and how each person's choices had a role in that outcome.
- The subtle nature of peer pressure and power dynamics are examined with respect to each character's behaviour. None of the characters outwardly identifies the need to fit in nor recognized the pressure to conform, yet it's apparent. While we don't know whether or not any character felt this way, the concepts of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) or FOBLO (Fear of Being Left Out) are discussed as explanations for the teens' choices in the film.
- The dangers of mixing cannabis, alcohol and other drugs is discussed with respect to both the film and in real life, as these choices can make bad outcomes that much worse.

- Answers will vary, but the message must be to all students; **There is NEVER a time that driving intoxicated is acceptable.** There is always another solution. Call a friend, your parents, the police. No amount of 'trouble' you get into for drinking or smoking up will ever be as bad as what can happen if you drive while impaired.
- Teen's need to understand that their values are molded by those around them; parents, teachers, friends, celebrities, athletes, and other role models in their lives. A teenager's value system is still in the developmental stage, and for many teens the value fitting in with a peer group can override many other more solid values. As a result, teenagers often make unsafe choices when influenced by their peers as that need for acceptance can be overwhelming.

**Discuss with the students that at the end of the day we are all responsible for the choices we make for ourselves. We answer to ourselves; we have to look inward when things go wrong. It is important to lead the discussion in a way that will impress upon students they should never leave their own fate in the hands of another and that outcomes can be forever. There are some things that simply can never be undone.**

## Extension Literacy Assignments



1. You are a high school student who wants to go to a year-end party at a hang out spot in the conservation area or park near your community. Your parents are concerned and are trying to prevent you from going. Write a script that depicts the conversation between you and your parents; identify their concerns and rules, and your responses, including what you promise to do. Make it realistic. (There is likely to be an argument) The work could be presented as a live sketch or in a video format.
2. You are a local newspaper editor who arrives on the scene at the crash site, involving any one of the stories you have seen. Write an editorial about what you have witnessed; what you know and what you believe to be true. Included should be your thoughts on how to prevent further tragedies such as this. **Remember that editorials present both facts and a point of view** and should have title that will grab the audience's attention.
3. You are a reporter for a local T.V. station. You are at the crash site where First Responders have just pulled a victim from the car. You are live and on the air. It is clear that the victim's next of kin do not yet know she/he has died. Write and perform the live narrative, as you believe a responsible journalist should do in reporting in this situation. You can have another student act as the videographer at the scene, with you as the reporter, OR you can be talking to your producer back at the station answering their questions as you report live. Remember - you would not have a script from which to read (but the work should be pre-written for submission)

## Success Criteria for Literacy Extension Tasks

1. The dialogue includes the following elements, demonstrating the students' understanding of how teen parties all too often end in tragedy.

- The teen has many good reasons why they should be allowed to go, including but not limited to; pre-planning a ride there and back, the promise not to consume alcohol or drugs as they are underage, plans in case of an emergency
- The parents quote other mishaps or tragedies that have happened; they counter the teen's argument with solid evidence stating why they should not go. Included should be the concern about a remote location, bad weather, alcohol poisoning, lack of cell service, collective decision making when teens are in a group, etc.
- The dialogue is authentic and replicates what really might happen

2. The written piece includes:

- Descriptive, figurative language that engages the reader
- A strongly worded title
- Wording that is clear, concise, and accurately depicts the scene
- Addressing how this crash probably happened and the choices the teens made that affected outcomes
- Prevention for the future
- Both facts and opinion (levels of responsibility, parent's roles, peer pressure as a cause)

3. The live piece is delivered authentically with strongly worded descriptors. The reporter addresses facts as well as interjects their own opinion about what has happened. The same criteria for #2 above can be used, with the addition of thought-provoking questions being asked by the producer to the reporter. Voice, intonation and fluency are used skillfully in depicting the severity of the situation.

## Rubric: Alternative Success Criteria for Extension Assignments

### Level One

- The work demonstrates very little understanding of the factors leading to impaired driving. There is no distinct mood or tone present.
- There is minimal attention paid to the issues of responsibility. Little mention is made of personal choices.
- The work pays little attention to the role that peer pressure played in the choices made
- The mental health aspects relating to teens and their choices are not addressed. (Particularly social anxiety and the need to fit in or to rebel)
- There is minimal detail in describing the crash scene, the peoples' emotions,
- There is little to no additional detail that demonstrates a clear understanding of the issue of impaired driving, especially as it relates to teens

### Level Two

- The work demonstrates an understanding of some of the factors leading to impaired driving. The appropriate mood and tone are evident. There is a recognition that peer pressure may have played a role.
- The work identifies the person who bears the most responsibility for the death caused by impaired driving (the driver)
- The mental health aspects leading to the crash or those that survivors will feel after the crash are mentioned
- The role of peer pressure is considered
- There is some detail and description about the crash scene and the emotions felt by those at the scene, and/or afterwards
- There is some additional detail that demonstrates an understanding of the various roles. (The parents and child, the reporter, the newspaper editor)
- The work demonstrates some effort to encompass the enormity of the situation

### Level Three

- The work demonstrates a significant understanding of most of the factors leading to impaired driving. There is a clear mood and tone set. The work identifies several people who bear responsibility for the death caused, and what their roles were in the final outcome.
- The role of peer pressure is identified and explained with respect to the crash.
- The mental health of the people in the story, both prior to and after the crash is explained with detail.
- There is appropriate descriptive and figurative language used in detailing the crash scene as well as the aftermath. (Hospital, home of the parents, court room)
- There is additional detail and creativity. (e.g., the feelings of the siblings left behind, the drivers' responses, etc., parents' emotional state)
- The work successfully demonstrates the seriousness of the topic and encompassed many aspects related to impaired driving

### Level Four

- The final project demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the multiple factors that lead to impaired driving incidents. The mood and tone are clearly identifiable.
- The work shows a clear understanding that these crashes are usually not just one person's fault; that many people bear a portion of the responsibility, yet the driver always bears the responsibility for driving
- The role of peer pressure, both overt and insidious is identified as it relates to this or other impaired driving incidents
- The mental health aspect as it relates to decision making is addressed and addressed again as a post-accident, trauma issue
- Higher level vocabulary and descriptors are used to paint a vivid picture of the scene as well as the aftermath
- There is an abundance of detail that leaves "no stone unturned" Creativity such as interviewing on the scene, or quoting others is included.
- The work is authentic and replicates the roles in a sincere and accurate manner. (The parents, the child, the reporter, or the editor) quoting others is included.



## SECTION 2

# Student and Educator Guides to Alcohol and Cannabis

### Drinking Habits Among Youth

Recent research (2021) shows that the incidence of teenage drinking has not changed significantly over the past 10 years, although there might be slight decline since the legalization of cannabis in Canada. Teens who do consume alcohol do so for a variety of reasons.

- Social reasons are number one: to be popular, fit in, find acceptance within a group (which in turn has an impact on self-esteem and mental health)
- Peer pressure to conform with others
- To relieve stress and anxiety
- To rebel against parents and other authority figures
- Following role models especially parents, older friend, or siblings who consume alcohol
- Youth “invincibility” — they feel that the long-term risks of consuming alcohol are not relevant to them. The perceived short-term gains far outweigh any negative consequences down the road.

In 2021 The Canadian Centre for Substance Use and Addiction interviewed a focus group of students to find out what ‘normal’ teenage drinking habits looked like.

- In today’s youth culture, young people commonly report binge drinking
- Many youths go out with the explicit intention of getting drunk.
- Many youths believe going out to get drunk is “just a normal thing.”
- They also believe that going out to have a good time *must include* getting drunk
- Few youths monitor the size of their drinks nor the number they consume
- Most teens do not internalize the long-term risks associated with alcohol consumption

Source: <https://www.ccsa.ca/alcohol-education-tailored-youth-what-we-heard-report>

## Types of Alcohol Commonly Consumed by Teens

### **Beer:**

- Is sold in regular strength (5% alcohol by volume)
- Light beers have less alcohol (2.5% -4.5 %)
- Many companies now sell beer in “tall boy” cans that have 473 ml of beer as compared to a standard can or bottle with 357 ml (16 ounces compared to 12 ounces)

### **Coolers:**

- Are sweeter and generally have more alcohol than beer. (6.0 -7.5%)
- The alcohol is either wine or spirits based
- Tend to be consumed more often by females as compared to males, so with the greater alcohol content females are likely to become intoxicated more quickly

### **Wine:**

- Is generally more expensive than beer and not often consumed by teens.
- Sparkling wines have the same alcohol content as other wines, (12-14%) but are often sweeter making them a choice for some teens.

### **Spirits or Liquor:**

- Also known as ‘shots’ (rye, vodka, tequila, bourbon, etc.)
- Are all 40% alcohol (in Canada)
- Can be mixed with juice or pop, but with teens, are often ‘shot” down in one gulp
- Shots have a very high alcohol content in a small volume of liquid. As a result, shots can be very dangerous. Because there is less volume, people often consume two or more shots in a short period of time, creating a much greater state of inebriation.

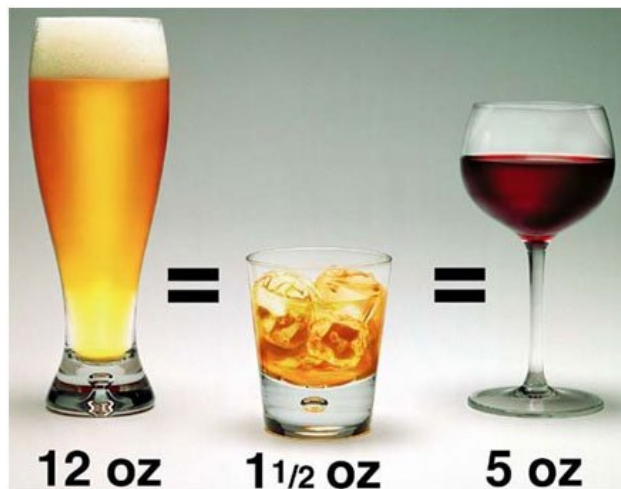


## What Does “Alcohol by Volume” Really Mean?

Alcohol by volume means ‘what is the percent of alcohol in each type of drink per 100 ml.? By using a standard volume measure (100ml) we can more easily compare how much alcohol is in each type of drink.

By mathematically calculating the amount of alcohol in each standard sized drink, we see that the amount of alcohol is **almost identical**.

