



What our kids are saying about...

DRIVING WHILE IMPAIRED

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**for identification purposes only*

One of the greatest public health accomplishments of the last generation has been the dramatic change in attitudes and accidents related to driving under the influence of alcohol.¹ Nonetheless, it remains a leading cause of injury and death among young people. Also, some youth have the mistaken belief that driving while high on marijuana is safe. To protect our children, parents and educators need to understand how many teens drive while impaired and what kinds of teens do so. [The common term used in such discussions is driving under the influence (DUI), which typically connotes under the influence of alcohol. In this article, we use the term DUI to refer to the influence of alcohol *and* marijuana.]

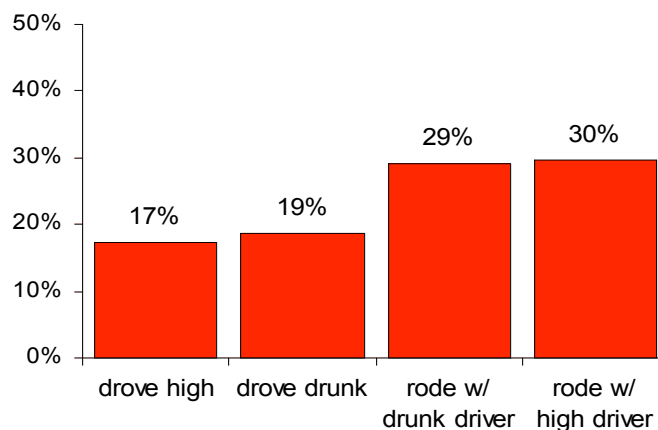
Fortunately, we know a fair bit about DUI in Franklin County. Using data from the 2006 PPAUS survey (see description below), this research brief aims to answer questions like: How many teens are driving under the influence? What kinds of kids are most likely to do so? What can we do?

How common is driving under the influence?²

DUI is very common! In the past year, nearly half (43%) of youth who drive have been involved in driving under the influence (DUI), either as a driver or a rider.

- Nearly 1 in 5 youth drove drunk or high at least once during the past year.
- Nearly 1 in 3 youth rode with driver who had been drunk or high.

% of 11th and 12th graders who engage in behaviors related to DUI



¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Achievements in Public Health, 1900-1999 Motor-Vehicle Safety: A 20th Century Public Health Achievement. MMWR; 1999; 48(18); 369-374.

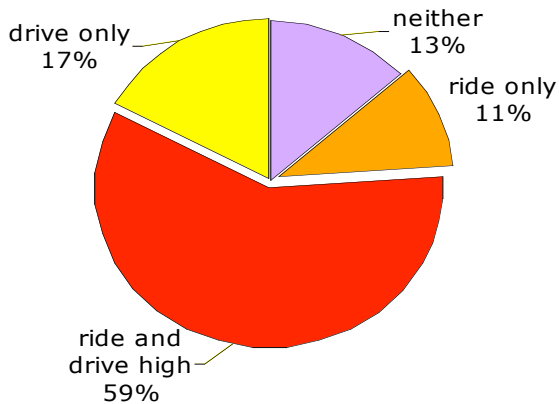
² About 3/4 of 11th and 12th graders say that they drive. Unless otherwise noted, these results are limited to these youth. We use the term "drove drunk" to refer to driving while drinking alcohol or soon afterwards. We use the term "drove high" to refer to driving while smoking marijuana or soon afterwards.

It's not just once or twice.

- About half of youth who drove drunk or high did so 3 or more times.

DUI is almost universal among kids who use drugs regularly.

Among 11th & 12th graders who regularly use marijuana:
% who drive high and/or ride with a high driver,



- Among 11th and 12th graders who regularly use alcohol, 72% have been involved in DUI as a driver or passenger.
- Among 11th and 12th graders who regularly use marijuana, 87% have been involved in DUI as a driver or passenger.

What kinds of kids are most likely to be involved in DUI?

- Low grade point average
- Youth who *don't* think about how their decisions about alcohol and other drugs will hurt their family
- Few differences by ethnicity, gender or grade (11th vs. 12th)
- Most kids who report sometimes being a "designated driver" are involved in DUI at other times as a driver (36%) and/or passenger (47%)

What should parents do?

We already know from "What our kids are saying about...Parental Influence" (Research Brief #1, http://www.edcouncil.org/programs/drugfree/ppaaus_2007/mini_reports_2007/PDFS/WhaKASA_parents.pdf) that messages from parents do influence youth attitudes toward substance use. Parents have a role in discouraging DUI. In talking with your children...

- If your child regularly uses alcohol or marijuana, recognize that s/he is probably involved in DUI as a rider or passenger.
- Emphasize, in consistent, strong messages, the dangers of DUI.
 - kids may be less aware of the dangers of marijuana-impaired driving
- "Designated drivers" may not be a viable strategy to protect kids. Discuss ways to avoid DUI.

About PPAAUS

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools Consortium has administered the Primary Prevention, Awareness, Attitude and Use Survey (PPAAUS) seven times since 1988. PPAAUS is designed to measure student attitudes and reported use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and provide information on violence and safety issues. Results from the latest survey (2006) are based on responses from 78,333 sixth through twelfth graders in 16 public school districts and 36 non-public schools in Franklin County. For more information, visit the PPAAUS website (http://www.edcouncil.org/programs/drugfree/ppaaus_2007/index.htm). Thank you to funders who have made this series of research briefs possible: ADAMH Board, Columbus Medical Association Foundation, United Way of Central Ohio and the US Dept of Health & Human Services/SAMHSA.