

Making a Difference

2020 Lubbock County “Youth Safe Driving Habits” Ronda Alexander, County Extension Agent 4-H, Lubbock County

Relevance

The National Safety Council Injury Facts estimates motor vehicle crashes cost employers \$170.8 billion in 2018. The NSC estimate takes into account both tangible economic costs as well as less obvious costs associated with lost quality of life.

Drunk driving, DUI or DWI.. Whether it’s referred to as drunk driving, driving while intoxicated, or driving under the influence, impaired driving simply means a person’s ability to safely operate a motor vehicle is compromised by alcohol or other drugs that change the function of the brain and body. Judgment, depth perception, coordination and reaction time—all needed to safely drive a car, truck, boat, motorcycle or other moving vehicle—are affected by alcohol, illegal drugs, and prescription or over-the-counter medications.

Lubbock County has been identified as a High Priority Needs by Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). This was based on the highest number of alcohol-related fatalities and serious injuries, based on a 3 year average.

The SIMPLE ACT of wearing a seat belt is the easiest, least expensive and most effective way to prevent traffic deaths and injuries. Drivers and passengers who buckle up are 45% less likely to die and 50% less likely to be moderately injured in a motor vehicle crash. Motor vehicle crashes remain a leading cause of death. In Texas: 9% of Texans are not buckling up, pickup truck drivers are more likely to not buckle up, and men are less likely to use a seat belt than women. Seat belts protect drivers and passengers by helping absorb the force of a crash. They keep occupants from being ejected in a crash, a frequent cause of death when people aren’t properly secured. They hold the driver in place so he or she can better control the vehicle.

On a typical day, more than 700 people in the U.S. are injured in distracted driving crashes. Talking on a cell phone – even hands-free – or texting or programming an in-vehicle infotainment system diverts your attention away from driving.

By educating everyone about drunk driving, seat belt usage and distracted driving - we can save Texans lives and the costs associated with the accidents that are a result of these behaviors.

Response

During the Spring of 2020, when face to face programming and interactions were restricted because of COVID 19, the “Watch UR BAC” team at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension adopted a creative approach to provide virtual programming opportunities to County Extension Agents to market and provide in their respective counties. Lubbock County was able to implement several of these opportunities within our county and provide much needed educational information to youth and adults in Lubbock County. These programming opportunities included: “When Sean Speaks” by Sean and Jenny Carter and “Buckle Up.” They were marketed and utilized by the Juvenile Justice Detention Center, Lubbock County 4-H teens, and South Plains Food Bank GRUB youth participants.

In June, 51 youth and 63 employees of the Lubbock County Juvenile Justice Center participated in an online viewing of the “When Sean Speaks” drunk driving awareness program; the “When Sean Speaks” program was also viewed by 21 youth participants and employees at the South Plains Food Bank GRUB farm, and 10 Lubbock County 4-H Teen Council members. Evaluations were completed by all participants at the end of the program. In July, 31 youth at the Lubbock County Juvenile Justice Center also participated in an online viewing of the “Buckle Up” Rollover Seat-Belt Convincer program; it was also viewed by 14 South Plains Food Bank GRUB participants. All youth were 13-18 years of age.

Results:

When Sean Speaks (WSS)	4-H	GRUB	JJDC
Agree/strongly agree that Sean & Jenny’s story will influence their future behavior	90% (9/10)	90% (19/21)	80% (41/51)
Plan to make the following actions/changes because of WSS:			
- have a designated driver	40% (4/10)	57% (12/21)	61% (31/51)
- call a friend, taxi, Uber	70% (7/10)	52% (11/21)	75% (38/51)
- don’t drink, stay sober	90% (9/10)	71% (15/21)	78% (40/51)
Plan to share what they learned about the dangers of drinking and driving with friends/others	90% (9/10)	71% (15/21)	84% (43/51)
Would recommend WSS program to others	70% (7/10)	95% (20/21)	86% (44/51)
Most important thing they learned from WSS: don’t drink and drive	20% (2/10)	33% (7/21)	35% (18/51)

“Buckle Up” Rollover Seat Belt Convincer	GRUB	JJDC
Not a licensed driver	100% (14/14)	97% (30/31)
Seat belt usage BEFORE viewing video		
- unlikely	14% (2/14)	13% (4/31)
- somewhat likely	28% (4/14)	32% (10/31)
- very likely	57% (8/14)	36% (11/31)
Seat belt usage AFTER viewing video		
- unlikely	7% (1/14)	13% (4/31)
- somewhat likely	22% (3/14)	36% (11/31)
- very likely	71% (10/14)	51% (16/31)
Plan to share information from video with friends/others	93% (13/14)	45% (14/31)
Viewing the video was a useful experience	86% (12/14)	55% (17/31)
Most important thing they learned from video: wear seat belt	93% (13/14)	55% (17/31)

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