Type of Alcohol	Can of Beer	Shot of Liquor	Glass of Wine
Standard Size for one Drink	341 ml or 12 oz	44 ml or 1.5 oz	147 ml or 5 oz.
Percentage Alcohol by Volume	5% / 100 ml	40% / 100 ml	13% / 100 ml
Actual percentage of alcohol in the container	= <b>0.18 %</b> Alcohol in the can	= <b>0.18 %</b> Alcohol in the shot	= <b>0.19 %</b> Alcohol in the glass
Actual Amount of Alcohol	<b>13.5 GRAMS</b> =	<b>13.5 GRAMS</b> =	<b>13.5 GRAMS</b>



**One beer = One shot = One glass of wine**

## THE BAC

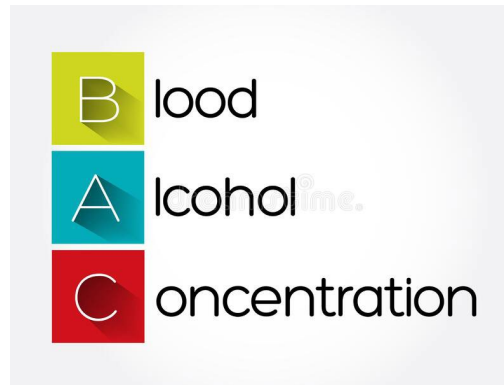
### **BAC is the abbreviation for Blood Alcohol Concentration**

- The higher a person's BAC, the more intoxicated they are.
- BAC is measured in milligrams of alcohol per 100 ml of blood.
- For example, if you have a BAC of 0.05, that means you have 50 milligrams of alcohol in each 100 ml of blood.
- The legal BAC limit for driving a vehicle in Canada is 0.08 for those of legal drinking age
- For those ***under the provincial legal drinking age, NO amount of alcohol in the bloodstream is legal***
- At a BAC level of 0.05 the police have the authority to suspend a person's driver's license and impound the vehicle but criminal charges will not be laid. (Unless there are other offences under the Highway Traffic Act)  
(See "Impaired Driving and the Law" section for more detailed information)



<https://www.verywellmind.com>

## Alcohol, Metabolism, and the BAC



### **Factors that affect a person's BAC and the level of intoxication include:**

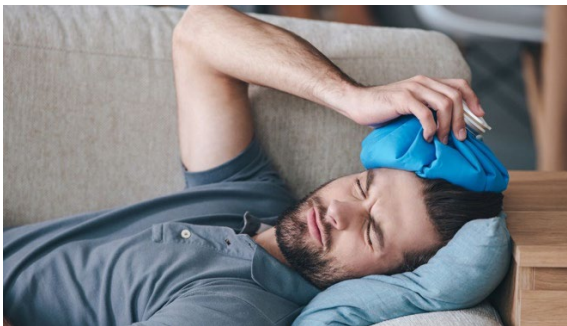
- **How fast you drink:** how much is consumed and over what period. The more you drink in a short period, the more intoxicated you will become. Four drinks in an hour will make the BAC much higher than 4 drinks in 4 hours.
- **Food:** Food in your stomach slows down the rate of absorption of alcohol but will NOT change the level of impairment. The amount of alcohol consumed whether there is food present or not, remains the same. Food may reduce some of the immediate effects of alcohol in the bloodstream. (nausea, loss of coordination, slurred speech, etc.) but will not reduce the BAC
- **Body size and build** (lean muscle mass: fat ratios affect rates of absorption. Fat on the body increases levels of intoxication. The greater the blood volume (size and weight of the person) the more diluted the alcohol will be.
- **Gender;** females generally have less water in their bodies therefore the alcohol is less diluted, resulting a greater level of intoxication  
Females also generally have less body mass, therefore less blood volume, resulting in a higher BAC for the same amount of alcohol consumed as compared to their male counterparts.
- **Medications;** If you are taking any such as antibiotics, when combined with alcohol may make you feel nauseous, cause stomach cramps, give you a headache or cause you to vomit.

## How is Alcohol Metabolized?

- Alcohol is metabolized (burned up) in the liver
- The average person can metabolize approximately one standard drink per hour
- Any alcohol in excess of one drink per hour remains circulating in the bloodstream until the liver can 'catch up' to metabolize it.
- A person's BAC and level of impairment is determined by the amount of alcohol in the bloodstream.
- Binge drinking causes a very high BAC Very often the alcohol is not metabolized for hours after a night of binge drinking.
- Roadside sobriety checkpoint programs will often find drivers are still impaired in the morning following a night of heavy drinking

## Myths about "Sobering Up"

- Eating food may slow down the absorption of alcohol in the stomach into the bloodstream, but the alcohol is there and cannot be metabolized any faster
- Drinking coffee simply puts caffeine and water into the body. It does not dilute the alcohol. All it accomplishes is making the person wider awake.
- Having a cold shower might make the person feel better or wider awake, but the alcohol is still present in the blood stream.
- **The only thing that will lower a person's BAC is time.**



## Short Term Effects of Alcohol Consumption

- Decreased perception and motor coordination
- Slurred Speech
- Upset stomach/vomiting/diarrhea
- Headaches
- Slower more laboured breathing
- Distorted vision and hearing
- Impaired judgment
- Unconsciousness
- Anemia (loss of red blood cells)
- Alcohol poisoning /coma
- Blackouts (memory lapses, where the drinker cannot remember events that occurred while under the influence)

## Binge Drinking and Long-term Effects of Alcohol Use

When you binge drink, your risk of many safety and health problems increases. These can include:

- Getting injured or killed while driving, biking, boating, snowmobiling, walking or being a passenger
- Intentional injuries such as firearm injuries, sexual assault, domestic violence
- Getting sick and possibly dying from alcohol poisoning
- Choking on your own vomit (which can kill you if you are passed out)
- Going into respiratory arrest (meaning you stop breathing).
- Loss of productivity / problems in school, poor grades
- Increased family problems, broken relationships
- High blood pressure, stroke, and other heart-related diseases
- Liver disease
- Sexual problems
- Permanent damage to the brain
- Vitamin B<sub>1</sub> deficiency, which can lead to a disorder characterized by amnesia, apathy and disorientation
- Ulcers/ gastritis (inflammation of stomach walls)
- Malnutrition
- Cancer of the mouth and throat
- Breast cancer in women - there is a very strong correlation
- Developing or worsening depression, anxiety and other mental health problems

- Having blackouts (when you lose all memory of where you were and what you did when you were drunk)
- Getting a hangover (headache, shaking, vomiting)

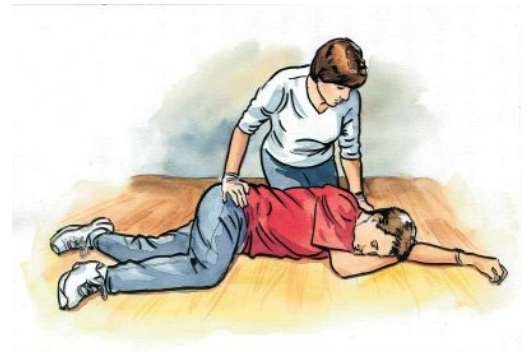
**Source:** <https://www.drugfreeworld.ca/drugfacts/alcohol/short-term-long-term-effects.html>



## Teen Partying and Alcohol Poisoning

**Alcohol poisoning, caused by too much alcohol, is extremely dangerous and can cause coma and death.**

- Alcohol is a depressant. That means alcohol will slow down – and eventually even shut down – the part of the nervous system that controls involuntary actions, like breathing and the gag reflex.
- Alcohol is absorbed very quickly through the stomach, into the bloodstream and to the brain, but can only be processed by the liver at the rate of about one ‘standard’ drink in one hour.
- Specialized poison control cells in your brain detect danger – there is too much alcohol – and vomiting is an attempt to eliminate any unabsorbed alcohol.
- Eating before you drink will slow down the speed of intoxication but it is no guarantee that you won't get sick if you consume too much alcohol.
- It may take anywhere from about 30-90 minutes *after you stop drinking* before you reach your highest level of intoxication.
- If someone who has been drinking has any of the following symptoms, they are likely experiencing an overdose reaction:
  - Vomiting
  - Passed out
  - Difficult to awaken
  - Slow, shallow breathing
  - Doesn't respond to stimuli
- Choking to death on one's vomit after an alcohol overdose is more common than you might think. Death by asphyxiation can occur when a person chokes on his or her own vomit or when alcohol depresses the body's reflexes to the point that the person can't vomit properly (loss of the “gag” reflex).
- If someone is experiencing alcohol poisoning, put them in a “Recovery Position” (see illustration), call for medical assistance and watch over them until professional help arrives.



Parent Action on Drugs.org has many resources for parents, educators and youth on alcohol and other drugs.

<http://parentaction.server295.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/PAD-Teens-Partying-and-Alcohol-Poisoning-20131.pdf>

# THE STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT HOW ALCOHOL AFFECTS YOUR MIND & BODY

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) %	Changes in Feelings & Personality	Impaired Activities (continuum)
0.01-0.05 1 DRINK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relaxation</li> <li>Sense of well being</li> <li>Loss of inhibition</li> </ul> <p><b>"BUZZED"</b></p>	Alertness
0.06-0.10 2-3 DRINKS <small>0.08 LEGAL LIMIT</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pleasure</li> <li>Numbness of feelings</li> <li>Nausea, Sleepiness</li> <li>Emotional arousal</li> </ul> <p><b>"DRUNK"</b></p>	Judgment
0.11-0.20 3-6 DRINKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mood swings</li> <li>Anger</li> <li>Sadness</li> <li>Mania</li> </ul> <p><b>"HAMMERED"</b></p>	Coordination (especially fine motor skills)
0.21-0.30 6-9 DRINKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aggression</li> <li>Reduced sensations</li> <li>Depression</li> <li>Stupor</li> </ul> <p><b>"PLASTERED"</b></p>	Visual tracking
0.31-0.40 9-12 DRINKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unconsciousness</li> <li>Death possible</li> <li>Coma</li> </ul> <p><b>"BLACKED OUT"</b></p>	Reasoning and depth perception
0.41 & GREATER 12+ DRINKS	<b>Death</b>	Inappropriate social behavior (e.g., obnoxiousness)

**0.08** PA LEGAL ALCOHOL LIMIT or 80 blood alcohol level

Approximate BAC for a female weighing 154 lbs. For drinks consumed within an hour. Actual BAC will vary by weight, rate of consumption and other factors. Source: Advisory committee and NIAAA scientists.

**ALCOHOL EQUIVALENTS**  
1 DRINK =

12oz BEER 5% Alcohol = 1.5oz DISTILLED LIQUOR 40% Alcohol = 5oz GLASS OF WINE 12% Alcohol

# CANNABIS

## What is Cannabis and What Does it Look Like?

Cannabis is the second most commonly used substance in Canada, second only to alcohol.

