

THE AFTERMATH



The National Road Safety Foundation, Inc.

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PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

To provide young people with non-judgmental information about the emotional, social and legal ramifications of drinking and driving.

To demonstrate the confusion, shock, fear, grief and loss that is a consequence of drinking and driving.

To instill an appreciation of the real-life dangers of drinking and driving.

To allow students an opportunity to explore some of their thoughts and feelings related to drinking and driving.

To develop a positive attitude among young people toward their rights and responsibilities regarding the issue of drinking and driving.

OVERALL GOALS

To encourage responsible behavior among young people regarding drinking and driving.

To reduce the incidence of alcohol-related vehicular crashes in this country. **The National Road Safety Foundation, Inc.** advocates a “no-use” message pertaining to alcohol for people under the legal drinking age. We are aware that many educators encounter underage drinking and wish to provide information which could be instrumental in saving the lives of their students who drink or experiment with alcohol.

The Aftermath is dedicated to the memory of Kevin Gossic and Robbie Bedell.

SYNOPSIS

“The Aftermath” is a very powerful, emotionally charged film that deals with the tragedy of alcohol-related crashes.

This can be a controversial issue. This guide contains discussion points pertaining to the physiological effects of alcohol and management of blood alcohol concentration. We recommend that teachers check with superiors, if they have not already done so, to make sure discussion topics meet the guidelines which the school and community wish to project.

An incident occurred on August 1, 1988 in a middle-class suburb of Tampa, Florida. Unlike the other thousands of alcohol-related vehicular accidents that happen every year in the United States, this incident received much notoriety and attention because one of the people involved was Bruce Kimball, an Olympic diver and silver medalist in the 1984 Olympics.

Bruce Kimball was the driver of the car that ran into a crowd of teenagers gathered on a dead-end road called “The Spot” on the night of August 1, 1988. Two people were killed on impact: 16-year-old Kevin Gossic and 19-year-old Robbie Bedell. Three other young people suffered critical injuries in this tragedy.

Bruce Kimball was later found to be driving under the influence (DUI). Kimball’s blood alcohol concentration (BAC) was 0.20, or twice the legal limit. Bruce Kimball was charged with two counts of second-degree felony DUI manslaughter and three counts of felony with personal injury for those hurt in the wreck.

The substance of the film deals with the grief and agony that was experienced as a result of this alcohol-related crash. There are no actors in this film. The victims, families and friends who appear in “The Aftermath” are determined to spare others from the suffering they have endured that were caused by one man’s choice to drink and drive.

UPDATE

Two years after the crash, on October 30, 1990, the Florida Parole Commission voted to release Bruce Kimball on November 24, 1993. Kimball served less than 5 years of the original 17-year sentence. His father, Dick Kimball, the diving coach at the University of Michigan, stated that his son entered a rehabilitation program at the Marion Correctional Institution for alcohol and cocaine.

DISCUSSION POINTS FOR STUDENTS

The Aftermath is a very sensitive and powerful film. We hope in using this film you will be very perceptive to the audiences' reactions. The Aftermath can be a very persuasive argument against drinking and driving if handled in an appropriate manner. If not, this can be an emotionally wrenching experience. It is important to deal with students' feelings and to let them verbalize their reactions. The following discussion questions should help make this a very "teachable" moment.



Question

Has anyone had a friend or a family member that has been involved in an alcohol-related crash?

Answer

There may be people who are visibly shaken by this film. It is important to elicit responses so students can externalize what they are thinking and feeling.



Question

Could this tragedy have been prevented?

Answer

If 25-year-old Bruce Kimball and the friends who were drinking with him had practiced responsible behavior, this incident may not have happened. These are some of the things a person can do to be a responsible driver:

- 1 **Don't drink if you are underage.** In all states you have to be 21 to legally drink alcohol, and at any age you should not drink alcohol and drive.
- 2 **Set your limit and stick to it.** The best time to establish a personal limit is before you begin drinking—when your judgment is not already impaired. BAC levels are only general guidelines, and are influenced by many factors such as: weight, age, personal alcohol tolerance, your body's metabolism, other medications you may be taking and your emotional state. Alcohol affects everyone differently. The only way to ensure absolutely that your driving is not impaired is to refrain from drinking.
- 3 **Know how to manage your Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC):**
 - a Drink slowly (let your liver detoxify some of the alcohol).
 - b Do not drink alcohol on an empty stomach.
 - c Eat high protein foods (milk, cheese, fish and meats) while drinking. This will help to slow down alcohol absorption through the stomach.



- d Know that carbonation will speed up alcohol absorption.
- e Know what percent of alcohol is in your drink. Be aware: the usual servings of hard liquor, beer or wine will equally effect your BAC level.
- f Alternate alcoholic beverages with non-alcoholic beverages.
- g Know that the body cannot burn up much more than 1/2 ounce of alcohol per hour. Nothing will speed up the process. It takes the average person about three or four hours to metabolize two glasses of wine.

