



Press Contacts:

Glenn Greenberg
Liberty Mutual
617-574-5874
glenn.greenberg@libertymutual.com

Deborah Burke Henderson
SADD
508-481-3568
dbhenderson@sadd.org

**LIBERTY MUTUAL/SADD STUDY FINDS FEW TEENS REPORT DRINKING AND DRIVING
ON PROM NIGHT DESPITE PEERS' BELIEFS**

***School Enforcement Policies May Be Significant Reason Why Only 6 Percent of Teens
Say They Have Driven Under the Influence at Spring Ritual***

BOSTON – April 13, 2011 – Each spring we are reminded of the driving tragedies that too often occur on prom night; however, there is encouraging news from the new 2011 teen driving study by Liberty Mutual Insurance and SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) that hopefully suggests fewer of these incidences will befall families this prom season. According to the new national study of 2,294 high school students, only 6 percent say they have driven under the influence on prom night, a stark contrast to the perception of that behavior. In a 2009 study, 90 percent of teens felt their peers would be more likely to drink and drive after prom than at other times of the year.

The Liberty Mutual/SADD study results offer some insight into a possible reason for the limited occurrences of [drinking and driving](#) by teens on prom night: policies or security measures are in place at most schools for these events. In fact, 89 percent of students reported that their schools have programs or policies in place to keep teens from engaging in illegal behaviors, such as underage drinking, at school-related functions. These include the presence of security guards or police (53 percent), organized transportation (35 percent), breathalyzer tests (15 percent) and other programs (8 percent).

“Underage drinking is never acceptable; however, these findings suggest that when schools enforce zero-tolerance measures at official functions they can be an effective way to curb that dangerous behavior behind the wheel,” said SADD Chairman Stephen Wallace. “On the flip side, however, the findings also suggest that when school enforcement is absent, drinking and driving is more prevalent.”

Increased Dangers Beyond the School Grounds

Indeed, the Liberty Mutual/SADD teen driving study reveals that the three most frequent times of year that teens admit to having driven under the influence are all when school is out: summer (12 percent), New Year’s Eve (10 percent) and the 4th of July (8 percent).

“Parents have a large responsibility to be vigilant in creating a [safe driving](#) experience for their teens year-round, and cannot solely expect the schools and law enforcement to play that role,” said Dave Melton, a driving safety expert with the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety. “Summer is right around the corner, and it’s not too early for parents and teens to be establishing their summer guidelines and boundaries to promote safe, responsible driving.”

Summer is an important time to focus on safe driving. In 2009, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reported that there were 1,305 teen fatalities (alcohol and non-alcohol-related) in motor vehicle crashes between the months of May and August. Alarming, the 2011 Liberty Mutual/SADD study shows that only few teens (8 percent) believe summer driving comes with a high degree of danger.

Helpful Tools and Resources to Rule the Road

The Liberty Mutual/SADD teen driving study is part of a robust library of resources for parents and teens to navigate the early driving years. Helpful, easy-to-navigate tools are found at www.LibertyMutual.com/TeenDriving, including a Parent/Teen Driving Contract designed for families to jointly discuss responsible driving habits, and to customize mutually agreed consequences and rewards for behaviors such as cell phone use, text messaging, speeding, seat belts, alcohol and other drug use, and curfews. Additionally, the website provides state-by-state teen driving laws, [practice permit tests](#), and video demonstrations of safe driving techniques.

Liberty Mutual's ongoing campaign to promote safe, responsible driving was recently lauded by Ace Metrix, an authority in television advertising effectiveness. Ace Metrix's industry study on auto insurance ads, released in March, found Liberty Mutual's anti-texting while driving ad featuring [Oprah Winfrey](#) to be the most effective of 136 insurance ads over the past year, based on the Ace Score measurement of reaction by randomly selected viewers across the U.S.

About the Study

Liberty Mutual and SADD commissioned ORC International, an InfoGroup Company, to conduct a qualitative and quantitative study to measure teen driving attitudes and behaviors. The study was initiated with a series of five focus groups held in Harrisburg, Pa., and San Francisco in October 2010. The study also involved studying a total of 2,294 teens in eleventh and twelfth grades from 28 recruited high schools across the country in January 2011. Overall findings for the study can be interpreted with a 95 percent confidence interval with an error margin of +/- 2.02 percent.

About Liberty Mutual Insurance

"Helping people live safer, more secure lives" since 1912, Boston-based Liberty Mutual Insurance is a diversified global insurer and fifth-largest property and casualty insurer in the U.S. based on 2009 direct written premium. Liberty Mutual Insurance ranks 71st on the Fortune 500 list of largest U.S. corporations, based on 2009 revenue. The company has over 45,000 employees located in more than 900 offices throughout the world.

The eighth-largest auto and home insurer in the U.S., Liberty Mutual Insurance (libertymutual.com) sells full lines of coverage for automobile, homeowners, valuable possessions, personal liability, and individual life insurance. The company is an industry leader in affinity partnerships, offering car and home insurance to employees and members of more than 13,000 companies, credit unions, professional associations and alumni groups.

About SADD

SADD, the nation's leading peer-to-peer youth education, prevention, and activism organization, is committed to empowering young people to lead initiatives in their schools and communities. Founded in 1981, today SADD has thousands of chapters in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. SADD highlights prevention of many destructive behaviors and attitudes that are harmful to young people, including underage drinking, other drug use, risky and impaired driving, and teen violence and suicide. More information about SADD can be found at sadd.org.

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