



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
January 25, 2007

**Contact:** Jennifer Baylis  
508-481-3568  
jbaylis@sadd.org

## **SADD Teams Up With the Ad Council for New Youth Reckless Driving Prevention Campaign**

*UR the Spokesperson* campaign empowers teens to “Speak Up”

**MARLBOROUGH, Mass.** – SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) is partnering with the Advertising Council on a new campaign aimed at putting the brakes on fatal car crashes involving teens and young adults. SADD joins the Ad Council and a coalition of state Attorneys General and consumer protection agencies and national partners, such as the American Automobile Association (AAA), to promote the new *UR the Spokesperson* campaign to prevent reckless driving and save lives.

Car crashes are the number-one cause of death among teens and young adults. National Highway Transportation Safety Administration research shows that, on average, more than 300,000 teens are injured in car crashes each year, nearly 8,000 are involved in fatal crashes, and more than 3,500 are killed. A study conducted by AAA also shows that teen drivers are involved in more than five times as many fatal crashes as adults are. Young drivers are more likely to speed, run red lights, make illegal turns, and die in SUV rollovers.

With the message “Speak Up,” the *UR the Spokesperson* campaign targets young adults between the ages of 15 and 21 and encourages them to be the spokesperson against reckless driving by empowering them to speak up when they are in the car with friends and don’t feel safe. The campaign also seeks to increase awareness about the dangers of reckless driving and to educate teens how to be safe drivers by focusing on safe speeds, avoiding distractions, and wearing seat belts.

“Our mission is to show other young people that we have the power to influence our friends and help them make the best choices,” said Daniel Vocelle of Vero Beach, Florida, SADD National Student of the Year. “That’s why this campaign really means something to me – it’s all about friends speaking up.”

The *UR the Spokesperson* campaign includes a series of public service advertisements (PSAs), a new Web site, and a soon-to-be-launched contest. Created pro bono by North Castle, a Stamford-based advertising agency that specializes in reaching teens, the PSAs target teen passengers, rather than drivers, and encourage them to speak up when they don't feel safe. Research shows that young drivers may be more likely to listen to their friends than to adults, which is why the *UR the Spokesperson* campaign is using a peer-to-peer approach. When it is friends who speak up, teenage drivers will listen because they don't want to damage the friendship or be labeled bad drivers.

“We want it to become not only socially acceptable, but socially expected for teens to speak up when they are riding with a friend and don't feel safe,” said Peggy Conlon, President and CEO of the Ad Council. “We also want to educate them about how to drive safely. From understanding the differences of driving an SUV to limiting distractions, there are lots of ways young drivers can prevent crashes.”

For more information on the campaign and to see the ads, please visit [www.URtheSpokesperson.com](http://www.URtheSpokesperson.com).

## **SADD**

SADD ([www.sadd.org](http://www.sadd.org)) is the nation's preeminent peer-to-peer youth education organization, with thousands of chapters in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. With a mission of preventing destructive behaviors and addressing attitudes that are harmful to young people, SADD sponsors programs that address issues such as underage drinking, substance abuse, impaired driving, and teen violence, depression, and suicide.

## **The Advertising Council**

The Ad Council ([www.adcouncil.org](http://www.adcouncil.org)) is a private, nonprofit organization with a rich history of marshalling volunteer talent from the advertising and media industries to deliver critical messages to the American public. Having produced literally thousands of PSA campaigns addressing the most pressing social issues of the day, the Ad Council has effected, and continues to effect, tremendous positive change by raising awareness, inspiring action, and saving lives.

###