



MADD
Mothers Against Drunk Driving™
Toronto Chapter



Driving Force

A regular update for the supporters of MADD Toronto

Vol.IV Spring 2008

»From Victim to Chapter President

The healing journey of Mary Sultana, a dedicated MADD Toronto Volunteer

My husband Alfred was always a night hawk. Our day was his night. That's why on November 3, 2002, it wasn't unusual for him to be heading out to a coffee shop in the middle of the night. Tragically, he never made it. An impaired driver who had just hit a taxi and was speeding to escape the scene ended up t-boning my husband's car in the middle of an intersection. That horrible crash happened just before 3:00 am but I didn't get a call from the hospital until around 6:00 am. They were still operating on him when I got to the hospital. By 8:30 am, a doctor came out to tell me that Alfred was dead. I didn't even get a chance to say good bye to my beloved husband of 31 years. Neither did our two sons, Darrel and Brian.

We felt lost. Devastated. Empty. Darrel and Brian were both in university and losing their dad in this criminal way was very difficult for them. Our youngest son Brian, age 25 at the time, e-mailed MADD Toronto to describe what had happened to our family and to ask for help. I wasn't aware he had done this until I got a call from a MADD Toronto volunteer. At first I didn't want help from anybody. I was far too overwhelmed to talk to anyone just yet, let alone a stranger.

A couple of weeks after that I got an invitation to join some MADD Toronto volunteers for a coffee at their monthly meeting. I was reluctant at first because I wasn't familiar with MADD Canada's mission and programs as much as my sons were. But once I was at the meeting and realized many of these volunteers had also been victims and were now giving freely of their time to help

others, I finally began to understand all the different ways they could make a difference in my life.

From that point forward, MADD Toronto's trained Victim Services Volunteers listened to me when I needed to talk. They helped me write a victim impact statement and



Front Row : Ruth Collins, Linda Holland, Cst. Lee Bishop, Mary Sultana, Julie DiMonte. Back Row: Cst. John Soffe, Ellen Steen, Tanva Kolenko, Brian Matthewson

accompanied me during the court proceedings. They had so many programs and resources to support me along the way. They were companions on a healing journey that continues to this day. The National Victims' Weekend and Candlelight Vigil was an especially powerful experience for me. I met people from across Canada whose lives had also been impacted by impaired driving and together,

we shared stories, remembered our loved ones, attended workshops and worked through our grief.

Once I survived that first year after Alfred was killed I felt inspired to begin volunteering my time. Two years ago, I was elected Co-President. I was very humbled, yet very honoured, to step into this leadership role. I feel very passionate about raising awareness in the community, in the media, in our schools and across Canada about the devastating impact of impaired driving. I also want victims and their families to know that we're here to help when they need us.

Today, my oldest son Darrel is a computer programmer analyst. Brian is a teacher; a MADD Canada Bursary helped him complete his education. Their father would have been so proud of them. I'm very proud of them.

» MADD Toronto to participate in Marathon

Participate in Toronto's favourite race, the Toronto Marathon and run through the heart of Canada's largest and most diverse city in support of MADD Toronto.

On October 19th, 2008, join more than 10,000 participants from over 33 countries in the Marathon, Half Marathon, 5K Walk or Half Marathon Walk as they run or walk down Yonge Street in support of a great cause.

Visit www.torontomarathon.com for complete details!

» MADD Toronto: What We Do

Victim Services:

- "We Care!" – extensive referral assistance to available groups/agencies
- Free printed materials – providing support on the grieving process and coping with injury
- Resource Guide – providing a comprehensive list of reference resources
- Emotional Support – Individual, groups and Chapter Meetings
- Annual Candlelight Vigil & Victims' Weekend (National)
- Court monitoring – volunteers tracking and reporting court decisions and proceedings
- Court accompaniment and support – during the trial process
- Victim Impact Panels – support and assistance with the panels
- Victim Services Volunteer Training – training sessions for volunteers to support existing and new victims
- Death Notification Training – training police and other emergency personnel on the sensitivities of contact with families

Chapter Events:

- Project Red Ribbon — the drive sober campaign
- RIDE spot checks – working with police at their roadside check stops
- Educational Assembly Show for high schools and elementary schools – an annual multimedia production for students
- Public Awareness Presentations – volunteer speakers present on a series of videos produced for various audiences at schools and community meetings
- Public Awareness & Education – information booths at school and business events

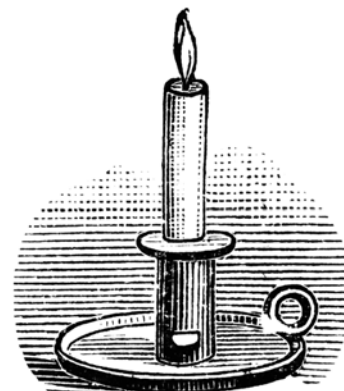
Public Policy:

- MADD Toronto volunteers are working to create, strengthen and enforce impaired driving laws, along with all MADD Canada Chapters across the country
- MADD Toronto volunteers continue to meet with their government officials and have been successful, with support from MADD Canada, in having new Federal and Provincial legislation implemented
- Taking Back Our Roads – a legislative agenda to ensure more effective federal laws
- Rating the Provinces – legislative agendas to improve provincial and territorial laws

» National Candlelight Vigil

Join us Saturday, April 26th at 7:30pm at MADD Canada's annual National Victims' Weekend & Candlelight Vigil to be held at the Bank of Montreal Institute for Learning, 3550 Pharmacy Avenue, Toronto.

