



Muscogee County School District

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NEWS RELEASE

GOHS Awards Teen Driver Safety Grant to Muscogee County High School SADD Chapters

(Columbus, GA)-Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) can make a life or death difference in our schools. As part of an ongoing program, to involve students in efforts to reduce injury and death of young drivers, the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) has awarded a \$2,000 highway safety grant to nine (9) high schools in the Muscogee County School District. The funds will be used to enhance existing SADD chapters and help reduce teen driver fatalities.

Grant recipients include:

Carver High School	Columbus High School	Northside High School
Early College Academy	Hardaway High School	Spencer High School
Jordan High School	Kendrick High School	Rose Hill Center

Teen driver vehicle crashes remain the number one cause of death for teens across the country. According to Georgia Crash Data, the youngest drivers (Ages 15-to-19), have the highest rate of crashes, injuries and fatalities...higher than adult or elderly drivers. During 2008, the 15-to-19 year old driver age group was involved in more than 85-thousand crashes on Georgia roadways, which resulted in nearly 14-thousand injured teens and 134 teen highway deaths.

Tragically, the most recent 2008 Department of Transportation crash data shows 41% of Georgia teens who were killed or seriously injured were not wearing safety belts. The inexperience and immaturity of these younger drivers is believed to be a major contributing factor in the higher fatality rate.

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“The Governor’s Office of Highway Safety is committed to changing the tragic trend of teen driver deaths in Georgia,” said GOHS Director Bob Dallas. “The fact is that the rate of teen driver deaths in Georgia and across the country needs to change and it needs to change now. I believe these active SADD chapters in Muscogee County can help us achieve our lifesaving goal of lowering teen driver crash, injury and fatality rates statewide. Who better to help address the challenges and dangers of teen driving than teens themselves? I’m confident these SADD student safety advocates can help convince their peers to be safer, more conscientious drivers.”

With this comprehensive statewide effort, GOHS and its SADD partners plan to coordinate key teen driving issues, which include operator inexperience, speed, safety belt use, and impaired driving. Participating schools will focus on a variety of highway safety issues throughout the school year.

The Muscogee County SADD chapters plan to conduct seatbelt checks, crash simulations with the police department, and other activities during the upcoming grant period. In addition, all SADD chapters will send its president and advisor to a GOHS statewide leadership-training program to coordinate with other high school SADD chapter representatives.

For more information, contact Dr. Betty McBride, Muscogee County School SADD Chapters– Students Against Destructive Decisions, (706) 748-2226.

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