

Unit 11: Drunk and Impaired Driving

Time Required: 2.5 hours

Resources Needed

- OVC *Listen and Learn* DVD (clip: Drunk and Impaired Driving/Cindi)
- *Participant Workbook*
- TV and DVD player
- Chalkboard or tear sheets

Prior to the Session

- Consider gathering local and state statistics and newspaper or article clippings for the discussion about drunk and impaired driving trends.
- Research your state's statutes related to drunk and impaired driving; be prepared to provide information to participants about these statutes.
- Find props for activity C at the end of this unit.
- Find a newspaper or Internet story about a survivor of a drunk or impaired driver. Make copies of the story to hand out during activity D at the end of this unit (unless you decide to read the story aloud).

Objectives

- Define **drunk** and **impaired driving**.
- Provide examples of drunk and impaired driving.
- Describe current trends for drunk and impaired driving.
- Explain the impact of drunk and impaired driving on victims.
- Discuss thoughts and feelings about being held accountable for drunk or impaired driving.



Facilitator Tip

- Avoid self-disclosure about drinking and social behavior (e.g., driving after “happy hour,” football games, parties).
- Avoid debates about drinking and drug use.
- Do not focus on substance abuse and prevention.
- Prevent discussions about politics and legislation related to alcohol and drugs. Keep the focus on the impact on the victim.

What Is Drunk and Impaired Driving?

Driving while drunk or otherwise impaired (using illegal drugs or taking certain prescription medications) is not an “accident”; it is against the law. It is a crime that too often results in serious injury or death. Drunk or impaired drivers seldom plan to injure or kill people. However, while they may not plan to cause a crash, they are making a choice.

It is painful for victims/survivors when the courts, media, and sometimes friends refer to the crash as an “accident” or a “nonviolent” crime. Victims/survivors have a difficult time understanding how someone would make the choice to drive a vehicle when his or her reaction time and decisionmaking are affected. For survivors there is no time to prepare, to adjust to the idea that the victim is dead, or to prepare for the feelings of loss. Many survivors talk about not having had the opportunity to say “good-bye,” or “I love you,” or anything else they may have wanted or needed to say. Survivors also have to face seeing or imagining the damage to their loved one’s body from a violent and fatal crash.



Have participants read the “Words To Know” aloud.

Delivery options include reading the words aloud yourself, writing the words on a chalkboard or tear sheet, selecting participants to read words aloud, or dividing participants into small groups or pairs and having them discuss the terms among themselves. For all options, survey participants to ensure that they understand the terms before moving on.



Words To Know

Accident: An unforeseen or unintended event.

BAC (blood alcohol content or concentration): A measurement of the concentration of alcohol in the blood.

Covictim: People who are touched by crime, usually someone who has a close relationship to the victim.

Crash: A violent vehicle collision causing injury or damage.

Homicide: The killing of another human being.

Impaired: Having mental and physical reactions diminished by alcohol or other substances.

Manslaughter: The killing of another person without prior intent to kill.

Negligent homicide: The killing of another person by failure to exercise care or responsibility.

Under the influence: The criminal act of driving while drinking or using other substances.



Facilitator Note

Keep in mind that states may have their own terms for the crime of drunk and impaired driving, including DUI (driving under the influence); DWI (driving while intoxicated); and OUI (operating under the influence).

Group Discussion

As a group, discuss the impact of drunk and impaired driving on victims.

- Why should crashes that involve drunk or otherwise impaired drivers not be referred to as “accidents” or “nonviolent”?
- Who are the “covictims” in crashes involving drunk or impaired drivers?



In the News: Drunk and Impaired Driving Trends

This page offers recent statistics about drunk and impaired driving. If you have gathered local and state statistics, integrate them into your discussion. If you have found relevant newspaper or magazine articles, read them out loud or assign participants into groups of three to discuss and then present the information to the larger group.

When discussing drunk and impaired driving trends:

- Select participants to read the drunk and impaired driving trends aloud.
- Use local news articles, reviewing them carefully to avoid overly complex issues. Make sure that the articles do not identify offenders in your facility or victims in your community.
- Which trends might affect your family?



Examples of Drunk and Impaired Driving

The *Participant Workbook* offers personal stories involving drunk and impaired driving; consider having participants substitute the names of their family members or friends in the scenarios. You also can share any state-specific statutes related to drunk and impaired driving with participants in this section. Remember to use various delivery options cited in the “Implementing the Curriculum” section when discussing the examples.



