

April 5, 2010

CAFY & ABRHS SADD Win Grants for Underage Drinking and Distracted Driving Campaigns

While most people understand that drinking and driving don't mix, many don't realize that texting or talking on a cell phone while driving is just as dangerous as driving drunk. To raise awareness of these risky behaviors, the Community Alliance for Youth (CAFY) and ABRHS/SADD (Acton Boxborough Regional High School/Students Against Destructive Decisions) were awarded two MA SADD mini grants of \$600 this year to support educational campaigns about the risks of Underage Drinking/Impaired Driving and Distracted Driving.

Underage Drinking/Impaired Driving were identified as important issues to the community in the most recent Acton-Boxborough Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), which reported that 63% of students in grades 9-12 have tried alcohol, and 30% of 12th graders and 23% of 11th graders have ridden in a car with someone who had used alcohol or drugs.

In response, an Open Town Hall Meeting on Underage Drinking was held on March 24th to encourage community conversation and identify actions and resources related to youth risk behavior and underage drinking. A snippet of the Matt Damon DVD entitled *Alcohol: True Stories* is available on the CAFY website (cafy.net) along with info on how to borrow and view the full video courtesy of the Acton Police Association. Additional information and links including parent and teen tips on hosting and attending safe teen parties and an E-version of the Teen resource card (listing key community resource contact phone numbers and websites) are also available on the CAFY website and via links from the Acton Boxborough PTSO (abrptso.ab.mec.edu), and Project Graduation websites (abprojectgrad.org). Project Graduation is a safe festive all-night, alcohol-free celebration, held annually on graduation night, for Acton-Boxborough Regional High School (ABRHS) seniors.

To jumpstart the Distracted Driving Campaign, CAFY and ABRHS/SADD (along with Danny's Place, Acton Toyota of Littleton, Acton-Boxborough (AB) Parent Involvement Project (PIP) and the Acton Police Association) are sponsoring two AB safe driving classes on April 11 (am and pm) at the In Control Driver Training facility in North Andover. Thanks to local sponsors, Acton area participants receive a discount on the In-Control Advanced Driver training sessions by registering at www.DriveInControl.com/AB or calling 1-888-301-SAFE (7233).

To increase community awareness of common Distracted Driving behaviors, the SADD grant was used to create a banner with Save Driving tips including texting, cell phone use, eating and drinking, drowsy driving, and misuse of audio devices. Copies of the Safe Driving banner will be posted on the CAFY website and be used by ABRHS SADD as part of an educational campaign and messaging supporting safe driving through posters, school radio, and online communication including Facebook.

Special thanks to MA SADD for offering Acton-Boxborough 2010 minigrant funding and to ABRHS SADD Co-Advisors Sue Bohmiller and Erica Cohen and students for helping with the grant programming and local campaigns. Visit cafy.net for more info and resource links.

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