Cannabis is the product of the plant Cannabis Sativa. The main active ingredient in cannabis is THC, a psychoactive drug that affects the functioning of the brain. There are over 400 additional chemicals found in Cannabis. The THC affects the neuro-transmission of messages to and from the brain, giving the user a 'high'. Cannabis also has a chemical known as CBD (cannabidiol) which does not produce the same effect. CBD is a non-psychoactive drug found in the cannabis plant, often used to reduce anxiety, sleeplessness, and to treat pain.



## What are the Common or Street Names for Cannabis?

Most cannabis is known as:

- dope, marijuana, weed, grass, or pot
- smoking a joint
- reefer, MaryJane or MJ

Other less common names include:

- bud, blunt, chronic, dab, ganja, green, herb, loud, skink, smoke, trees, and wax

Other forms of cannabis are:

- hash, hash oil, *K2*, *spice*, and *shatter*
- The last three are synthetic forms of the plant and can be very dangerous to the user's health. \*\* see important facts for teens about synthetic cannabis

## How Cannabis is Consumed is Very Important

### ***Inhalation***

- Cannabis is usually rolled into a 'joint' that is smoked
- Extracts like oils can be vaped
- The THC is delivered to the bloodstream directly through the lungs, and the effects begin almost immediately
- It takes only a few seconds to start, a few minutes to increase, and about 30 minutes for the full effect to take place
- The effects dissipate in about 6 hours, but some lingering effects can take up to 24 hours to be gone.

### ***Ingestion***

- Cannabis edibles come in all kinds of forms from 'gummies' to baked goods such brownies, or blended into a drink.
- The THC is delivered more slowly as it is absorbed through the stomach and liver before reaching the bloodstream and the brain
- **HOWEVER** - the 'high' is more intense as the liver metabolizes the THC to a stronger chemical. The effects begin between 30 minutes to about 2 hours, with the full effect not being felt for about 4 hours. It takes about 12 hours for the cannabis ***to be mostly out of the system, but like with inhalation, residual effects can last up to 24 hours.***

## How Does Cannabis Affect the Mind and the Body?

### **Short Term Effects**

- Initially cannabis may make the user feel happy, relaxed, have fewer inhibitions, and feel more sociable.
- The immediate effects also include problems with memory and learning
- body tremors, loss of sense of reality including distorted perceptions
- distorted perceptions include seeing things that aren't there
- size, time, distance perceptions are inaccurate
- hallucinations
- increased heart rate and anxiety
- difficulty with motor coordination and response time and visual acuity
- the short-term effects can last up to 24 hours

These are particularly troublesome when considering driving a motor vehicle after consuming cannabis.

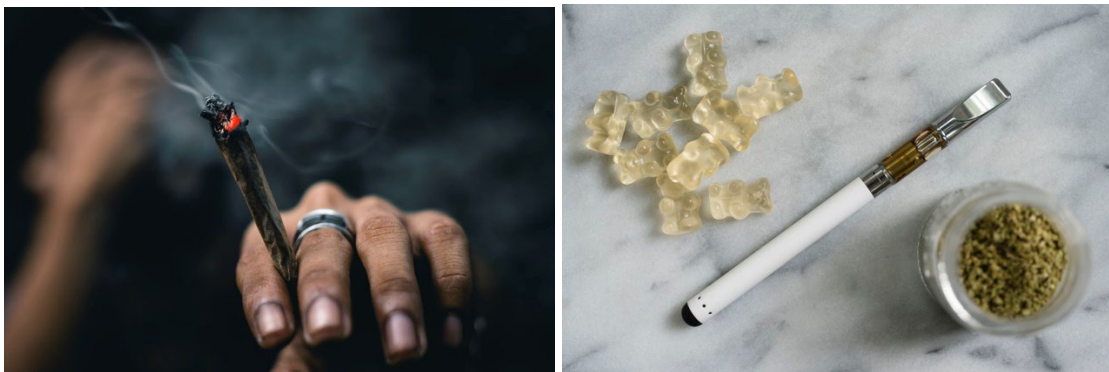


### **Long Term Effects**

- Just like any other drug, regular cannabis use can lead to addiction.
- Addiction can be social, psychological, or physical
- Early and frequent use has been linked to poor performance in school, as cognitive functioning is impaired.
- Youth are particularly vulnerable to negative outcomes with respect to brain function as their pre-frontal cortex is still developing.
- Working memory, impulse control, self-regulation and problem-solving skills can all be affected over the course of years of consumption

## Important Facts for Teens

- The legal age for consumption of cannabis in most Canadian provinces and territories is 19. (18 in Alberta, 21 in Quebec)
- Illegal synthetic cannabis (also known as cannabinoids) includes common street named drugs such as K2, Spice, and herbal or liquid incense.
- They are made with some plant material with added synthetic chemicals that can be extremely harmful, in some cases causing permanent brain damage or death.
- Their potency is much greater than legal government regulated cannabis.
- Canadian teens have one of the highest rates of cannabis use worldwide. In fact, Canada ranks number 3 in the world for consumption
- 18% of Canadians students between grades 7 and 12 used cannabis in 2021-22, with a minimal difference between genders in their rates of usage
- If 18% of Canadian youth have used cannabis, then over 82% have not. Not everyone is 'doing it'.
- While overall cannabis use is increasing at about 2% per year, teens vaping cannabis has doubled over 4 years.
- Vaping any substance, including cannabis can be an extremely risky choice
- In addition to the drug altering the brain's functioning, vaping can cause severe lung damage. (Especially if vaping nicotine)
- Cannabis grown and sold legally in Canada is much stronger than cannabis was in the 1960s when it became a socially acceptable behaviour among teens.
- The methods of consumption have changed dramatically as well, affecting how it is metabolized in the body and how it affects the user's cognitive and physical abilities



*Health Canada's Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey (CSTADS), was conducted for Health Canada by CCI Research Inc. 2020-21*

## Cannabis and Driving - Frightening Facts

- There are 24 million drivers in Canada. 7% of these drivers have driven within 2 hours of consuming cannabis. That is over 1.6 million people driving while impaired by cannabis. An additional 5% have combined cannabis with alcohol which make levels of impairment that much greater and that much more dangerous. (TIRF., 2019 study)
- Cannabis is the drug most often detected in drivers involved in motor vehicle crashes
- In 2016, among those drivers tested for drugs, 29.8% of fatally injured drivers tested positive for cannabis, representing a steady increase over previous years. Drivers aged 16 to 19 years and 20 to 34 years were most likely to test positive for this substance (Brown et al., 2019)
- Reviews of studies on the effects of cannabis on driving skills demonstrated cannabis can specifically impair certain skills necessary for safe driving such as:
  - controlling speed variability
  - lane positioning
  - reaction time
  - divided attention
  - staying attentive and not being distracted by passengers
  - route planning
  - decision-making
  - risk-taking

Cannabis use has been associated with a significantly increased risk of fatal crash involvement. Drivers using cannabis are at an increased risk of injury anywhere from 1.8 to 2.8 times higher. Furthermore, the odds of drivers being found responsible for a crash increased with rising cannabis concentrations in the blood.

Source: ALCOHOL, MARIJUANA & DRIVING RISK, December 2020, By Craig Lyon & Robyn D. Robertson, SoberSmartDriving.tirf.ca)

### **Cannabis Education Sources:**

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/marijuana.html>

<https://www.drugfreekidscanada.org/prevention/drug-spotlights/cannabis/>

<https://csceducation.com/blog/cannabis-flower-power-its-influence-in-the-sixties>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/laws-regulations/provinces-territories.html>

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/synthetic-cannabinoids-k2spice>

<https://tirf.ca/projects/status-of-alcohol-impaired-driving-in-canada>

## Cannabis and the Law

- The maximum a person is allowed to possess is 5 g of dried cannabis which is equal to 150 g or fresh cannabis
- 15 g of edible product, 70 g of liquid product and 1 seed are the personal limits
- Other restrictions vary by province as to where it can be grown, how many plants are allowed per household, and where it can be consumed
- Some provinces allow consumption (smoking) cannabis anywhere tobacco is allowed with exception of places in proximity to children, while others do not allow public consumption at all. (Man., N.B., Nfld./Lab., PEI., Que., Sask., Yukon.)
- Where cannabis can be legally sold varies by province (private and/or government run stores)
- It is a criminal offence to sell or give cannabis or any cannabis product to anyone who is underage
- Penalties range from tickets being issued for illegal possession in small amounts, to a maximum of 14 years in jail for other more serious offences.
- A minor found in possession of cannabis is usually not charged
- It is illegal to cross international borders with any form of cannabis including CBD
- In most countries cannabis is illegal and the criminal penalties are harsh
- It is illegal to drive a motor vehicle while impaired by cannabis
- **Motor vehicles include not only cars and trucks, but boats, ATVs, e-bikes, motor-scooters, farm equipment, snowmobiles, and golf carts**
- The penalties for cannabis impaired driving are the same as those for alcohol
- Police service personnel have the right to stop anyone who is suspected of driving while impaired, administer a sobriety test, and to test saliva for levels of cannabis

Source: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/cannabis/>

## Legal Age for Cannabis Use in Canada

**In all provinces and territories, the legal age for consumption is 19 years old, with the exception of Alberta which is age 18, and Quebec which is age 21.**



# Government of Canada

## Departments of Justice and Criminal Justice, Impaired Driving Laws and Penalties

### ***Impaired Driving***

The *Criminal Code* prohibits driving while impaired to any degree by drugs, alcohol, or a combination of both. Penalties for this offence range from a mandatory minimum fine to life imprisonment, depending on the severity of the offence

### ***Prohibited Levels***

In addition to the offence of impaired driving, there are separate offences of having specified prohibited levels of alcohol, cannabis or certain other drugs in the blood within two hours of driving. Penalties range from fines to life imprisonment, depending on the severity of the offence.

### ***Alcohol***

The prohibited blood-alcohol concentration (BAC) is **80 milligrams or more (mg) of alcohol per 100 milliliters (ml) of blood**.

### ***Cannabis (THC)***

There are two prohibited levels for THC, the primary psychoactive component of cannabis: it is a less serious offence to have between **2 nanograms (ng) and 5 ng of THC per ml of blood**. It is a more serious offence to have **5 ng of THC or more per ml of blood**.

### ***Combination of alcohol and cannabis***

The prohibited levels of alcohol and cannabis, when found in combination, is **50mg or more of alcohol per 100ml blood and 2.5 ng or more of THC per ml of blood**.

