



COALITION COLLABORATION: WORKING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS IMPAIRED DRIVING



Introduction

Substance use prevention coalitions can have a potentially huge impact on impaired driving. The World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state that collaboration among businesses, agencies, nonprofits, and concerned citizens of all ages is the first step to reducing impaired driving and other consequences associated with substance use.

Though they are natural partners in reducing impaired driving, communication gaps often exist between substance use prevention coalitions and the traffic safety community. To address this issue, Texans for Safe and Drug-Free Youth (TxSDY) conducted a statewide assessment to help identify areas of potential collaboration between the two groups. TxSDY is also developing a public website that will allow local coalitions, the traffic safety community, and other prevention advocates to connect in their work. TxSDY hopes that this project will help increase collaboration among organizations and ultimately reduce impaired driving in Texas.

Impaired Driving

Impaired driving continues to be a significant problem in Texas, especially among young drivers. In a survey of Texas youth, 8% of high school seniors said that they have driven after drinking at least once in the past year.¹ Among Texas college students, 18% reported that they had driven after drinking in the past thirty days, and 5% said that they drive after binge drinking at least once a month.²

Additionally, Texas consistently ranks in the top ten states with the highest number of alcohol-related traffic fatalities. In 2017, 39% of all fatal crashes in Texas were attributable to alcohol impairment.³ Overall, there is a disproportionate number of impaired driving fatalities caused by individuals under age 25—more than a quarter of all alcohol-related fatal crashes involve a driver in this age group.⁴ These statistics alone are alarming, and we must also remember these numbers represent many lives that are changed in an instant. From individuals to family members, impaired driving affects thousands of Texans every day.

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The Coalitions Project at a Glance

Throughout 2018, TxSDY conducted an assessment with more than 40 substance use prevention coalitions leaders and traffic safety experts from different communities across Texas. TxSDY utilized surveys, key informant interviews, and focus groups to gather information about current prevention strategies and collaboration efforts. In addition, TxSDY developed an online, searchable coalitions tool to help individuals and organizations connect and leverage resources to enhance prevention efforts. Get started today at Coalitions.TexansStandingTall.org.

Findings from the Coalitions Project

One of the most exciting findings from the survey was that nearly 70 percent of coalitions have worked with or are currently working with outside agencies, coalitions, law enforcement, and/or traffic safety specialists on public health issues. These findings

show that Texas coalitions are already developing partnerships with like-minded organizations, and make it even more clear that the coalitions website will be a valuable resource for connecting coalitions and traffic safety experts. Additionally, both coalition staff members and traffic safety specialists recognized how helpful and important they are to each other's goals, and both communities expressed interest in working more closely and effectively with one another.

The Work Continues, and You Can Help!

TxSDY is continuing to build the coalitions project into the most useful resource it can be, and part of that involves recruiting participants who are interested in reducing impaired driving and creating healthier, safer communities across the state.



**TxSDY is
excited to
work with
you!**

If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact
info@TxSDY.org
512.442.7501

Resources

¹ Public Policy Research Institute. (2018). Texas School Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use: 2018. Retrieved September 17, 2019 from <https://texaschoolsurvey.org/Documents/Reports/State/18State712.pdf>

² Public Policy Research Institute. (2017). 2017 Texas Survey of Substance Use Among College Students. Retrieved September 17, 2019 from https://texascollegesurvey.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CDAS_report_final_2017.pdf

³ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2018). Traffic Safety Facts: 2017 Data. Retrieved September 17, 2019 from <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812630>

⁴ Texas Department of Transportation. (2019). DUI (Alcohol) Drivers in Fatal Crashes by Age, 2018. Retrieved September 17, 2019 from http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/trf/crash_statistics/2018/34.pdf