



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY



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CONTACT:

ONDCP Public Affairs: 202-395-6618

MediaInquiry@ondcp.eop.gov -OR-

MADD Communications: 469-420-4503
media@madd.org

White House Drug Policy Director and Mothers Against Drunk Driving Unite to Combat Drugged Driving; Call on Parents to Act to Reduce Significant Public Safety Threat

New Analysis Shows 1 in 4 Fatally Injured Drivers who Tested Positive for Drugs are Under the Age of 25; MADD Announces Support Services for Victims of Drugged Driving and Recognition for Law Enforcement Efforts

(Washington, D.C.)—Today, Gil Kerlikowske, Director of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and Jan Withers, National President of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) announced a new partnership to raise public awareness regarding the consequences of drugged driving. MADD has launched a national effort to provide support to the victims of poly-abuse (both alcohol and drugs) and drugged driving, and to recognize law enforcement officers for their achievements in drugged driving enforcement. ONDCP also released new resources produced by ONDCP for parents and teens aimed at educating young drivers regarding the perils of driving while under the influence of drugs.

According to a new ONDCP analysis of 2009 data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) census, roughly one in four (23 percent) of fatally injured drivers who tested positive for drugs were under the age of 25. Additionally, based on data from 2005 to 2009, almost half (42 percent) of fatally injured drivers who tested positive for marijuana were under the age of 25.

The results of this analysis provide a deeper look at previously released information from NHTSA's FARS census of fatal motor vehicle crashes which showed that one-in three motor vehicle driver fatalities (33 percent) with known drug test results tested positive for drugs in 2009. FARS data also showed the involvement of drugs in fatal crashes has increased by five percentage points over the past five years, even as the overall number of drivers killed in motor vehicle crashes in the United States has declined.

“Research shows that drugs have adverse effects on judgment, reaction time, and motor skills – all vital requirements for responsible driving,” said Kerlikowske. “I can think of no greater organization with which to partner to save lives on our roadways than MADD. For decades, MADD has been a lynchpin in our Nation's efforts to make our roadways safer and I am proud to join them to help raise public awareness regarding the devastating consequences of drugged driving.”

“In partnership with ONDCP and in recognition of the growing problem of poly-abuse and drugged driving, MADD is putting a face on these issues by launching a nationally coordinated effort to provide support to the underserved and growing number of drugged driving victims in America,” said MADD National President Jan Withers. “In addition, we are presenting Pennsylvania State Police Corporal David Andrascik with the first annual MADD Hero Award for Drugged Driving Enforcement for his ongoing efforts in implementation of effective strategies for recognizing drugged driving and keeping our roads safe.”

“We already know the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol, and a growing body of research indicates that drugged driving is also a concern—especially for young drivers aged 15-20 who are at particularly high risk for traffic crashes and really need to remain fully alert and focused on driving,” said David Strickland, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. “We’re pleased to be working alongside the Office of National Drug Control Policy and Mothers Against Drunk Driving to bring attention to this serious health and safety issue.”

Recognizing the need to arm parents, young people, and community leaders with information to prevent drugged driving, ONDCP also released a *Drugged Driving Toolkit*. The toolkit provides tips for parents of teen drivers, sample community activities to raise public awareness regarding drugged driving, and tips to help teens reject negative influences to ensure they remain “Above the Influence.” The toolkit is available for download at www.TheAntiDrug.com.

President Obama has made combating drugged driving a drug control priority and has set a goal of reducing drugged driving prevalence by 10 percent by 2015. To achieve this goal, the Obama Administration is working to increase public awareness and encouraging states to explore legal responses, such as *per se* laws that make it illegal for individuals to drive with illicit drugs in their system. Already, 17 states in the United States have adopted these statutes. Additionally, ONDCP is providing increased training to law enforcement to identify drugged drivers and working with the National Institutes of Health and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to develop standard screening methodologies for drug-testing labs to use in detecting the presence of drugs among drivers.

Since its inception in 1980, MADD has worked tirelessly to stop drunk driving and to support the victims of drunk driving and prevent underage drinking. Victims and survivors of both drunk and drugged driving crashes can get support from trained victim advocates 24/7 at 1-877-MADD-HELP, at no charge. More information about MADD can be found at www.madd.org.

For more information on national efforts to reduce drug use and its consequences visit www.WhiteHouse.gov/ONDCP

The Office of National Drug Control Policy seeks to foster healthy individuals and safe communities by effectively leading the Nation’s effort to reduce drug use and its consequences.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving was founded by a mother whose daughter was killed by a drunk driver, and it is now the nation’s largest nonprofit working to protect families from drunk driving and underage drinking, while also supporting victims of drunk and drugged driving.
