



Watch UR BAC

Alcohol Awareness Program

watchurbac.tamu.edu

Helping Texans
Better Their Lives

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 2015, 1,446 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes in Texas where a driver was under the influence of alcohol. This is 41% of the total number of people killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes.
- In 2015, 65,609 people were arrested for DWI in Texas, according to a comprehensive report from the Texas Department of Public Safety.
- Nearly 1 in 3 Texas high school students reported having been in a car with a driver who had been drinking — the highest proportion in the country.
- Nearly 1 in 6 high school seniors have driven after using an illicit drug. About 1 in 4 had recently ridden in a car with such a driver. Among twelfth graders, driving after marijuana use is more common than drinking and driving.



Response

The statewide Alcohol and Other Drug Awareness Program, *Watch UR BAC*, provides resources for a wide variety of programming in alcohol and drug awareness, including zero tolerance for under age 21, alcohol poisoning, and the dangers of drug-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.
- Teacher in-service trainings to bring education of recent trends in alcohol and drugs including watching out for clothing brands, hidden compartments, and student behaviors that can signal drug or alcohol use.
- Sub-contracts 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, which is a mobile crash car exhibit that demonstrates the dangers of impaired driving.
- Programs designed especially for older adult drivers, focusing on driving while impaired by medication.

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

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

Results

- More than 59,900 people participated in *Watch UR BAC* programs in 2016 at 243 separate events.
- *Watch UR BAC* held a majority of the programs in Texas schools, impacting young lives throughout the state. By 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

- One faculty member at a high school where When Sean Speaks was presented commented, “Thank you for coming to our school today. Your presentation was very moving and I know it had an impact on many of our students. Several of my students told me it was the best and most powerful alcohol awareness presentation our school has had. Thank you so much for what you are doing to encourage young people to make the right choices when it comes to alcohol use.”
- During Red Ribbon Week, *Watch UR BAC* staff split into pairs and traveled to East Texas and the Rio Grande Valley to present at several schools. News coverage in both Nacogdoches and the valley showed the programs were very well-received among the students. One of the students in Nacogdoches remarked, “I would say it’s not good to drink because you could get in a very bad car wreck.” After trying out the impaired vision goggles during a mock field sobriety test, a student from San Benito High School said, “I’ve never been drunk. If that’s the way it feels, then I don’t want to take a drink.”

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.



Points of Contact

- Bobbi Brooks, Program Manager;
blbrooks@ag.tamu.edu or 979.862.8325
- Laura Dean-Mooney, Program Coordinator;
ldmooney@ag.tamu.edu or 979.862.1911
- Janet Sandera, Program Coordinator;
janet.sandera@ag.tamu.edu or 979.458.0124
- Ben Smith, Program Coordinator
ben.smith@ag.tamu.edu or 979.845.2444