Triad Session

Have participants write their answers to the questions under each drunk and impaired driving example. Then, in groups of three, have participants share their responses with one another and offer feedback. Finally, bring the larger group back together to review and discuss participants’ responses.

What Is the Impact of Drunk and Impaired Driving?

Drunk and impaired driving has serious negative consequences for victims, their families, and communities. These effects ripple throughout several areas in victims’ lives: financial, physical, emotional, and religious/spiritual.



Chalkboard Exercise

Have participants read from the areas of impact lists. Solicit additional examples from the group, looking for the following:

<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of income • Inability to work • Loss of job • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brain damage • Loss of limbs • Scars • Surgeries • Skin grafts • Paralysis
<p>Emotional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to self-image • Embarrassment • Shame and guilt • Suicide/attempted suicide • Violent dreams • Fear • Anger • Frustration 	<p>Religious/Spiritual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling abandoned by a “higher power” • _____



Facilitator Note

If participants say they have never driven while drunk or otherwise impaired, ask them whether they or someone they know has ever been a victim of a drunk or otherwise impaired driver and what the impact of that crime was.



OVC Listen and Learn DVD

Cindi is the victim of a drunk driving crash that left her with devastating physical injuries. Her 5-month-old daughter, Laura, was left a quadriplegic and later died at age 7.

Consider stopping and starting the video to reinforce key points and then initiate discussion at the end. Possible discussion questions and answers follow:

What was the physical impact on Cindi’s daughter Laura?

- The cervical section of her spinal cord was crushed and, at 5 months old, she became the Nation’s youngest quadriplegic—paralyzed from the neck down.
- She had many infections, some requiring tracheotomies.
- She eventually died from her injuries at age 7.

How did this crash and crime affect Cindi?

- She spent 7 years tending to her daughter Laura around the clock.
- She felt hatred for the man who did this to her.
- She kept imagining “all kinds of plans for how I was gonna kill this guy.”
- She had much pain and sorrow when Laura was alive, as well as when she died.

Being Accountable for Your Crimes

Victims of drunk or otherwise impaired driving crashes suffer physically, emotionally, financially, and religiously/spiritually. Their lives are often changed in such a way that many never fully recover. For those who are killed, their families will always mourn the loss. All drunk and impaired driving crashes are preventable. **Remind participants that no one has the right to drive drunk or otherwise impaired and risk injuring or killing others.**

Group Discussion

Have participants read the accountability statements and share their thoughts with the group. Also ask them what else offenders could do to demonstrate accountability.

Additional Activities

If time permits after covering the material in this unit, you may conduct the additional activities listed on the next few pages before debriefing participants. You may also want to schedule a guest victim/survivor speaker.

Activity A – Cindy

Objective: Participants focus on how a mother's life is changed by a drunk driving crash.

Participants have already watched the drunk driving video clip on Cindi and answered the discussion questions. Replay the video, stopping and pausing if necessary. Stop the video and leave Cindi's face on the screen.

- Have the participants write a victim impact statement as if they were Cindi.
- Have participants present their impact statements to the class and encourage feedback.
- Have participants answer the following questions:
 - What might be the hardest holiday or special date for Cindi?
 - What might it be like for Cindi when people ask, "Do you have children?" or "What happened to Laura?"
 - If Cindi had other children, how might they have been affected?

Activity B – Gregory

Objective: Participants understand the impact of drunk driving on victims and survivors. Read the following:

Gregory is a well-known lawyer and is interested in becoming a judge. He has been drinking heavily at a bar for a few hours with friends. His friends laugh when he slurs his words, stumbles around, and says, "Sure hope I don't mess up my car on the way home."

While driving home, Gregory crashes into three cars, injuring the following people: Karen, a single mom, has wrist injuries and her young child is uninjured. Marcus is married, has a family, and has just gotten a new job with a good salary. He is in a coma and medical personnel are unsure of his injuries. Tamara has a broken leg. She is a defense attorney scheduled for a final day in court for a death penalty case.

Have the participants fill in the "Gregory" worksheet in their workbooks for each person using specific examples of the physical, emotional, financial, and religious/spiritual harm they have suffered.

