

Assignment Discovery Online Curriculum

Lesson title: Safe Driving

Grade level: 9-12

Subject area: Health

Duration: Two class periods

Objectives:

Students will do the following:

- Study the potential dangers, risks, and statistics associated with a variety of road safety issues: impaired driving, not wearing seat belts, speeding, distracted driving (eating and using cell phones), and drowsy driving
- Develop a public service announcement such as a poster, mock television or radio commercial, Web site, or brochure about a road safety issue

Materials:

- Newsprint
- Internet access
- Poster board, paper, markers, color printer, video cameras, tape recorder, or other materials for students' public service announcement projects

Procedures:

1. Explain to students that according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among Americans up to 34 years old. Factors such as alcohol consumption, high-speed driving, and other dangerous behaviors contribute to these crashes. Most accidents could be avoided by following common safety practices. The focus of this lesson is to learn about safe practices and laws designed to prevent accidents.
2. On a piece of newsprint, draw two columns for the “dos and don'ts” of driving. Ask students to brainstorm about items for both lists. Their answers may include the following:

Do	Don't
Wear your seat belt	Drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol
Pay attention	Drive above the speed limit
Obey traffic laws	Pass a stopped school bus
Drive at the speed limit	Drive through a stop sign or stop light without stopping
Signal before turning or changing lanes	Pass a car unless there's plenty of room ahead
Reduce speed at night, in bad	Drive if you are sleepy

weather, and in heavy traffic	
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3. After discussing the lists, talk about why it's important to educate the public about safety issues. Explain that in this lesson students will explore one of five safe driving issues and create their own public safety announcement.
4. Divide students into five groups, and assign one of the following topics to each group:
 - Impaired driving (DUI/DWI)
 - Seat belts
 - Speeding
 - Distracted driving (such as driving while eating or talking on a cell phone)
 - Drowsy driving
5. Have students use the Web sites below to research the safety issues. Encourage them to take notes about dangers, risks, and statistics. Make sure students include examples of trauma that may occur when safety practices are not followed.

All Topics

Safety Fact Sheets

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/ncsa/factsheet.html>

Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS; see Did You Know? and Reports)

<http://www-fars.nhtsa.dot.gov/>

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety

http://www.highwaysafety.org/safety_facts/safety.htm

Drive Home Safe: For Teens

http://www.drivehomesafe.com/just_4_u_teens.htm

Impaired Driving (DUI/DWI)

http://www.highwaysafety.org/safety_facts/alcohol_drugs.htm

<http://library.thinkquest.org/23713/frameset.html>

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/alcohol/>

<http://www.nsc.org/library/facts/drnkdriv.htm>

Seat belts

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/airbags/buckleplan/index.html>

http://www.highwaysafety.org/safety_facts/belt_use.htm

Speeding

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/speedmgnt.htm>

http://www.highwaysafety.org/safety_facts/speed.htm

Distracted Driving

<http://www.aaafoundation.org/projects/index.cfm?button=distraction>
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/research/wireless/nht0198.html>
<http://www.nsc.org/library/shelf/inincell.htm>
<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/esnr/2000cell.htm>
<http://cartalk.cars.com/About/Drive-Now/>

Drowsy Driving

http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/drowsy_driving1/index.html
<http://www.aaafoundation.org/projects/index.cfm?button=drowsy>
<http://www.nsc.org/library/facts/drowsdr.htm>

6. Have each group develop a public service announcement such as a poster, mock television or radio commercial, Web site, or brochure for high school students. Encourage them to use statistics and specific state laws from their research and anecdotes or stories from personal experiences. Students should include descriptions about the bodily injuries that can occur as a result of unsafe driving.
7. After each group has presented its public service announcement, discuss the issues as a class. Which statistics did they find most surprising? How do they think their driving will change after what they've learned?

Discussion Questions:

1. Imagine a friend has had a few beers and is about to drive home from a party. What would you say to persuade him or her not to drive?
2. Your friend has just bought a new car and wants to take you for a ride. He or she is driving through your neighborhood 20 miles over the speed limit. What would you say?
3. A defensive driver anticipates danger to avoid accidents. Give examples of defensive driving.

Extension:

Traffic Laws in Your State

Have students visit the Web site for your state's motor vehicle department. (Links for all states are available at <http://www.drivehomesafe.com/just_4_u_teens.htm>.) As a class, review important facts such as the following:

- What is required to get a driver's license?
- What are your state's laws regarding seat belts and child restraints?
- What are your state's laws on driving and alcohol, passing school buses, stopping for pedestrians, and emergency vehicles?

Have students explore the site in small groups to find three additional facts, statistics, or laws they did not know. Have students share their findings with the class.

Evaluation:

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate how well students participated in class discussions, worked in their groups, and created presentations about safe driving issues.

Three points: active participation in class discussion; strong research skills; above-average creativity and communication skills in the presentation.

Two points: average participation in class discussion; on-grade research skills; average creativity and communication skills in the presentation.

One point: little participation in class discussion; weak research skills; below-average creativity and communication skills in the presentation.

Suggested Reading

Coping with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Carolyn Simpson and Dwain Simpson. Rosen Publishing, 1997.

For every trauma, there is an aftermath. For some traumas, people suffer what is called post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and this book describes the kinds of circumstances, such as war, car accidents, or rape, that can result in PTSD. The second part of the book covers the kinds of treatment available for the disorder, ranging from proper support and therapy to hospitalization in severe cases. A short glossary and help list are included.

Emergency!

Joy Masoff. Scholastic, 1999.

Learn about emergency medicine by following the action as a trauma happens—including a call to 911, the activity in an emergency room, surgery, and more. Suggestions for 10 things you can do to “practice” medicine and additional resources round out the presentation. A tremendous amount of information is packed into this well-illustrated book.

Vocabulary

blood alcohol concentration (BAC)

Definition: A percentage by weight of alcohol in the blood (grams/deciliter, or g/dl). A positive BAC level (0.01 g/dl and higher) indicates that a person consumed alcohol. In most states, a BAC level of 0.10 g/dl or more indicates legal intoxication.

Context: All states except Massachusetts and the District of Columbia have laws stating the level at which driving with a specific **blood alcohol concentration (BAC)** is a crime.

defensive driving

Definition: Anticipating danger to avoid accidents.

Context: A **defensive driver** adjusts the car's speed and position to suit visibility, the road, and traffic conditions.

driving under the influence (DUI)

driving while impaired (DWI)

Definition: The criminal action of operating a vehicle while intoxicated, impaired, or under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

Context: About one-third of all drivers arrested or convicted of **driving under the influence (DUI)** are repeat offenders.

speed limit

Definition: The highest speed allowed by state or local law in a certain area.

Context: State laws specify **speed limits** for different types of roads.

Academic Standards:

The following standards are from the American Association for Health Education for students in grades 6-8.

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting and decision-making skills to enhance health.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Credit:

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