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**COLLEGE VISITS MAY PROVE DANGEROUS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

**SADD/Liberty Mutual Study Reveals Risky Behaviors by High Schoolers During Overnight College Visits**

**BOSTON (November 10, 2003)** – Many high school juniors and seniors are getting more than a campus tour on college visits, according to new study results from SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) and Liberty Mutual Group. Almost four in ten teens (39.1 percent) who have stayed overnight on a college campus report engaging in drinking, other drug use or sex during those visits. The study also indicates these dangerous behaviors are far more prevalent among boys than among girls.

The study, conducted for SADD and Liberty Mutual by RoperASW, found the following behaviors among the high school teens who have visited a college campus for an overnight visit.

- *Sex* – More than one in four teens (28 percent) report “having sex,” and an additional 4.2 percent report engaging in “other types of sexual activity.”
- *Drinking* – One in four teens (25.5 percent) reports drinking alcohol.
- *Drugs (other than alcohol)* – More than one in five teens (21.5 percent) report using drugs.
- *All risky behaviors* – One in eight teens (12.4 percent) reports engaging in all of the dangerous behaviors: drinking, drug use, and sexual activity.

Additionally, the research indicates boys’ behaviors on these overnight campus visits tend to be riskier than girls’ behaviors. For example, boys are two to three times more likely than girls to report having sex (41.5 percent vs. 14.6 percent), drinking (36.3 percent vs. 14.8 percent) or using drugs (29.7 percent vs. 11.6 percent).

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“This new information should sound an alarm both for parents and college administrators,” said Stephen Wallace, SADD Chairman and CEO. “High school students, some as young as 16, are making poor, and potentially tragic, choices in unsupervised environments filled with access to alcohol, drugs, and sex.”

“These results speak to parents about the importance of setting expectations for their teens, and discussing those expectations, to help teens make the right decisions,” said Paul Condrin, Liberty Mutual executive vice president and manager, Personal Market. “The temptations are waiting for these kids as soon as they go off to school, so it’s important that parents have a strong communication channel with their teens to help guide them in the right direction.”

### **Solutions for Families**

Past SADD/Liberty Mutual research has repeatedly found that open, honest communication between parents and teens is the most important element in healthy teen decision-making. Young people who spend time with their parents, talk with them regularly, and have a close relationship with them are less likely to drink, use drugs or have sex. SADD and Liberty Mutual make available several communication tools to promote healthy dialogue between teens and parents.

- SADD’s Contract for Life and “Opening Lifesaving Lines” brochure are both available at [www.sadd.org](http://www.sadd.org).
- The SADD/Liberty Mutual “Guidelines for Good Family Communication” brochure is available online at [www.libertymutualinsurance.com](http://www.libertymutualinsurance.com) and [www.sadd.org](http://www.sadd.org).
- “Avoiding Collisions: How to Survive the Teenage Driving Years” is a driving safety program focusing on four areas of driving safety – safety belt use, speeding, night driving, and driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol. The program offers families a free 15-minute video and brochure by calling a local Liberty Mutual office or 1-800-4-LIBERTY. Liberty Mutual lists its local sales offices at [www.libertymutualinsurance.com](http://www.libertymutualinsurance.com).

The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy also offers these resources:

- “Wake Up to the Risks of Marijuana: A Guide for Parents,” and “Keeping Your Kids Drug-Free: A How-To Guide for Parents and Caregivers,” available at [www.TheAntiDrug.com](http://www.TheAntiDrug.com) or (800) 788-2800.

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### **About the Study**

Liberty Mutual and SADD annually collaborate on studies and reports linking teen attitudes, influencers and decision-making to behaviors such as driving, drinking, drug use, and sexual activity and provide solutions for families to address these issues. The college visit behaviors data is a subset of the SADD and Liberty Mutual's larger *Teens Today* 2003 project, the full results of which will be available in January 2004.

### **Methodology**

*Teens Today* 2003 reports on the completion of a total of 2,753 self-administered surveys by middle and high school students in grades 6-12. Responses specific to college visit behaviors are based on the responses of 321 high school students who have visited a college campus for an overnight visit. RoperASW designed the *Teens Today* 2003 survey and administered it in a nationwide cross-section of 46 schools (25 middle schools, 21 high schools) between May 6 and June 18, 2003. The sampling error for the study at the 95 percent confidence level is +/- 3 percentage points for the total sample. Additional findings from qualitative research (focus groups and individual interviews), designed and conducted by Atlantic Research and Consulting, Inc. in April 2003, were used in the development of the student survey.

### **About the Partners**

SADD, Inc. sponsors peer-to-peer education and prevention programs in middle schools and high schools nationwide.

Boston-based Liberty Mutual Group is one of the largest multi-line insurers in the North American property and casualty industry. Offering a wide range of products and services, Liberty Mutual is the eighth-largest provider of private passenger auto and homeowners insurance in the U.S.

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