### ***Other drugs***

Having **any detectable amount** of LSD, psilocybin, psilocin ("magic mushrooms"), ketamine, PCP, cocaine, methamphetamine or 6-mam (a metabolite of heroin) in your system within two hours of driving is also prohibited. The prohibited level for GHB is **5mg or more per litre of blood**, since the body can naturally produce low levels of this drug.

### ***Penalties***

Impaired driving is a serious crime that poses a significant threat to public safety. Having the prohibited level of alcohol, THC, or other impairing drugs in your blood within two hours of driving is an offence.

Penalties for committing this conduct can vary, depending on the alcohol or drug concentration, whether it is your first or a repeated offence, and whether you have caused bodily harm or death to another person.

Source: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/sidl-rlcfa/>



# NEW ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED DRIVING LAWS

## What do they mean?

Impaired driving is the leading criminal cause of death and injury in Canada and this is unacceptable. In 2017, there were **more than 69,000 impaired driving incidents reported by the police**, including almost **3,500 drug-impaired driving incidents**. In December 2018, new impaired driving laws came into effect to **make our roads safer and to save lives**.

### MYTH:



Mandatory alcohol screening permits police to demand a breath sample from people in their homes or bars.



Police cannot stop you while driving unless you have done something wrong.



Police can use mandatory alcohol screening to come to your house two hours after you arrive home and demand a breath sample.



You can beat an "at or over 80 mg" charge if you have several drinks right before driving, because the alcohol didn't affect you until after you drove.



You can beat a charge of "at or over 80 mg" if you drink after being stopped by the police.



If you are under 80 mg of blood alcohol concentration, you are safe to drive.

### FACT:



Mandatory alcohol screening **can only be used** if you, as the driver, are in care and control of the vehicle, have been lawfully stopped, and if the police officer has the approved screening device at hand.



Police have long had the power to stop drivers to check to see if they have a valid licence, if they are sober, and if their vehicle is roadworthy. They don't need to see you do anything wrong.



For mandatory alcohol screening to be used:

- ✓ The car must be lawfully stopped
- ✓ You, as the driver, must be in care and control of the vehicle
- ✓ The police officer must have the device at hand



The new law covers this situation and you can be convicted if you have a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) at or over 80 mg within two hours of driving. This change was made to address this type of risky and dangerous behaviour on our roads.



This defence now only applies if:

- ✓ A driver drank after driving
- ✓ There was no reason to think they would need to provide a sample (e.g., they were not involved in an accident)
- ✓ The breath results indicate they were under a blood alcohol concentration of 80 mg while driving



Many individuals are impaired long before they reach a blood alcohol concentration of 80 mg. You can still be charged with impaired driving, and you may face serious provincial consequences, like losing your licence.

**The best practice is not to drink and drive.**



The two hour window aims to prevent risky and dangerous behavior that decreases road safety by eliminating the "bolus drinking" defence and limiting the "intervening drinking" defence.

For example:

- ✓ In a "bolus drinking" defence, a driver would admit that their BAC was at or over 80 mg at the time of testing but claim it was not at the time of driving because they consumed a significant amount of alcohol just before or while driving, arguing that the alcohol was still being absorbed and, not at or over 80.
- ✓ In an "intervening drink" defence, a driver claims to have consumed alcohol after operating the vehicle but before testing, often used after an accident where the driver claimed they drank to calm their nerves. This defence made it difficult for law enforcement to determine the actual BAC at the time of driving.



## SECTION 3

### **Student Activities, Worksheets and Additional Information**

In this section of the document, teachers will find some very helpful resources for either pre-teaching alcohol and cannabis education prior to viewing the MADD Canada presentation, or for use as follow-up tools.

#### Worksheet - What Do I Know?

1. What is a drug and what are the four ways in which drugs can be taken?
2. How are drugs categorized?
3. What do drugs do to the user's body? How do they affect the user?
4. What drugs are safe and which ones are not?
5. Why do some people choose to use drugs?
6. What are the factors that you think have or will affect your decision to either use or not to use drugs?



## Worksheet - Myth or Fact?

**Consider each statement below and decide whether it is a myth or a fact.  
Be sure to be prepared to explain your answer.**

1. Alcohol is safe for consumption, or it wouldn't be legal.
2. Alcohol is not really a drug, even though people say it is.
3. Eating before you drink will make you less drunk.
4. Boys get less drunk than girls if they consume the same amount.
5. Drinking coffee will help sober you up before driving home.
6. If you vomit from drinking too much, you'll be less drunk because it's out of your system.
7. Beer is more intoxicating than 'shots' because you drink more volume. (e.g., whiskey, vodka)
8. A cold shower will do nothing to help you sober up faster.
9. Mixing different drinks will make you even drunker. (e.g., beer, wine, shots)
10. Coolers or ciders are equally likely to get you as drunk as beer or shots.
11. Cannabis is less dangerous than alcohol.
12. Cannabis edibles such as gummies are just as strong as smoking a joint.
13. Most young people smoke cannabis. It's not a big deal, since it's now a legal drug.
14. It takes a long time for cannabis to leave your system, but you might not be impaired that whole time.
15. Driving while high from cannabis isn't a good idea, but it's still safer than driving while drunk.

## Answer Guide to “What do I Know?”

### 1. What is a drug and how is it taken?

A drug is any substance, that when taken into the body changes the normal functioning of the body. Drugs can be taken in one of four ways:

- **Ingested** (orally) Taken through the mouth and the drug is absorbed into the body’s circulatory system through the digestive system.
- **Injected** (needle) Shot directly into a muscle like the arm or is injected into a vein, directly into the blood stream.
- **Inhaled** (smoked, snorted, sniffed) The drug is absorbed into the body through the respiratory system (through the lungs to the circulatory system)
- **Subcutaneous** (a patch) The drug is released slowly, absorbed by the skin, and eventually is absorbed into the circulatory system.

**2. How are drugs categorized?** Drugs can be categorized in many ways. The two most common are:

#### **A) Legal and Illegal**

Under legal there are over-the counter drugs that anyone can purchase in a store (e.g., cough medicines, pain remedies such as Tylenol or Advil). The second are prescription drugs that require a medical professional’s written note for a licenced pharmacist to give to you. They are controlled and not available for anyone to purchase. (e.g., antibiotics, asthma inhalers, stronger pain medications)

Illegal drugs are usually obtained through street vendors who have access to them in various ways. These drugs are not manufactured by licenced drug companies and have no government quality control. (e.g., heroin, cocaine, ecstasy)

#### **B) Stimulants, Depressants, Hallucinogenics**

This categorization includes drugs of all sources, legal and illegal, and is based on the drug’s effect on the body. The way in which our bodies respond to drugs is based on the way the Central Nervous System (CNS) delivers messages to and from the brain. The CNS is responsible for all our activity and functioning. Different drugs alter this functioning. For example, pain killers ‘turn down’ the pain receptors in our nerve endings, reducing the effect of what has caused the pain in the first place.

### 3. How do drugs affect the body?

#### **Stimulants:**

Increase the rate of response in the Central Nervous System. Stimulant drugs “make you go faster”. Examples include nicotine, caffeine, cocaine. (“Red Bull” as well as other synthetic caffeine energy drinks) The user may feel energetic, wide awake, “wired”, anxious, jittery, or “on edge”. Their heart rate may increase, they may sweat more or feel flushed.

#### **Depressants:**

These drugs do just the opposite. They decrease the rate of response in the CNS, making the user’ body and reaction time slow down. Examples include alcohol, sleeping pills, anti-depressant medications, and heroin. These drugs may make the user initially feel relaxed, worry-free, then may cause drowsiness, confusion, slurred speech, dizziness, stumbling, inability to walk, and poor concentration.

## Hallucinogenics:

These drugs interfere with the pattern of message transmission to and from the brain. In essence they 'jumble or scramble' the messages to and from the brain to the body. The user is likely to feel three main effects. There may be an increase in the senses so that they may feel, see, and hear things more acutely (small things look big, quiet sounds are loud, a small mark on the wall may look like a giant spider). The user may see and hear things that aren't there at all, or they may feel like they have superpowers and can do anything they want, like jumping safely off a building.

They may feel a sense of euphoria or silliness or a sense of calm or 'floating'. Examples of hallucinogenics are cannabis and its derivatives, certain mushrooms ("Shrooms"), LSD, and some cough syrups. Most hallucinogenic drugs are plant based in origin, although like other drugs, are also made in illegal synthetic chemical labs.

### 4. Are some drugs safe while others are not?

Taking any kind of drug, whether legal or not, has a safety risk. Since all drugs alter the way your body works, there can be unwanted side effects. Even over-the-counter medicines can be extremely harmful if not taken according to directions. All drugs have the potential to harm if not taken according to the directions. For example, it is easy to 'overdose' on such drugs as cough syrup, Tylenol, Advil, or even Vitamins. Many people take too many pills such as morphine to kill pain, and overdose, resulting in permanent damage or death. Prescription medications taken in too large doses or by people for whom they were not prescribed are at a huge risk.

Street drugs have NO KNOWN source of origin. There is no quality control on street drugs. If you buy and use drugs that originate from a street vendor, you have no idea what is in it. Even if you got it from your friend.... where did he/she get it? Where did that person get it? No illegal drug is safe. Today there is a crisis with a lethal drug called Fentanyl that has been mixed with other drugs such as cannabis and cocaine. Fentanyl can kill. There have been thousands of deaths in Canada over the last few years due to other more common street drugs, being laced with Fentanyl.

