

## Weigh the Odds

Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for youth who can legally drive. A young person under the legal drinking age is nearly twice as likely to die in an alcohol-related crash as a person over 21.

- About three in 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some time in their life.
- Four young people a day die in alcohol-related accidents.
- Approximately two people every minute are injured in alcohol-related crashes in this country.
- One-third of teen traffic deaths are alcohol related.
- Remember to "buckle up." Safety belts more than double the chances of surviving a bad crash.

## Add It Up

In Michigan, it is illegal for persons under the age of 21 to drink alcohol. Penalties here for drinking drivers under the age of 21 are tough. Drinking and driving can cost you your driver's license and a lot of cash. The average drunk driving conviction will cost you about \$5,000 for payment of legal fees and expenses, a fine, court costs and extra insurance premiums.

The "zero tolerance" law sets stiff punishment for drivers under the age of 21 with a blood alcohol level of .02% or greater. Even one drink could register greater than .02 percent.

A conviction under the law would result in a mandatory 30- to 90-day suspension of your driver's license. It would add four points to your driving record. You could have to pay fines of up to \$250 and/or perform up to 45 days of community service. You will also be assessed a Driver Responsibility Fee of \$500 for two consecutive years.

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Add It up:

## It's Simple Math

**Alcohol/Drugs +  
Automobiles =  
A Deadly Combination**

**Drinking/Drugs  
and Driving  
Don't Mix**

## Don't Subtract Years From Your Life

If people didn't drink and drive, more than 16,000 lives could be saved each year. Alcohol and other drugs affect the mind and body. Alcohol and other drugs reach the brain almost immediately after being consumed, which results in poor judgment, slowed reaction time, loss of concentration and visual problems.

With judgment influenced by drugs and alcohol, drivers may begin to take chances. They may drive too fast, follow too close, pass without enough clear distance and/or take curves at too high a speed.

Unfortunately, most people who have consumed alcohol and/or other drugs before driving don't even realize that their judgment has been affected. Everyone has heard someone say, "don't worry, I can handle it," as they get into a vehicle after they have been drinking or taking other drugs. Those people are "dead" wrong.

Some people are under the impression that certain drugs, such as marijuana, enhance driving ability. In fact, just the opposite is true. Studies have proven that people who have smoked "pot" have a significant reduction in skills necessary for safe driving, even hours after the "high" is gone.

## Count the reasons for not drinking and driving

Regardless of what others may say, "everyone" does not drink and take drugs. In fact, there are many good reasons for not consuming alcohol or using drugs -- especially when you drive!

1. You increase your chances of being killed or seriously injured.
2. You risk causing death or injury to your friends and other passengers in the car.
3. You take a chance that could have a permanent, tragic impact on your family.
4. You jeopardize your own future plans -- both personal and professional.

## ▶ Save your life and help save the life of your friends.

**N**ever get into a vehicle with someone who has been drinking or using drugs.

**I**f you are with someone who has been drinking or using drugs, try to persuade him/her not to drive. It won't be easy, but stand tough. Be friendly, but be firm. Don't worry about losing a friendship; the person may not even remember the incident the next day. If that person does remember, he/she will probably be too embarrassed to say anything. Your friend may even thank you.

**I**f friendly persuasion doesn't work, it might not hurt to put a little fear into the situation. Tell the person that if stopped by the police, he/she could end up in jail and lose his/her driver's license.