For more information call 416-924-2666 or email at maddtoronto@bellnet.ca.



»MADD Canada's High School and Elementary School Multi-Media Shows

With a new look, stronger key messaging and new victim stories, MADD Canada's Multi-Media shows will be reaching new audiences across the GTA!

Youth education is a critical part of our strategy to prevent impaired driving. We know that getting our message out to youth when they're forming beliefs and patterns of behaviour is the most effective way to prevent deaths and injuries caused by impaired driving. This program will encourage a life-long habit of responsible behaviour on and off our roads.

Elementary Multi-Media Show

The *MADD Scientist* introduces the concepts that the "Brain", "Heart" and "Guts" are what give you "Power". If students can find out how to get those things, they will earn their Power Badges. As the *MADD Scientist* explains, "It's all there inside you but you need to figure it out."



Great graphics, inspiring role models and powerful messaging makes this show a winner.



On your cell
Any cab. Anywhere. Anytime.

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that does come with



risks. The host delivers some sobering statistics about teen deaths and alcohol while addressing the "It'll never happen to me" syndrome. Throughout the show, the audience learns how to reduce risk and therefore avoid the heartbreak that others have endured.

Friday Night tackles hard issues including: binge drinking, mixing alcohol and drugs, as well as peer pressure to get into a vehicle with an impaired driver. Powerful stories shared by courageous victims show that alcohol and other drugs mixed with driving are a deadly cocktail. Previews are available online at www.maddyouth.ca/cms.

Only with the continued commitment of our valued supporters are we able to fund these highly effective programs for some of the tens of thousands of young people in our city. You're helping spread our message and save young lives. If you are interested in sponsoring a Multi-Media presentation and / or arranging for a MADD Toronto volunteer to speak at your school or community group please contact us at: **416-924-2666**.

**Thank you for sharing our mission:
To stop impaired driving and to support victims of this**

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» Poster Contest Winners



Toronto Chapter Past President Carolyn Swinson presents first prize to the 2006 / 2007 Poster Contest winner,

Queenie Chan
Ivy Yin-Yuk Leung Arts Studio

MADD Toronto invites students from elementary and secondary schools all over the GTA to submit a poster, essay or multi-media project demonstrating the dangers and effects of drinking and driving.

This year's contest will be an opportunity for the brightest minds in Toronto to speak up and tell us in their own words and pictures just what the message of this year's competition means to them: "If you see a drunk driver, call 911."

Contest deadlines are April 20th, 2008 for Multi-Media and May 1st, 2008 for the Poster & Essay. Please visit www.maddyouth.ca for more information.

Thank you to all those who participated in last year's contest.

» Victim Services: We are here to help

MADD Toronto offers one-on-one Victim Support Services. If impaired driving has affected you or someone you love, we have trained Victim Service Volunteers who can help you through this difficult time.



In addition to providing emotional support, our Victim Service Volunteers also offer court accompaniment. The legal system can be overwhelming to someone experiencing grief. Our volunteers are trained to help you make sense of what is happening, and to be with you each step of the way. ***If you would like one of***

our Volunteers to contact you, please call us at 416-924-2666.

» Celebrating our achievement

Our volunteers and supporters make all our accomplishments possible with generous donations of time and money. On behalf of all those we've been able to serve because of you, we thank you whole heartedly!

This year MADD Toronto volunteers and supporters:

- Working with the Toronto Police we participated in 11 roadside R.I.D.E. and 2 Marine R.I.D.E spot checks.
- Raised awareness and funds at the Beaches Jazz Festival, St. Patrick's Day Parade, TTC Awareness Week, Canadian Tire Blitz Day and countless health fairs and awareness displays.
- Helped make the lives of impaired driving victims a little bit easier with the support and care of our volunteers.
- Launched our new MADD Toronto website at www.maddtoronto.ca giving us a stronger online voice in your community.
- Spoke to thousands of students about the dangers of impaired driving.

Although we are proud of our achievements we know that there is lots more work to do. We need to reach out to more young people, more victims of impaired driving and generate more awareness about the dangers of impaired driving. You can help us do that by continuing to support your chapter's vital goals.

» A Caring Gift for the Community

MADD Toronto is the grateful recipient of a donation for \$2,000 from the IBM Community Grant Program. This gift will ensure 4 schools in the GTA will receive the new Multi-Media presentation Friday Night.

Congratulations to this year's winners of *In The Driver's Seat* program and recipients of the IBM Community Grant:

- Victoria Park SS
- Senator O'Connor Catholic SS
- Weston Collegiate Institute
- Archbishop Romero Catholic SS

» A Teen's Perspective on Alcohol and Drugs

Behind the Doors of High School

By: Helen Lao, Student Volunteer

They say high school is the best four years of your life; you meet new people, learn new things and stress out about exams. As great as it seems, high school is also a four year long test that weeds out those who submit to peer pressure and stress and those who can rise above it. It's survival of the fittest.