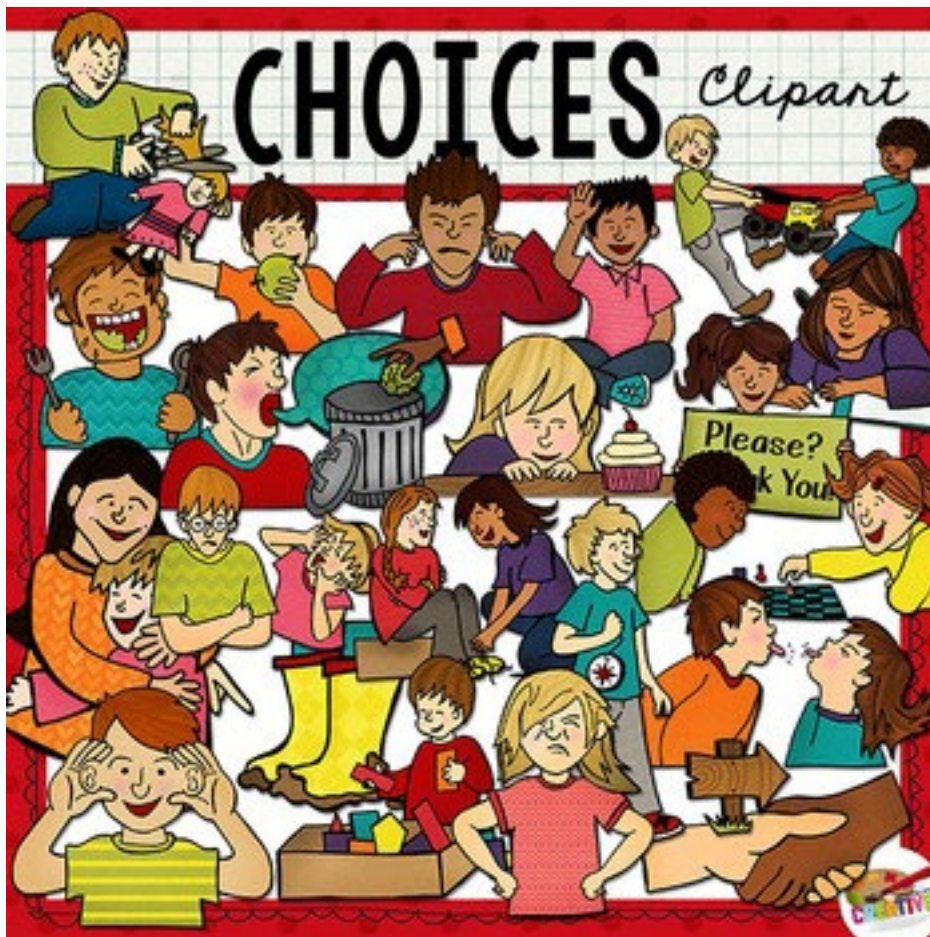
**How do I keep myself safe?** Take only drugs that your trusted adult (parent, guardian, foster parent) says are safe to take, (over the counter) or are prescribed for you, by a doctor, **and follow the instructions exactly as they appear**. Be sure to stop taking anything if you don't feel well after taking it and see your doctor. **NEVER** take any drug given to you by a friend. You don't know where it came from, and you don't know what's in it. Even if they say it's fine - you don't know.

**5. Why do some people choose to use drugs?** Answers will vary here - no answer is incorrect - but you can lead the discussion as follows:

- Curiosity: will it really feel like 'they say it does?'
- To fit in - everyone else is doing it so it must be safe, and I'll do it too
- Peer pressure: to keep friends you finally give in and agree to try a drug
- To escape problems such as interpersonal relationships, sexual identity crises, social media difficulties, bullying, family issues, academic pressure, extra-curricular pressures.
- To help with schoolwork or to study for exams
- As a way of coping with mental health issues; a choice made instead of/along with self-harm

## 6. What are the factors that may lead you to choose or not to choose to use drugs, including alcohol and cannabis?

- Family values - what would my parents think or say? Do I value their beliefs?
- Role models - both those who use drugs, and those who do not.
- Self-image and self-confidence; Do I have the ability to make my own choices and be happy with them, regardless of the consequences?
- Religious and cultural values
- Friends with whom I socialize; what are their choices, and do I have to make the same ones?
- Value on education and the negative or positive effects my choices might have
- How badly do I want to fit in?
- What are the mental health challenges I am facing?
- What coping mechanisms do I have to solve any mental health issues I might have?
- What support systems do I have to help with my problems?
- How much credible knowledge do I have about alcohol and cannabis?
- Are my choices made under duress or are they well considered and independent?
- My future: where do I see myself in 5, 10, 15 years, and what affect might my choices now, have on that future?



## Answer Guide to Myth or Fact

1. MYTH AND FACT: When consumed responsibly and in moderate quantities, alcohol will not cause permanent damage. However, since many teen drinkers consume large quantities in a short period of time, it can be extremely harmful and dangerous.
2. MYTH: Alcohol is a depressant drug. It slows down the normal pattern of neuro-transmission to and from the brain through the Central Nervous System. All body systems react more slowly, including gross and fine motor skills, and reaction time.
3. MYTH: If you eat before you drink, the food in your stomach will slow down the rate of absorption of the alcohol into the blood stream. The amount of alcohol however, remains the same, therefore the level of intoxication is the same. You may not feel the effects of the alcohol as rapidly, but it is in your system, regardless of the food.
4. MYTH AND FACT: The level of intoxication is determined by the amount of alcohol consumed, as well as the volume of blood into which it is absorbed. Girls generally have less weight than boys, and therefore less blood volume, so the alcohol concentration in the blood stream is greater. As girls generally have a greater percentage of body fat compared to boys, the rate of alcohol absorption is also greater. But this is just a generalization. Some boys may be physically lighter than a girl and may have greater body fat, making this untrue. It really depends on the person.
5. MYTH: Coffee or energy drinks have caffeine, which is a stimulant drug. Consuming these may make you feel wider awake, but they do not change the BAC level. By consuming these stimulant drinks, you simply are a 'wide-awake drunk'.
6. MYTH: If you vomit after drinking too much, the alcohol in the drinks that are vomited won't be absorbed into the blood stream. However, the alcohol that is already in the blood stream is there until it can be metabolized through the liver, which is only about one drink per hour. Vomiting will not make you less drunk.
7. MYTH: Beer, coolers, wine, and shots are equally as intoxicating. While beer has more volume, (e.g. a 355 ml can of beer compared to a 30 ml shot of whiskey), the beer has only 5% alcohol by volume, compared to the shot at 40% alcohol by volume. A shot of whiskey is stronger, but you drink less of it. However, 'chugging' shots is very dangerous as the alcohol content is huge.
8. FACT: A cold shower may wake you up, but the amount of alcohol in the blood stream remains unchanged. Your level of impairment is the same. There is nothing that will reduce the state of drunkenness except time. It takes approximately one hour to metabolize one standard drink.
9. MYTH AND FACT: Alcohol is alcohol. It doesn't matter whether you drink a beer, then a wine, then a shot - the amount of alcohol you consume is the determining factor for your BAC level. However, mixing drinks may make you feel drunker, or may make you feel sick, due to the other components in the drinks, especially the sugar.



10. FACT: Many people think coolers are less likely to intoxicate the user, but in fact most coolers have the same amount of alcohol as a beer. Some actually have more alcohol by volume, increasing the level of intoxication. Additionally, coolers have a high sugar level which often makes the person drink them faster and/or drink more, increasing the level of intoxication.

11. MYTH: All drugs can be dangerous if consumed in excess or if their consumption is combined with driving any type of vehicle. While alcohol affects many parts of the body, not just brain function, so too does cannabis. Alcohol affects the liver, pancreas, intestines, and stomach, as well as adding 'empty calories' to the person's caloric intake. Cannabis negatively affects the lungs, fat tissues in the body, circulatory system and digestive system when consumed.

12. FACT: Cannabis edibles are digested through the stomach and liver, and take longer to reach the bloodstream, hence making the user feel like there is a lesser effect. The amount of product smoked or ingested is the determining factor. Many edibles are just as strong as that which is smoked.

13. MYTH and FACT: Most young people do not use cannabis, although a large percentage reported at least one use in the previous 12 months. Health Canada reported that in 2020 an average of 44% of male youth and 37% of female youth (aged 15 - 19) had used cannabis in the previous 12 months. Research on the effects of Covid-19 on cannabis use showed that there was an increase in use among teenagers as compared to older adults.

14. TRUE: Cannabis can still be detected in the body hours or even days after use. The level of impairment wanes significantly after only a few hours, but the drug is still present in the body.

15. MYTH: It is not safe to drive any vehicle after drinking alcohol or after using cannabis. While there are limits under which it is allowable to operate a vehicle, even if under these limits any amount of consumption will cause a small level of impairment. TO BE SAFE.... If you drink, don't drive. If you use cannabis, don't drive. It's as simple as that.



# Would you fly with these pilots?



IF IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE HERE, WHY DOES IT MAKE SENSE WHEN YOU DRIVE?

Visit [www.potanddriving.cpha.ca](http://www.potanddriving.cpha.ca) to find out more about driving high.

A National Health and Consumer Council Health Communication Program developed by Canada Drug, Alcohol, & Health (CDAG). The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of Health Canada.

## Worksheet - Signs of Intoxication

**Question: List 10 common signs of intoxication that you might observe in others.**



<https://www.dreamstime.com/photos-images/teen-alcohol.html>

## Signs of Intoxication – Answers

A person can usually tell when they are intoxicated, but it may be challenging to spot the signs in others. To gauge another person's level of intoxication you should be aware of the following signs:

1. A loss of coordination, such as stumbling or swaying
2. Flushing of the face
3. Bloodshot eyes
4. Louder speech than usual; boisterous show-off behaviour.
5. Slurred speech
6. Damp or clammy skin
7. Mood swings or personality changes, such as aggression or depression
8. Drowsiness/ Passing out
9. Slowed reflexes
10. Vomiting

## Drama Activity/Assignment

**(Most suitable for grade 8-10 students)**

During this role-play students have an opportunity to explore communication about choices. They will work in small groups to write and perform a role-play about one minute in duration. Teachers must acknowledge students' desire to act silly due to a level of discomfort in acting in front of peers, but they must insist that the role play be authentic.

1. Arrange students in groups of three; give each group a scenario card. There will be duplicates of each role-play, which will facilitate class discussion and peer evaluation.
2. Allow students five minutes to prepare their script.
3. The "actors" should not read lines from a sheet of paper. To authenticate the task, they should talk off the 'top of their heads' as they would in real life.
4. Have each group to perform their scenario. After each one, ask the class the following questions:
  - What did they do well?
  - Could they have done anything differently?
  - Was the dialogue authentic?
  - Did the group perform what really would have happened, or what the teacher 'wants to see?'"

## Drama Activity Scenarios

### **Scenario 1:**

Your friend Jeremy picks you up and you go to Carl's house to watch a game on TV. While watching the game, Carl brings out a case of beer that his older brother bought for him and passes them out. Towards the end of the game, you notice Jeremy is starting to get loud and slur his words. It's time to go home and Jeremy gets his keys out to drive both of you home. How does the conversation go, and how does it end?

### **Scenario 2:**

Your father did the laundry today and found a joint in your jeans pocket. You've never talked to your parents about smoking weed and they don't know that you do. Your older sibling comes into the room when your father confronts you. What conversation ensues?

### **Scenario 3:**

You're home studying. You see your neighbour, Dan, out on the back deck. He's sharing a joint with his girlfriend who happens to be your best friend. 30 minutes later, you see them both heading out the front door. Dan has car keys in his hand and he seems to be stumbling as he walks. What do you do?

