

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE



For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Celebrate Kwanzaa But Do It Safely and Responsibly *Kwanzaa Principles Uphold Reasons Not to Drive While Impaired*

[Name of city or town] – According to the NHTSA Ethnicity and Alcohol Related Fatalities study in 2000, African-American drivers over 40 years old are especially at risk for alcohol-related fatalities, and for being unbelted at the time of a crash, which further increases the chances of a fatality. Equally alarming is that someone in America is injured every two minutes in an alcohol-related crash, and every 31 minutes, someone is killed in an alcohol-related crash. As far as young people, alcohol use contributes to the three leading causes of death among African-American 12- to 20-year-olds: homicide, unintentional injuries (including car crashes), and suicide.

One of the seven principles of Kwanzaa is “Ujima,” which means “responsibility.” During this time of year (December 26th – January 1st) when many African-Americans celebrate Kwanzaa, they are reminded that this responsibility extends to educating others about the dangers associated with impaired driving, and the importance of selecting a designated driver before attending any event where alcohol will be served. People must also be prepared to intervene if they see someone who has had too much to drink attempting to drive home. This one act can save many lives!

“Impaired driving is dangerous at any time,” says **[name and title of local leader]**. “With so much to lose as a result of a single decision, Kwanzaa is an appropriate time for African-Americans to think about being responsible for their actions and always pledging to designate a sober driver.”

African-Americans should know that NHTSA’s new *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.* campaign means that drivers who are caught driving while impaired or allowing another to do so can be arrested, have their license revoked, have their insurance rates increased, or be given hefty fines. According to the Centers for Disease Control, in 2004, more than 1.4 million drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. This is an arrest rate of 1 for every 139 licensed drivers in the United States.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2005 more than 250,000 people were injured in crashes where police reports indicated alcohol was present – an average of one person injured every two minutes. “Alcohol-related crashes destroy families and that destroys communities,” says [**local leader**], “so it’s important for African-Americans and others to embrace the principle of ‘Collective Work and Responsibility’ that makes us responsible for each other.”

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[suggest you put in the boilerplate disclaimer about getting permission from the local leader to use his name in the press release, and to clear quotes with him/her.