



SADD Campaigns and Activities: Middle School Month

Today's middle school students face the same issues as do high school students. It is so important for SADD chapters to reach out to their middle school counterparts and help them in facing dangerous decisions that could have long-term consequences. Research has found messages taught by peer-led programs are significantly more successful than are the same messages taught by the classroom teacher. It's the best way to get the attention and commitment of middle school students, having high school SADD members speaking and working with them! Helping them to start a SADD chapter or working with an established chapter would be the ideal situation. As mentors for middle school students, SADD members can provide information, skills, encouragement and support to help these younger students say no to tobacco, alcohol and other drugs and follow good safety practices.

The following are activities that your SADD chapter can do during Middle School Month.

- Rather than just speaking to students, consider mixing your presentation with a play, skit, role-play or rap to get your message across.
- Whenever possible, make your presentation interactive, including middle school students in the action. Provide a copy of the material for students to keep as a reminder.
- Getting young people to buckle up whenever they are in a car is a high priority. For fun with a message, hold a Quick Click Buckle Challenge to teach the ease and necessity of buckling up for safety. Invite Vince and Larry, the crash dummies, to assist. To host a Quick Click Buckle Challenge, you will need a stopwatch and a four-door sedan with seat belts. A bull-horn and whistle are also helpful. Teams of four students race against time as they jump into a parked car, put on their seat belts, raise their hands in the air, then change seats and repeat the procedure until students are back in their starting positions. The object is to have the shortest time. Winning schools have been known to put on and take off four sets of seat belts in 25 seconds. Beat that.
- While talking about safety belts, don't forget to discuss the issue of air bags and where younger brothers and sisters should sit in a car.
- Tobacco, alcohol and other drugs are now prevalent in the lives of many middle school youngsters. SADD members can do much to assist these young students in learning how to say no, why it is important to say no, and how to save face with their peers while saying no. Role-playing is a great way to get the message across.
- To encourage students to really take a look at the downside of tobacco use, conduct a door contest. Choose categories for awards and give prizes to the best in each category. Leave the doors decorated for a week so students will see the message daily as they pass the doors.
- Bicycles, skateboards, in-line skating and scooters are the major means of travel and fun for middle school students. These activities, when not done safely, can be major causes of injuries and even death. SADD members can be very effective in making sure that younger students know how to participate in these activities safely. Plan a Bicycle and In-line Skating Rodeo, including a test of skills and safety checks for both bikes and skates. Ask a local bicycle club, bicycle shop and a knowledgeable police officer to assist in this project. Your local civic organization may also be willing to help by providing snacks and drinks.
- Because the issues that previously only affected high school age youth are now working down to the middle school, many activities conducted at the high school can be duplicated at the middle school. Middle school students like to do the Chain of Life, Red Ribbon



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Campaign, and the Tree of Life.

- Don't forget to have them sign the SADD Contract for Life. Even though they are not old enough to drive, they could still find themselves in a dangerous situation and needing to call home. Getting in a car with someone who has been drinking is one of those instances.

Although March is commonly Middle School Month, activities at your middle school and even your elementary school can be done throughout the year.