**Scenario 4:**

You're at a party and it's getting late. There has been a lot of weed passed around and most of the partiers have also been drinking a lot. You notice one of the girls in your class passed out on the living room sofa. When you try to shake her awake, you can't wake her up. What do you do?

**Scenario 5:**

You're at a party and Sandy is the designated driver. People are having fun drinking and smoking joints. Friends keep passing Sandy a joint because they think that everyone drives better after smoking weed. Sandy decides to go ahead and smoke the joint. She seems fine when it is time to go home, and you are definitely in no shape to drive. Now what?

**Scenario 6:**

Your best friend, Sarah, just called you in tears to let you know she was pulled over by the police and charged with impaired driving. She doesn't know what's going to happen to her if she goes to court and is convicted. She's terrified to call her parents. What could happen?

**Scenario 7:**

You are coming back in through the front doors of the school after lunch break; you're returning from the park where you and your friends had gone to smoke up. The vice-principal asks you to come to the office as she saw you at the park. You didn't smoke but she and believes you're high. Now what?

**Scenario 8:**

You see your younger brother who is grade 7 at the park under the climber with a friend and a couple of cans of beer. What will you do?

**Scenario 9:**

You are a passenger in your parents' car with your older sibling who has been asked to take you to your soccer game. Your sibling is driving erratically and you suspect they have either been drinking or smoking cannabis. What are you going to do?

**Scenario 10:**

You've been invited to a grad party where everyone knows there will be no supervision, and alcohol and cannabis. You are having a conversation with your parents, who don't want to let you go. How will this conflict play out?

## Discussion Questions about Driving Impaired by Alcohol and/or Drugs

1. Do people you know, or your friends ever get into a vehicle with someone who was impaired by alcohol and/or drugs?
2. Do you think they knew that the driver had been drinking and/or had smoked pot? What are the signs to look for?
3. Do you think doing drugs and driving is as bad as drinking and driving? Why or why not?
4. What are some common distractions that we face on the road? If you are driving, how does drug or alcohol use affect how you react to these distractions?
5. What would you do if you were at a party and your friends kept insisting you smoke up with them? What if they were offering other drugs? Where do you personally draw the line?
6. If your ride home got high on cannabis, how safe would you feel getting a ride home with them? Being honest, might you still ride with them?
7. If you are impaired by alcohol or drugs, could you accurately decide if your driver was drunk or high before getting into a vehicle with them?
8. Would you get into a plane if you knew the pilot was high? (See photo on previous page) Why or why not? Is there a difference between that and getting into a vehicle?



<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/victims-id-d-after-fatal-march-road-carling-avenue-crash-1.2719563>

# The Cost and Consequences of Impaired Driving

Although the costs and consequences vary between the different provinces and territories, a single impaired driving incident can trigger a range of sanctions, including administrative licence suspensions and administrative vehicle impoundments. Other sanctions such as the requirement to use an ignition interlock device or the need to attend a comprehensive remedial treatment program may also apply.

Further, the same incident of impaired driving that triggered provincial/territorial sanctions can trigger criminal charges, which might lead to a conviction under the Criminal Code, fines, jail time, and expensive legal fees. In addition, most provinces impose lengthy licence suspensions on drivers convicted of most federal alcohol and drug-related driving offences, failing or refusing to

submit to a required test, or driving while prohibited or suspended for a federal impaired driving offence.

The costs and sanctions below are based on an impaired driver who is caught while driving on a public road. This example outlines one province's sanctions. Although these sanctions will generally be similar to those in other jurisdictions, there will be some variation. The driver in this hypothetical has been charged and convicted of the offence commonly referred to as an "80 or Over" (Criminal Code, s. 320.12(b)). This offence is considered to be one of the less serious impaired driving offences. The costs and consequences associated with impaired driving are much more severe if injury or death resulted from the impaired driving incident. Repeat offenders are also subject to more severe costs and consequences.



## Total Costs:

- \$45,256-53,765+

## Provincial Sanctions (\$4,765+)

- 90-day administrative licence suspension
- 7-day administrative vehicle impoundment
- 1-year post-conviction licence suspension (reduced to 3 or 6-months in certain circumstances)
- Minimum 45-day post-conviction vehicle impoundment
- \$1,800+ impoundment fee
- \$550 administrative penalty
- \$281 licence reinstatement fee
- \$634 for remedial program for convicted impaired drivers
- \$1,500+ for the use of an ignition interlock for one year (less in certain circumstances)

## Criminal Sanctions + Legal Fees (\$4,500-7,000+)

- \$1,000 fine
- Jail time
- 1-3-year federal driving prohibition
- 3,500-\$4,000 for a plea or withdrawal or \$6,000 for a one or two-day trial (If your case takes longer, the costs will be higher.)
- Criminal Record



## Insurance Costs (\$36,000-\$42,000)

- \$8,000-\$10,000+ a year for three years for a facility insurance policy. (In provinces with private insurance 3 years of facility insurance is typically required. Jurisdictions with public insurance do not have facility insurance but will typically raise the insurance rate of drivers with impaired driving convictions.)
- \$4,000+ a year for three years following the facility insurance policy assuming a normal insurance rate of \$2,000 a year. (The insurance rate is typically double the normal rate for a further three years for a total of 6 years of increased insurance cost.)

## Warn Range

Drivers who are below the criminal BAC threshold of 0.08% but above the provincial threshold (typically 0.04% or 0.05%) are also subject to costs and consequences. While these drivers will not face criminal sanctions, in one province these drivers are subject to:

- 3-day administrative licence suspension
- \$250 penalty
- \$281 licence reinstatement fee
- Insurance consequences

Some jurisdictions include administrative vehicle impoundments as part of these sanctions. Sanctions and penalties vary between jurisdictions and typically increase for subsequent occurrences.



## New and Young Drivers

Young and novice drivers (i.e. drivers in the graduated licencing program and drivers under a certain age, typically 21 or 22) are generally required to maintain a BAC of zero and/or have no detectable level of cannabis or certain other drugs in their body. If these requirements are breached, drivers in one province suffer the following costs and consequences if they blow within the warn range:

- Immediate 3-day administrative licence suspension
- 30-day administrative licence suspension if convicted of a provincial offence
- \$60-500 fine if convicted of a provincial offence
- \$250 penalty
- \$281 licence reinstatement fee
- Possible licence cancellation if convicted of a provincial offence.
- Insurance consequences

Some jurisdictions include administrative vehicle impoundments as part of these sanctions. Sanctions and penalties vary between jurisdictions and typically increase for subsequent occurrences.





## Staying Safe and Refusal Skills

**The safest and healthiest choice is always to not drink alcohol or use drugs at all.**

**However, if you decide to drink, here are some tips to remember.**

**When you know you will be drinking, plan ahead, stay in control and stay safe!**

1. Pace yourself by alternating alcoholic drinks with soft drinks or water. Eat before you drink and while you are drinking.
2. Know your limit. Keep below it. Don't let others push you beyond it.
3. Drink slowly. Don't chug. No one will be impressed by how fast you can drink when you're clinging to the toilet.
4. Stop drinking before you feel drunk.
5. Don't mix alcohol with medicines, illegal drugs or energy drinks. Other drugs may interact with alcohol, causing affects you don't expect or are unable to control.
6. Count your drinks. Ways to keep track include keeping your bottle caps in your pocket.
7. Think about your reputation, your safety and the safety of others.
8. Watch your drink so that no one can slip anything into it when you're not looking.
9. Plan ahead. Arrange to walk, take a taxi or public transit home with a sober buddy; get someone you can trust to pick you up; or stay overnight where you will be drinking.
10. If you drink any alcohol, do not drive. The only way to know whether the level of alcohol in your body is within the legal limit for driving is a breathalyzer or blood test. You can't tell by the way you feel. Just as important, don't ride with a driver who has been drinking.

*Source: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health*

## Refusal Skills: How to Say No

*Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don't matter  
and those who matter don't mind. - Dr. Seuss*

Saying no can sometimes be hard, but you might be surprised how easy it gets with practice. If you know you are going to be some place where you might be offered alcohol or other drugs try to plan your response in advance. The following are options you can use.

### **Be direct**

Say "No thanks"; sometimes it's just that easy.

### **Repeat yourself**

Be firm in your position and continue to repeat your response, "No thanks".

### **State why**

Give a reason why; try saying, "No thanks, I have to be up early tomorrow" (or I have a game tomorrow, or I have to be home early, or I got caught the last time). Or just say the truth; I don't drink, and I don't use drugs.

### **Turn the tables**

If the person won't let up try turning the tables and ask, "Why do you care if I do or don't". Be confident in your response.

### **Address the Pressure**

People don't like being accused of peer pressuring others, so try stating the obvious, "Wow, the peer pressure in this room is pretty strong", then walk away.

### **Walk away**

It is always an option to not respond and just walk away.

### **Change the subject**

Try suggesting something better to do with your time, "No thanks, do you want to \_\_\_\_\_".

### **Be proactive**

If you know you are in a situation where you are likely to be offered alcohol or other drugs, leave before you ever get to that point or simply don't go in the first place.

### **Accept the person, reject the behaviour**

If the person is giving you a hard time try telling the person, "I respect your choice to do drugs, respect mine not to".

AADAC, OYZ Refusal Strategy Tool Kit: <https://drugfree.org/>

**Recommended web site:** The young teen's place for info on alcohol and resisting peer pressure  
<http://www.thecoolspot.gov>

## [Not Ready to Go](#)

### **A Video about Driving while Impaired by Cannabis**

MADD Canada has made a video documentary, **Not Ready to Go** about a deadly crash in Kanata, Ontario. The video shares the story of 5 teens who were killed and 11 other people who were injured in Cannabis impaired multi-vehicle crash as told by the survivors, families and emergency services responders.

It was a clear night and they were driving on an empty stretch of road. The drivers started playing leapfrog, taking turns passing each other. In normal circumstances this would be really dangerous, but with impairment from Cannabis, the consequences were much deadlier.

One of the cars pulled into the oncoming lane to pass and didn't see a truck coming. At the last second the passing driver saw the truck coming towards him and tried to get out of the way by pulling off the road. The truck couldn't avoid hitting the car and it was deflected into the oncoming traffic lane, hitting another car head-on.

The fiery crash resulted in 5 people dead – all teenagers, and 11 others injured, 9 of whom were teenagers. The two gentlemen in the truck were also severely injured. The driver of the truck still has the scars of the fateful night when his arm was severed. Although doctors were able to re-attach it, he is still missing sensation in that arm. The passenger in the truck had numerous surgeries and eventually had to have his leg amputated as a result of his injuries.

