

WASHINGTON, DC, September 18, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- Studies have shown that drinking and driving among minors has been decreasing in the last ten years or so, but underage drinking remains a problem in the United States and Washington, D.C. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, although fatal vehicle accidents involving underage drinking have dropped 54 percent since 1991, young people under the age of 21 still drink and get behind the wheel of a car about 2.4 million times each month in the country.

The District of Columbia follows most states with its [strict underage drinking laws](#), with a zero-tolerance rule for drinking and driving for those under age 21. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism says that minors caught with any detectable amount of alcohol in their systems are violating the law and may face suspension or revocation of their driver's license for 90 days, among other serious penalties.

The reasons for these laws are clear: lawmakers, educators and parents alike want to protect children and others from being hurt by drunk driving. A story reported on by the Huffington Post drives home this point. In May last year, a teenager driving home from a graduation party in Wyoming lost control of his car, and his two friends riding with him were killed. The driver had a blood alcohol content of .10 percent at the time of the accident. During the trial, the father of one of the victims asked the judge to be lenient and allow the remorseful boy to make something of his life.

Preventing teen drinking and driving

Starting early, parents and teens should openly communicate with each other about drinking and driving to keep kids from making the wrong decision. Other prevention tips include:

Setting and agreeing to follow specific rules about drinking, and about getting in a car with someone who has been drinking. Providing teens with a safe way to get home if teen drivers are intoxicated. Setting an example about safe driving behavior. Since teenagers who start drinking at a young age are several times more likely to be in an alcohol-related accident than teens that never drink, setting clear rules and boundaries about drinking is crucial. MADD says about 15 percent of people ages 18 to 20 reported drinking and driving in the past year. Any number of these kids could find themselves arrested and facing charges for a DUI -- or worse, having caused an accident that injured or killed someone else.

Contacting an attorney

Drinking and driving can affect young people for a lifetime

Written by Australian Business

The consequences of an underage DUI can last a lifetime. Minors facing these charges will need strong representation by an experienced drunk driving defense attorney to help them understand their options, and to protect their rights. Depending on the charges, a defense attorney may be able to get some of the penalties lessened or even dropped.