

SUCCESS STORIES

OPERATION TEEN SAFE DRIVING

During the spring of 2007, Operation Teen Safe Driving, a program developed by the Illinois Department of Transportation and Ford Motor Company, was conducted in every High School in Tazewell County. The high schools in this rural central Illinois county were invited to participate in Operation Teen Safe Driving after state officials noticed they lost 15 teenagers to motor vehicle crashes in 15 consecutive months. Using the Ford Driving Skills for Life curriculum, student groups at each high school came up with innovative teen-led safe driving campaigns that impacted both their high schools and their communities. There have been no teen fatalities (ages 16-19) in Tazewell County since the program began in 2007.

1. Several schools created public service announcements (PSAs). One school received permission from Pearl Jam to use "The Last Kiss" song in their PSA.
2. Car magnets, with safe driving messages, were placed on all student cars and many cars in the community.
3. "Remember to drive safe during prom-time" stickers were placed on all the corsage packages at local flower shops.
4. A safe driving message screen played at local movie theaters.
5. Picture locket key chains were passed out at prom with a safe driving message attached.
6. Safety Day was held, involving drunk driving simulation goggles, local hospital rescue helicopter (Life Flight), ambulances, crash scene re-enactments, etc.
7. Banners were put up on strategic locations reminding people in town to drive safely.
8. Rap songs were created about safe driving and performed during lunch.
9. Safety belt checks were conducted and students and community individuals received a prize, or chance for a prize, if they were buckled up.
10. Safe driving poster competitions were held.
11. One high school conducted the first all-school assembly at their school in six years.
12. A high school welded safety belts to all the chairs in a classroom to get students in the habit of buckling up.
13. One school created 19 cardboard mannequin cut-outs, dressed them, and then placed them around the school to represent the average of 19 teenagers who die every day in America as a result of a fatal vehicle crash.
14. T-shirts with the high school safe driving slogan were created at just about every school.
15. Detailed scrapbooks were created to represent programs.
16. Safe driving wristbands were created.
17. Bumper stickers were created.
18. All schools had newspaper articles written about their campaign.
19. Several schools made the local news.