When the car that was hit by the truck in the first collision caught fire, some of the people in that car were trapped. Their bodies were burnt beyond recognition. Their families could not identify them.

All the teenagers involved that night were good friends. The driver of the first vehicle that caused the collision survived and was convicted of impaired driving causing death and served jail time. None of these young people thought smoking weed and driving could be dangerous and it was proven in court that impairment by Cannabis alone was a key factor (the driver had not consumed alcohol). He has to live with the guilt that he killed 5 of his close friends and caused serious injury to so many others.

To watch “*Not Ready to Go*” and other videos available please visit:

<https://madd.ca/pages/programs/awareness-campaigns/television-and-radio-ads/>.

## Kanata Crash

### 100 Percent Avoidable



Source: <https://ottawacitizen.com/gallery/0728-crash-brf>

## Study: What Canadian Youth Think About Weed

Abridged from the study by *Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse*

### **Key Findings:**

#### **Youth's decision to use cannabis is based on many factors:**

- concerns about health risks, poor academic performance, and negative impacts on relationships with family members led to non-use
- Family relations were a significant influence on decisions to use cannabis: in particular, a weak parent-child relationship, with the parents not openly communicating their positions on the drug to their children.
- Youth also held a strong belief that all youth are using cannabis all the time.

#### **Youth's perception of the effects of cannabis use included:**

- cannabis was believed to result in dependency, a loss of focus, laziness, and some physical problems.
- Interestingly, youth also perceived cannabis to affect youth on an individual basis — that is, cannabis affects each person differently and so it is not accurate to try to describe universal outcomes.
- the youth involved in the study stated that cannabis helps people focus, relax, sleep and improve their creativity. They also believed that cannabis produced a range of health benefits, from treating mental health issues to curing cancer.

#### **Youth also held these perceptions:**

- that cannabis does not change people in a long-term, negative way; instead, any long-term changes are attributed to the individual and not the drug.
- Participants also reported a perception that cannabis is safe and poses minimal risk to youth, with this perception particularly evident when discussing the use of cannabis while driving.
- While some participants suggested that cannabis makes drivers more focused, others thought that such use is dangerous because it impairs the driver, not unlike alcohol.
- Youth also commonly expressed the belief that cannabis is not and should not be considered a drug because it is argued to be natural, safe and categorically distinct from “hard drugs.”
- Youth also expressed frustration and confusion about the inconsistency in police reactions to cannabis. For example, they could not make sense of how the same substance could result in legal sanctions in some contexts, (e.g., being caught with a large quantity of cannabis), but not others, (e.g., being caught with a small quantity of cannabis).
- Youth appeared to have difficulty understanding the legal use of cannabis (medical) vs illegal use (underage) and a perceived double standard.

**To read the full report:** <http://www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/CCSA-What-Canadian-Youth-Think-about-Cannabis-Report-in-Short-2013-en.pdf>

## Key Questions for High School Students, Linked to the Report

1. Consider your decision to use or not use cannabis. What are the main factors in your life that have led to your decision?
2. Are you aware of factors in your life that could make you **alter your decision** to use or not to use cannabis?
3. Do you personally agree with the study's findings that;
  - a) negative effects of cannabis are because of the user, not the drug?
  - b) cannabis has no long-term effects?
  - c) cannabis is safe and poses minimal risk to youth?
4. Do you agree that early prevention efforts will help reduce cannabis use among youth? What could/should these efforts look like?
5. Since cannabis is now treated similarly to alcohol under Canadian law, are youth more likely to believe there are few to no negative effects? How will this belief impact consumption and the possibility of an increased number of impaired drivers?
6. Should cannabis education focus on abstinence or on safe consumption? What else might it focus on?
7. If you were running a cannabis education class for grade 7 and 8 students, what would you be telling them?

### Ideas to Elicit Discussion for Cannabis Study Questions

1. Family values, fear of 'getting caught', dislike of the physical high or loss of control, fear of the drug being tampered with, the affect it would have on your school work and future ambitions, the drug's perceived benefit in making you more able to cope, the benefit of fitting into a group.
2. Social media pressures, bullying, social pressure to fit in, parents separate or divorce, a death in the family, parent loses a job, family financial stress, you having to balance school work with a job, social life and extra-curricular activities.
3. Since cannabis is legal for people over the age of 19 (Quebec, 18) students may feel safe consumption is a much more valid educational strategy for both cannabis and alcohol education. However, abstinence is an option that should always be presented to students. They should be encouraged to see it as a healthy, legitimate and viable option.

## Designated Drivers

### **Ways to avoid riding in a vehicle driven by an impaired driver:**

1. Know the public transit hours and have a list of taxi companies with phone numbers.
2. Plan for a sober friend or family member to pick you up and bring you home.
3. Make arrangements ahead of time to stay the night if you know you will be drinking.
4. Arrange for someone in your group to be the sober designated driver.
5. Make sure you stay sober enough to be able to assess your driver's condition.
6. Have money or a credit card to pay for transportation home
7. Know where your parents are and make sure your parents know where you are.
8. Call your parents if you can't get home! They might be upset that you were drinking or using cannabis, but they'll be a lot unhappier if you drive with someone who is impaired

### **Who makes a good Designated Driver? (DD)**

1. Reliable
2. Responsible
3. Able to say NO to using drugs or drinking
4. Someone who is not in attendance at the social situation and will not be impaired.

### **What needs to be decided ahead of time?**

1. Who will be the DD.
2. When you will leave and what you will do if someone in the group is not ready on time.
3. Who is paying for gas and parking? (shared costs?)

### **What must the passengers do?**

1. Be ready to leave at the agreed time.
2. Not get sick in the car.
3. Not be rude to the DD.
4. In the event that the designated driver drinks alcohol or smokes weed, have a backup plan (i.e., money for taxi or transit).

### **Activity**

Even though you have agreed to be the designated driver or have decided not to use alcohol or drugs, your peers may still pressure you to drink or smoke pot. In groups, ask students to write down the five ways to refuse or say "no". Bring the groups together for discussion.

## Student Questionnaires

Statement	True	False	Not Sure
1. If your BAC (Blood Alcohol Concentration) is below the legal limit, you cannot be charged with an impaired driving offence.			
2. Your driver's license can be suspended immediately by a police officer for impaired driving.			
3. Having only one drink per hour allows you to stay below the legal limit.			
4. If you are impaired while operating a snowmobile on your own property you cannot be charged with impaired driving.			
5. An impaired driving charge is nothing to be concerned about. You pay the ticket and that's that.			
6. If you have had too much to drink, drinking a cup of coffee and taking a cold shower will sober you up enough to drive.			
7. Driving under the influence of drugs is less risky than driving under the influence of alcohol.			
8. If you suspect that someone has had too much to drink but they assure you they are okay to drive, you should trust their judgment and get in a vehicle with them.			
9. Any drug that changes your mood or the way you feel (e.g. illegal or legal drugs, prescription drugs or over-the-counter drugs) impairs your ability to drive.			
10. If you are under 21 years of age and a fully licensed driver, it's okay to have one drink and drive.			

**Source:**

<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cycp-cpcj/id-cfa/lp-pl/ac1-hand-docu-eng.htm>



## Test Your Knowledge on Drug-Impaired Driving



Answer each question true or false or fill in the blanks, and explain why you answered that way.

1. Driving while impaired by cannabis doubles your risk of being involved in a motor vehicle collision.
2. Smoking only one joint will not affect a person's ability to drive.
3. Driving while under the influence of drugs can impair a driver's:
  - a) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Police do not have a road-side test that can reveal if a driver is impaired by drugs the same as a breathalyzer for alcohol impairment.
5. If someone in Canada gets caught by the police for driving while impaired by drugs, the penalties are less severe than the penalties for driving while impaired by alcohol.
6. Certain drugs prescribed by your doctor can impair your ability to drive.
7. Even though there is a legal age under which the consumption of cannabis is illegal, the police are not likely to charge a minor with possession.
8. There is one set of laws and penalties with respect to cannabis-impaired driving, set out by the Government of Canada, under the Federal Criminal Code.
9. Taking cannabis into the United States or any other country is illegal, but the penalties will simply be having the drug confiscated.
10. If you smoke cannabis you can drive after 2 hours, but if you ingest it you shouldn't drive for at least four hours.

## Answers to “Test Your Knowledge”

- 1. True:** Research has found that driving within three hours of smoking cannabis almost doubles the risk of a crash that can result in injury or death. The most common drug found in drivers aged 16–19 is Cannabis (60.8%). This age group is more likely to have cannabis in their system than any other age group.
- 2. False:** Research shows that any amount of cannabis increases impairment.
- 3. Drugs can impair a driver’s:**
  - a) ability to react to outside stimuli (e.g., pedestrian, traffic lights)
  - b) visual acuity (blurred vision, distorted images)
  - c) ability to divide their attention (radio, passengers, other vehicles)
  - d) ability to make safe lane changes, maintain a constant speed
- 4. False:** The test is called Drug Evaluation and Classification and research has shown that Drug Recognition Evaluators (DRE) are accurate over 95% in detecting drug use. The 12-step evaluation is conducted by a trained officer and includes eye examinations and a series of motor coordination tests. To confirm results, drivers must provide a sample of urine, saliva or blood when demanded by a DRE. New tests and laws came into effect in October, 2018.
- 5. False.** The penalties are the same as for alcohol-impaired driving:
  - First offence: \$1,000 fine, 12-month licence suspension and a possible jail sentence of up to 18 months.
  - Second offence: minimum 30 days in jail and a two-year licence suspension.
  - Third or subsequent offence: minimum of 120 days in prison, three-year driving prohibition.
  - Causing bodily harm or death while driving impaired: maximum 10-years in prison or life sentence.
- 6. True.** Just because the drug was prescribed to you by your doctor does not necessarily mean it is okay to drive after use. Given the properties of some prescription drugs, it might not be safe to operate a vehicle after consumption. Be sure to read the label and speak to your pharmacist. The effects of some prescription drugs can last for several hours.
- 7. False:** The police may or may not lay charges for possession of very small amounts, but they will lay charges if there is a significant amount of cannabis or if the minor (or adult) is providing cannabis to other minors. The police will often take a minor to the police station and require the parent/guardian to pick them up.
- 8. False:** There are provincial and territorial laws in addition to those set out by the Government of Canada. These local jurisdictions make any amount of drug impairment while driving illegal for underage drivers or those in a Graduated Licencing Program.
- 9. False:** The penalties for taking cannabis into another country can be very harsh, up to and including imprisonment. Cannabis possession is illegal in most countries and in many states within the United States.
- 10. False:** Cannabis can still be in your system up to 24 hours after use. It is not safe to drive for at least four to six hours after use.