- 4 **Know when you have had too much.** Listen to friends who say you've had too much and shouldn't drive. Remember, alcohol affects your judgment at low BAC levels, so you aren't the best judge of your condition.
- 5 **Have a designated driver** who is licensed and has not been drinking alcoholic beverages. Or get a ride (e.g. a taxi).
- 6 **Stop drinking at least an hour before you leave to drive.** It takes your liver at least an hour to oxidize a drink. Coffee and fresh air will not speed this process.



Question

What were the charges that were finally brought against Bruce Kimball? What was his sentence? Does he have to serve the whole sentence?

Answer

2 counts of second degree felony DUI manslaughter and 3 counts of felony with personal injury for those hurt in the wreck. His sentence was to serve 17-years in a state correctional facility. On October 30, 1990, the Florida Parole Commission voted to release Bruce Kimball on November 24, 1993, due to overcrowding in the prison system and his good behavior. He served less than 5 years of his original 17-year sentence.

Question

Do you think Bruce Kimball's original sentence (17 years) was fair...too harsh or too lenient? Explain.

Answer

This question has no right or wrong answer. It leads to a healthy and sometimes heated discussion where students can give their own opinions. A point to bring up is that in a tragedy like this one, there are no winners...everyone loses.

Question

Can "good" come out of this tragedy?

Answer

Yes. If we can get people, especially young people, to think about the consequences of their actions and be responsible for their behavior regarding drinking and driving. The "bottom line" is:

- 1 Make sure your friends that have been drinking are able to drive safely. Anything over 0.00 BAC is impaired. Help them to find alternate transportation.
- 2 Don't get in the car with an alcohol-impaired driver.
- 3 Know when you have had enough. Listen to your friends if they feel you've had too much to drink.
- 4 Have a licensed, designated driver who is not impaired, or get a safe ride home (e.g. a taxi).
- 5 Find alternatives to alcohol.





Question


Can your faculties be impaired at lower levels than a 0.10 BAC?


Answer

Yes. Remember, alcohol is not digested in the stomach. It is absorbed directly into the blood stream, where it displaces oxygen and carries quickly throughout the body. Because the brain requires so much blood to function, alcohol affects it more immediately than any other organ.

 At 0.03 BAC, or after just one cocktail, one glass of wine or beer, one experiences slight changes in feeling which may affect judgment or physical coordination.

 At 0.05 to 0.06 BAC, or after two cocktails, two glasses of wine or two beers, one experiences a feeling of relaxation, warmth, slight decrease in reaction time and a decrease in fine muscle coordination. There is less concern with minor irritations.

 At 0.08 BAC, or after three cocktails, three glasses of wine or three beers, balance, speech, vision and hearing are slightly impaired; feelings of euphoria, increased confidence and a loss of motor coordination are experienced. Emotions become exaggerated, leading to noisy, talkative and morose behaviors.

 At 0.10 BAC, coordination and balance become difficult and there is distinct impairment of mental faculties, including judgment.

Looking at the psychological and physical effects of alcohol, one can see why 50% of the deaths that happen on America's highways are alcohol-related.

Even at lower levels than a BAC of 0.08, senses are impaired, coordination is impaired and reaction time is also. As a result, any important physical and mental abilities are changed dramatically. Also, one's self confidence is falsely increased by the influence of alcohol. Drivers then think that they can operate a vehicle safely. However, the facts are that their hand-to-eye coordination, reaction time and ability to make instantaneous adjustments are all significantly decreased by alcohol.

It was revealed during the court proceedings that Bruce Kimball and his friends who were driving with him had not thought he was drunk or had exceeded the legal BAC of 0.10. Kimball's BAC was 0.20, twice the legal limit at that time! To be a responsible drinker, a person needs to make good choices and decisions.

Question

What things can be done to reduce the incidence of alcohol-related vehicular crashes in our country?

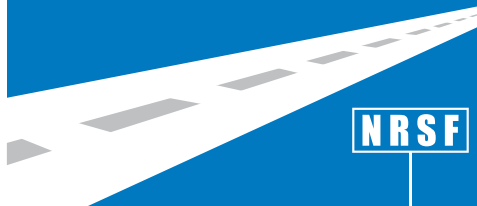
Answer

There can be many answers to this question. This brainstorming could lead to some very constructive ideas. The following is a list of a few things that could be done:

- 1 Stricter laws.
- 2 Stricter and more enforcement.
- 3 Raising driving age.
- 4 Raising drinking age.
- 5 Education of the facts of alcohol, drinking and driving.
- 6 Changing our attitudes toward drinking and driving and encouraging greater responsibility among our friends.
- 7 Suggesting lower legal BAC levels or a Zero tolerance level.

Most experts believe the solution is a combination of all of the above. More emphasis needs to be put on education and changing attitudes. We must think before we drive!

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