Relevance

- Texas continues to lead the nation in alcohol-related fatalities and serious bodily injuries.
- Many thousands are arrested for DWI, but law enforcement cannot catch all offenders. Estimates are that only 1 in 1,000 drinking drivers are caught.
- In 2013, 1,089 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes in Texas where a driver was under the influence of alcohol. This is 32.2% of the total number of people killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes.
- In 2013, 74,792 people were arrested for DWI in Texas just by the Department of Public Safety. Figures are not available for municipalities or other state agencies.
- Nearly one in three Texas high school students reported having been in a car with a driver who had been drinking – the highest proportion in the country.
- Texas high school students have the 10th-highest rate of binge drinking in the U.S. The state is among the 10 worst in the country for 9th through 12th graders drinking and driving, and current alcohol use.

Response

The statewide Alcohol Awareness Program, Watch UR BAC, provides resources for a wide variety of programming in alcohol awareness, including zero tolerance for under age 21, alcohol poisoning, and the dangers of impaired driving. Additional resources include:

- Access to the Watch UR BAC website for county Extension agents to find information for youth and adults, our schedule of events, links, and contact information.
- Dynamic hands-on tools, including the DWI prevention simulators and pedal car. Simulators are operated with the driver wearing impaired driving goggles and can be used at schools and community events.
- Select resources in Spanish. Contact Watch UR BAC for assistance with these programs.
- Programs that can be tailored to meet clients’ needs. Different options include a short formal presentation and hands-on activities. Another option is a “Lunch and Learn” held during school or employee lunch periods. Programs can also be supported through Watch UR BAC staff shipping materials to the client’s location for use at an event. Parent meetings are an effective way to keep parents and educators up-to-date on the most recent trends in underage drinking and other drugs.
- Subcontracts with When Sean Speaks, an alcohol awareness program to share the dangers of getting
into a car with a drinking driver and The Amber Menefee crash car exhibit, a mobile crash car exhibit that demonstrates the dangers of impaired driving.

The Watch UR BAC alcohol awareness program is funded through federal funds competitively awarded through the Texas Department of Transportation.

**Results**

- Over 20,600 people participated in Watch UR BAC programs in 2014 at 168 separate events.

- Watch UR BAC held a majority of the programs in Texas schools, impacting young lives throughout the state. Experiencing the DWI prevention simulator and/or pedal car, students had a sensory experience of how dangerous drunken driving can be. While the driving experience is considered “fun” to many, the educational component that goes before the driving experience is critical to emphasizing the importance of always driving sober since there is no “reset” button in life as there is on the DWI prevention simulator.

**Success Stories**

- “I had the pleasure of hearing Sean speak when I was a senior in school, right before prom, and I still to this day have not driven drunk; if I have suspicions of someone I am driving behind, I report them. I have 2 small children now and would hate for this to happen. I just want to thank Sean and his mom for changing the way my life could have turned out. Thanks so much.” — **Young mom who heard When Sean Speaks (August 13, 2014)**

- “I appreciate (your pilot program) and am very happy you had this program available for our defendants. Anytime you want to allow us to work with you on this program or others, please let me know. — **Municipal court judge who sent offenders to the pilot peer-to-peer program (October 21, 2013)**

- “I learned a lot and will try to encourage my friends about their drinking, and I feel good that I do not drink!” — **Sam Houston State University student (September 30, 2013)**

**Points of Contact**

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