



## **SADD Campaigns & Activities: Mock Car Crash**

The Mock Car Crash is a staple activity of many SADD chapters. But it is important to remember that “scare” tactics have been shown to have only limited impact. Think carefully about how you can make a real difference among your peers.

Use this activity in conjunction with other steps that will have a lasting influence. The issues of underage drinking and impaired driving should be approached with a comprehensive education and prevention plan.

Reading about a tragedy in your local newspaper or seeing something broadcast on your nightly news might catch your attention. It’s terrible, but it is something terrible that has happened to somebody else. And if the news is too upsetting, you can turn the page or change the channel. But having an impaired driving crash hit home makes a tremendous impact. In this mock car crash demonstration, students play an active role. Teens will be asked to sit in the driver’s seat and experience firsthand what it might feel like to injure passengers and kill friends and loved ones.

This demonstration requires help from your school administrators and local fire and police departments and hospital. Through the combined efforts of these agencies and services, the mock crash demonstration will simulate the arrest, rescue, and medical transport of the injured students and the deaths of others.

The demonstration is divided into two distinct segments: 1) the crash and rescue and 2) comments from the people who performed the emergency services.

The crash and rescue portion should be as realistic as possible. The police (with sirens) should be the first on the scene, followed by EMS, rescue truck, and fire department. The “Jaws of Life” and/or medical air units might then be used. Injured students are removed from the cars, the driver is given a sobriety test, and the dead students left for the coroner, who pronounces them dead and ships them off in body bags.

Some of the most emotional moments of the event will be the comments from the participants: the medic who attends to the injured victims and a police officer who gives a chilling account of breaking the bad news to parents and loved ones who were waiting for their children to come home.

### **Setting Up The Event:**

**Participants** – Successful dramatizations have the support of the entire community, starting with the school administration and including as many local volunteers as possible. Try to obtain community support early. The expertise and real-life experience of police officers and medical staff members will be invaluable.

**Student Volunteers** – Student volunteers are crucial to getting the message across. The student body will relate better to participants who are well-known in the school. Participating students need not be cheerleaders or sports stars, but they should be recognizable to their classmates.

**Communication** – Setting up a dramatization requires a great deal of time and communication. Letters to volunteers, follow-up calls, and thank you notes are all part of the process for a successful event. Make a list of everyone who needs to be contacted at every stage of the event.

**Planning the Event** – Determine the scope of the presentation with input from all participating groups. Discuss all of the elements associated with a crash, from the responding squad cars and EMS vehicles to flight medics and other special units. Creating a time line might be helpful. Remember that mock crash demonstrations don't necessarily need to be large, just realistic.

**Location and Time** – Choose the location at your school that best meets your needs, and don't forget to consider time constraints.

**Setting the Date** – Plan your demonstration to take place a week or two before a special event such as homecoming, prom, graduation, or other special event. Set a rain date.

**Securing the Equipment** – A local junkyard is an excellent source of cars for this demonstration. Talk with the manager early about obtaining a couple of cars and preparing them for the event. Be sure to have the fuel tank, battery, and oil fluids removed. Make sure any cars used in this event do not have a connection with your community; taking this step will avoid upsetting anyone in your community who has already endured a real crash.

### **What to Do**

1. Set up the wrecked car. Arrange victims to give the appearance of their having been struck by an impaired driver. Use fake blood to intensify the effect.
2. Have policemen and paramedics demonstrate what happens when they arrive on the scene after an impaired driving crash. Ask them to arrest the impaired driver and strap the victims to a backboard or pronounce them dead and cover them with a sheet.
3. Discuss the event. Elicit comments from the people who performed the emergency services, friends and family of the "deceased," and participants who witnessed the event.