



Risks of Bad Driving

By Amy Shouse and Chip Leffelman

As more students continue to get their licenses there are definitely some things to remember.

Driving related fatalities are the number one cause of death in people aged from 16-23, peaking at 21. This means that it is more likely that you will die behind the wheel of a car than from cancer, drugs, or murder. As the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) puts it, "Almost 18,000 people are killed each year. About 250,000 people are injured."

Some things that tend to cause people to be bad drivers include distractions such as friends, the radio, cell phones, or eating. Avoiding these distractions tend to lead to better driving and avoiding a crash.

The other obvious cause of bad driving is impairment. Impairment is defined by the NHTSA as "something that weakens the ability to drive or operate the vehicle." In other words, not putting on your required glasses when you drive or the obvious, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

According to the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) site, "In 2002, 17,419 people were killed in crashes involving alcohol, representing 41 percent of the 42,815 people killed in all traffic crashes, according to NHTSA data."

As well as the obvious consequences of dangerous driving such as death and injury, there are the hidden financial consequences. Some examples include tickets, reparations on

cars, and raised insurance.

Overall, it's much smarter to drive safely.

Safe and efficient driving is in the hands of everyone who gets behind the wheel. Over half of motor accidents could be prevented if drivers would make constructive driving decisions.

Senior Christina Poland said, "It takes patience and coordination. You need to be aware of your mental skills and physical reactions to the other surrounding cars."

"Becoming a responsible and good driver just takes practice," said junior Mike Fuchs.

It's critical that good driving habits be formed early.

- Drive defensively. Drivers will automatically become more cautious on the road if they assume other drivers are not as skilled as they are.

- Do not speed. Drivers have less time to react and less time to make the correct decisions when they speed.

- Do not drink and drive. Drinking and driving is the number one cause for automobile accidents. Alcohol can impair your decision-making skills and reaction time.

When friends have been drinking, it is the responsibility of the people with them to take their keys and find a designated driver.

"If you drive safely and not make stupid mistakes, your way to driving well will come naturally" said Fuchs.

Proper driving will not only keep the driver in tact and focused on the road while behind the wheel, but also keep them out of destruction.

The dream that never comes...

Students suffer from lack of sleep

By Cassie Turzy

The typical first-hour classroom is filled with bobbing heads and drooping eyes. Kids are struggling to stay awake; their only focus is not the equation on the board but the battle to keep their heads from their desks. Signs of sleepiness are loss of focus and concentration, being fidgety, and difficulty completing everyday tasks. These are all common characteristics that many students at Antioch Community High School face.

Sleep is a natural entity required to complete complex tasks efficiently. According to biology teacher, Ms. Day, "There is a ton of research linking REM sleep to long term memory. The hippocampus, converts short-term memory to long-term, is most active during REM sleep, or the sixth to eighth hours of rest. Therefore, less than six hours of sleep will affect learning". A malnourished brain, caused by insufficient sleep, creates an unstable atmosphere that can lead to harm.

When sleep deprived, the risk of unintentional injury increases. One-sixth of car accidents in the United States are due to drowsiness. Also, moods are affected because the brain releases powerful chemicals that induce hallucinations, irritability and then has difficulty controlling one's emotional behavior.

These conditions are prevalent at ACHS, Mr. Mikal, Biology teacher, said "In the morning, first and second hour, kids are quiet and slow. I have to draw the responses out of them" Mr. Mikal is not the only one noticing the

heavy eyes at ACHS. Rachel Luzwick said, "It's a big, big problem that affects the ability of all kids that actually do their homework" To confirm this assumption a sleep study was conducted to review four students differing sleep patterns. The participants were asked to record their nightly rest, their condition the next morning, and any factors that might prohibit sleep such as stress, caffeine, and activity level.

The four personalities surveyed display four different types of students found at ACHS. The participants begin with Jodi Crivello, sophomore, representing students who are involved heavily with athletics. Andrew Curto, senior, he displayed the effects of a working student. Christie Pondell, senior, embodied characteristics associated with an academically challenged student in the honors curriculum. The final member was J.D. Turzy, freshman, who set the standards for the ordinary student.

The results were surprisingly similar. Most of the personalities received an average of six hours of sleep per night. The student without after school activities managed to get eight hours every night. The stress factors of the students differed. The academically challenged and the athlete lead stressful lifestyles but it doesn't seem to affect their rest. The working student had the highest stress level. The lowest level of stress was recorded by the regular student. Homework, a big game, and work were the causes of stress. At the conclusion of this study eating after eight o'clock in the evening didn't affect the night's rest. This study provided results



ACHS Sleepy Heads



Photos by Cassie Turzy

that confirm that ACHS students do not receive an adequate amount of rest at night. Though they feel rested after six hours of sleep, their brain is suffering.

Is there any solution for the sleepy students? Mr. Mikal suggested, "Parents should be notified to get their kids to bed earlier".

But Molly Bonner, senior, said "This isn't a possibility because my parents realize all these decisions will be my own next year, so they don't enforce a bed time" Many have accepted the fact that they can only receive a limited amount of sleep as part of their lifestyle. They can only hope to catch the dream that never comes.



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