The topics of alcohol and drugs are more talked about now in the high school environment than they ever were before. The way I see it, talk is cheap, more needs to be done to prevent alcohol and drugs from getting into the hands of teenagers. However, before any action can occur, adults need to understand the situation from a teenager's point of view. So how do teens really feel about alcohol and drug use?

As I walked through the doors of my high school on a Monday morning, it seemed to be a typical day. There were people sitting in front of their lockers cramming for their tests and lots of people running around in the halls. However, this Monday, there was a group of girls huddled together gossiping about Friday night's party.

As a friend told one of the girls what she did at the party, her expression turned from being shocked to horrified. "I knew I was going to do something stupid by getting wasted, but at least I had fun that night," commented the girl. When I asked her why she started drinking, the answer I received was startling. "I began drinking because my boyfriend told me to, he said I'd do it if I loved him. I wasn't sure about the booze but I knew I loved him, so I did it. After my first time I had a lot of fun so I continued drinking."

After hearing that reply from one of the girls, I became more intrigued by the topic. I wanted to know more about my peer's thoughts on drugs and alcohol. I always thought that alcohol was a problem that only affected adults but as my interviews prove, it's a potent aspect in the lives of many teens.

From talking to many teenagers, I found that one of the most common reason teens turned to drugs and alcohol is that dreaded six-letter word.

Stress. In order to unwind and relax after a hectic week of school, many students get wasted to forget their problems. "I think we have more stressful lives than adults do. We have educational problems like tests, social situations like fights with friends, relationship stuff, part-time jobs, and family life. It's a lot to balance out and it's easier to just get high than to keep trying to fix things and make everything perfect."

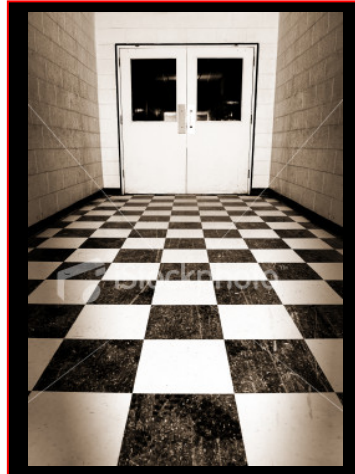
Personally, I think teens today use drugs and alcohol because we're trying to learn about ourselves. It's a time for us to experiment with new things to see what we like and what we don't like. Teens want to experience first hand what it actually

feels like to be drunk or to be high. It's one thing to be told that it's bad for us and it's another to actually be in that situation. We know that it's bad for us; we know it can kill us, and we know that things like impaired driving can kill others too, but we never think that it's going to happen to us.

"Drugs can kill you, but alcohol can't. You drink it, get drunk, and have a good time. Aside from the hangover the next morning, it's over with." This respond from a grade 11 male shocked me. Over the years, our school has

had numerous assemblies warning teens about the dangers of drugs and alcohol but none of them seem to have gotten through to this student. Then I thought to myself, if this one person that I happened to interview didn't get anything from the presentations, then how many more people have been left unaffected? How many more teens are left ignorant about the dangers of alcohol?

In presentations at school, we are told not to drink and drive. We are told not to do drugs. We hear stories; we see pictures, but we never truly believe that it'd happen to us until it actually happens. Luckily, there are some students who don't put their lives at risk by taking drugs or drinking alcohol. However, there still many people who are left in the dark about the dangers of these substances. It's obvious that more needs to be done to save these teens before it's too late. High school is about survival of the fittest, but everyone can use a little help every now and then.



» Campaign 911 Saves Lives!



Dangerous Driving Behaviour could be a sign of an Impaired Driver.

1. Driving unreasonably fast, slow or at an inconsistent speed
2. Drifting in and out of lanes
3. Tailgating and changing lanes frequently
4. Making exceptionally wide turns
5. Changing lanes or passing without sufficient clearance
6. Overshooting or stopping well before stop signs or stop lights
7. Disregarding signals and lights
8. Approaching signals or leaving intersections too quickly or slowly
9. Driving without headlights, failing to lower high beams or leaving turn signals on
10. Driving with windows open in cold or inclement weather

ALWAYS MAINTAIN A SAFE DISTANCE FROM ANY DRIVER YOU SUSPECT MIGHT BE IMPAIRED. ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEATBELT.

Safety Reminders

- Please observe all safety rules
- Keep your distance from the impaired driver
- Wear your seatbelt
- Use extreme caution when using a cellular phone to call 911
- Police officers are trained specialists, let them do their job
- Never try to apprehend the impaired driver yourself

Tell Us Your Campaign 911 Stories

We want to hear your 911 stories. Your voice will help us track the success of this very important campaign.



Your support matters!

Every dollar we receive from generous donors stays right here in Toronto. Your Chapter is working hard to keep our streets safe and we thank you for any amount you can give. To make a donation, please call 416-924-2666.

We love to hear from you!

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Thank you for reading!