## Know Means NO

### Using Drugs or Drinking? No Driving!

**Know you are not alone.** If you feel pressure to do something you know is wrong, so do most of the others you are with. Knowing you are not alone makes it easier to say NO.

**Know that most youth know better** - they just don't have the courage to stand up to strong personalities and the peer pressure that ensues. You need to find your inner courage and know it's the right thing to say NO.

**Know what the consequences are:** for you, for your friends, for family, and for all those who may suffer for the rest of their lives if you don't say NO.

**Know that peer pressure and the need to fit in is at its greatest during the teen years.** There is no greater pressure, than peer pressure. Knowing this may actually make it easier to say NO.

**Know that as long as your decision was to stay safe,** any amount of "trouble" you might be in for drinking or using cannabis underage will be nothing compared to the pain and suffering caused if you are injured or killed in an accident. It's hard, but say NO.

**Know your driver** and what he/she has done that night. If you don't know, you won't know to say NO.

**Know yourself;** your goals, your dreams, your ambitions. You know the right thing to do. It's not easy going against the grain; it takes courage - but you do have the option of saying NO.

**And lastly, know that when you look at yourself in the mirror the next day, you will like and respect the person you see. You will, because you will know in your heart that you made a good decision, no matter how tough it was. You stood up and said "NO".**

M. Elizabeth Watson  
Hon. B.P.E., B.Ed., Hon.Specialist, OCT

## Section 4

### What Students Can do to Make a Difference

How to use *MADD Canada's Youth Manual* to make a difference

*You are able to spread the message*

*You are able to make a difference*

*You are able to save lives!*

### **What you can do to raise awareness about impaired driving**

Download the **MADD Canada Youth Resource Manual** at:

<http://madd.ca/pages/programs/youth-services/get-involved/>

The manual, this guide and other tools can also be found on the USB.

## How to Prevent Impaired Driving

**Impaired driving impacts all of us; the following are some things each of us can do to make our roads safer.**

- Wear a seat belt.
- Be a responsible host. Serve food and have non-alcoholic drinks available. Don't let your guests drive after drinking alcohol and never serve alcohol to someone under the legal drinking age.
- Speak out expressing your concern over impaired driving in your community.
- Never ride in a car with someone who has been drinking or using drugs – call a cab or ask a sober friend to drive you home.
- Report impaired drivers immediately to area law enforcement (call 911) from a car phone or pay phone with the license plate number, description of the vehicle, and the direction in which it was traveling.
- Keep a safe distance from anyone driving erratically and do not try to intervene yourself.

*Riding in a car with an impaired driver is just as dangerous as driving impaired. Never accept a ride from someone who has been drinking or using drugs.*

### **Being a Friend**

***Stepping in and stopping a friend who is impaired is a true sign of friendship.***

- If one of your friends has been drinking and shouldn't drive, please don't let them. They could hurt themselves or others and maybe just a little persuasion from you could mean the difference between life and death.
- Suggest that you or a sober friend drive your alcohol-impaired friend home. His/her car can always be picked up at another time.
- Suggest that your impaired friend stay overnight in your home. This may sound inconvenient, but you could be saving your friend's, or someone else's life.
- Have your friend taken home in a taxi. Pay for the ride yourself. It's hard to object to a free ride.
- Whatever you do, don't give in. Friends don't let friends drink and then drive. In the morning, you'll have a safer and maybe an even closer friend. And if they are angry, so be it. You have made the right decision. In the end, that's all that matters.

## Tips for Teens

These are some of the things you and your friends can do to reduce your risks:

- **Speak up.** Talk to your friends about the risks of drinking and/or doing drugs and driving.
- **Think ahead.** How would you get around if you couldn't drive? Graduated licensing means you can lose your license after just one drink. And how would you feel if you caused a crash – especially if someone were hurt or killed?
- **Offer support.** Make sure your designated driver doesn't drink at all.
- **Be strong.** Never get in the car with someone who has been drinking or doing drugs! Instead, call your parents or someone else and ask for your ride. They would rather drive you home in the middle of the night than learn you were hurt or killed in a crash.
- **Be prepared.** Bring enough money to pay for a cab if you need one. If you don't have any money, call a cab anyway!! Your parents can pay when you get home, and you can arrange to pay them down the road.
- **Celebrate wisely.** Promote "Safe Grad" concept. On graduation night, think about things to do besides drinking. If you and your friends do drink, make plans before the party to make sure everyone will get home safely.

Source: *Smashed*, TC1002934, Transport Canada

## Start an Impaired Driving Awareness Group

There are a number of youth-oriented impaired driving awareness groups that work together to help educate their school communities about the dangers of impaired driving and prevent impaired driving deaths and injuries. The following groups can help get you started:

*SADD – Students Against Destructive Decisions*

*OSAID – Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving*

*CYAID – Canadian Youth Against Impaired Driving*


*TADD – Teens Against Drunk Driving*

All you need is a couple of friends and a staff member to help get things started. For fundraising, awareness, and event planning ideas, download the MADD Canada Youth Manual at: <http://madd.ca/pages/programs/youth-services/get-involved/>



### **Some tips to help keep you and your friends safe:**



- Stop friends from driving impaired or getting into a vehicle  with someone who is impaired by alcohol or drugs. They could hurt themselves or others and maybe just a little persuasion from you could mean the difference between life and death.
- Be a responsible host. If friends are consuming alcohol in your house, ensure they do not drive home. Offer a couch, get a sober driver to take them home or pay for their cab home. Who's going to object to a free ride? This may sound inconvenient, but you could be saving the life of your friend or another innocent victim.
- If the friend decides to leave anyway, always report suspected impaired drivers immediately by calling 9-1-1.
- Contact your local MADD Canada Chapter or Community Leader to find out how you can get involved. They can be found at [madd.ca](http://madd.ca).
- Talk to your parents about impaired driving and sign MADD Canada's *Contract for Life* (see next page).

# **CONTRACT FOR LIFE – I PROMISE**

## **A reality check between friends and family members...**

I understand the dangers involved in operating a motor vehicle while impaired. I WILL NOT DRIVE if I have been drinking or using drugs. If I am placed in a situation where a person driving is impaired, I PROMISE to call you to ask for advice or a ride, regardless of the hour or circumstances.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Because I care about you and others, when you contact me I PROMISE to do my best to help you through any situation in a non-judgmental way, either by suggesting possible solutions, or by volunteering to provide or find alternative transportation, no matter what the hour or circumstances.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Plan a sober ride home before setting out, designate a sober driver, call home, take a taxi, walk with a friend, arrange to stay over with friends or family, or take local transit.**



You can download this contract from:

[http://www.madd.ca/media/docs/contract\\_for\\_life.pdf](http://www.madd.ca/media/docs/contract_for_life.pdf)

*Help your friends and family stay alive – don't let them drive after drinking or using drugs!*

## **HOW THIS CONTRACT WORKS:**

- Both parties must read, discuss and reach an agreement on the terms.
- This agreement provides an arrangement that has proven to be effective for many.
- Both parties may choose to attach terms to this contract, to better suit their situation. (Use the reverse side of this form.)
- This contract is also designed to be used as a forum for discussion between individuals.
- It can be a practical step in dealing with the realities of situations that involve impaired driving.
- This contract can be made between family members, friends and others.





## When Should You Call 9-1-1?

*When you see these signs:*

- Driving unreasonably fast, slow or at an inconsistent speed
- Drifting in and out of lanes
- Tailgating and changing lanes frequently
- Making exceptionally wide turns, changing lanes or passing without sufficient clearance
- Overshooting or stopping well before stop signs or stop lights
- Disregarding signals and lights
- Approaching signals or leaving intersections too quickly or slowly
- Driving without headlights, failing to lower high beams or leaving turn signals on
- Driving with windows open in cold or inclement weather

*When you pull over to call 9-1-1 be ready with these details:*

1. State your location
2. Vehicle description
  - Licence plate number of the vehicle
  - Colour of vehicle
  - Make and model of vehicle
3. Direction of travel for the vehicle
4. Description of driver



*Always maintain a safe distance from any driver you suspect might be impaired. Always wear your seatbelt and do not call while driving.*

## **A Night to Remember**

### **An After-Prom or After-Grad Party**

#### **Background**

At *MADD Canada*, we know that young drivers are over-represented in the number of fatalities and serious injuries on our roads. In 2022, 16-25-year-olds constituted 13% of the population, but made up almost 33.4% of the alcohol-related traffic deaths. Despite all of our efforts, traffic crashes remain the largest single cause of death among 16-25-year-olds and approximately 55% are alcohol-related.

#### **Take Action!**

*MADD Canada* is committed to change these statistics and eliminate death and injuries on our roadways due to impaired driving and you can be too! High school prom and grad time is a time to celebrate. Unfortunately, many of the all-night parties following the prom or graduation ceremonies involve the use of alcohol and/or drugs. No matter how parents try to supervise and control the amount of alcohol that is consumed, the risk remains too high. Too often the fun turns to tragedy, particularly when alcohol or drugs are mixed with driving.

If your school doesn't already have an all-night dry party after these events, you can talk to your school advisor about starting a new tradition to keep students safe on one of the highest-risk nights of their lives. The evening is a night that all grads and their guests will remember.

This high-energy party has a wide variety of entertainment going on throughout the night, draws for some terrific prizes and lots of food. The entire evening is alcohol and substance free and is supervised by adult volunteers. Your goal would be to have a majority of all the graduating students attend.

An evening like this has already been implemented at high schools across Canada and can be very successful. Some schools have reached 100% attendance by grads.

For more information on *MADD Canada's A Night to Remember*, visit [madd.ca](http://madd.ca).



We would like to thank all those who shared their stories  
and photos for *The School Program*

*The School Program* is dedicated to all victims and survivors of impaired driving.



Thank you for bringing *The School Program* to your school and for taking the time to  
bring this important message into your classroom.

We hope this guide helped to generate lively discussions and created an opportunity to  
educate, inform, and empower your students so that they can continue to make safe,  
positive choices.

For more information about *MADD Canada* programs, please visit

[madd.ca](http://madd.ca)

**madd**   
**No alcohol. No drugs. No victims.**

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PEI LIQUOR



ALCOOL Î.-P.-É.

Please drink responsibly.

**Saskatchewan  
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A graphic element consisting of three curved, overlapping shapes in shades of green and yellow, resembling a stylized leaf or a flame.

**SGI**

**Take care out there**

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