Activity C – “Bud” Role Play

Objective: Participants experience the ripple effect of drunk and impaired driving.

Assign participants a part in the “Bud” role play in their workbooks and give them time to review and prepare. (The parts are a drunk driver, his friend, his 6-year-old son, his mother, and an emergency room doctor. Two optional parts are a talk show host and the CEO of a beer company.) Start the scenario at the party and let it play out all the way through the hospital scene. If you found props, use them whenever possible. Stop the scenario at any point at which participants want to ask a question of the role players.

Activity D – Apply What You've Learned

Objective: Participants apply what they learned to a real case of drunk and impaired driving.

Either read the story you found before this unit began about a drunk or otherwise impaired driving survivor or hand out copies to participants. Have the participants discuss their reactions. Possible questions and prompts follow:

- How has life changed for the victim/survivor and his or her family or friends?
- What is the ripple effect?
- How do you think the victim’s family feels seeing this article in the newspaper/on the Internet?
- What might the offender’s family be going through?

Recommended Speaker

Have an appropriate speaker address the class on the topic of drunk and impaired driving crimes. Listening to victim/survivor speakers may be uncomfortable for offenders. Make sure to instruct participants beforehand about appropriate behavior during the speaker’s presentation. (See “Implementing the Curriculum” for information about recruiting, selecting, and screening speakers and on how to prepare both speakers and participants for the experience.)



Discussion/Wrap-Up

Discuss what participants learned in the Drunk and Impaired Driving unit. Address any questions they may have.

Unit 11 Participant Worksheets

Activity B – Gregory

Read the following scenario and fill in the impact chart below for each person.

Gregory is a well-known lawyer and is interested in becoming a judge. He has been drinking heavily at a bar for a few hours with friends. His friends laugh when he slurs his words, stumbles around, and says, “Sure hope I don’t mess up my car on the way home.”

While driving home, Gregory crashes into three cars injuring the following people: Karen, a single mom, has wrist injuries; her young child is uninjured. Marcus is married, has a family, and has just gotten a new job with a good salary. He is in a coma and medical personnel are unsure of the extent of his injuries. Tamara has a broken leg. She is a defense attorney scheduled for a final day in court for a death penalty case.

Karen, a single mom, has wrist injuries; her young child is uninjured.

<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____
<p>Emotional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Religious/Spiritual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____

Marcus is married, has a family, and has just gotten a new job with a good salary. He is in a coma and medical personnel are unsure of the extent of his injuries.

<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____
<p>Emotional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Religious/Spiritual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____

Tamara has a broken leg. She is a defense attorney scheduled for a final day in court for a death penalty case.

<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____
<p>Emotional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Religious/Spiritual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____

Activity C – “Bud” Role Play

Bud (drunk driver)

You pick up your son Buddy at your mom’s house. You have just come from a party where you have been drinking for about 2 hours. You are in a hurry to pick up Buddy and drive home, a few miles away. Your mom tells you not to drive home, but you don’t listen. You put Buddy in the car seat and drive off. You then call your mom on your cell phone to prove everything is okay. You talk to her for a second before saying, “Oh, no!” and crashing the car. You end up semiconscious in the emergency room, asking for Buddy.

Mike (Bud’s friend)

You are at the same party as Bud. You see him leave the party and you know he’s drunk but you don’t say anything. You argue with yourself about whether to try to stop him, “Man, he’s my friend, I should stop him. He may think I’m nagging him. He doesn’t have far to drive.”

Buddy (Bud’s 6-year-old)

You ask “grandma” to drive you home because daddy is acting funny. Neither one of them pay much attention to you. After the crash, you are left sitting outside the emergency room by yourself.

Mom

Bud shows up to pick up his son. You notice that he looks and smells like he has been drinking. You try just a few times to get him not to drive, but he doesn’t listen. You have seen him in the same condition before, and he always gets home safely. He calls you later from his cell phone telling you that everything is fine. Suddenly, he says “Oh, no!” You hear a crash, and then the line goes dead.

Doc (emergency room doctor)

Bud is brought into the emergency room with injuries. A blood alcohol test shows he is over the legal limit. You see injuries and deaths from drunk driving crashes all the time. You are upset that Bud put his son at risk and you tell him that.

Optional Roles

Dr. Bill (talk show host)

You are conducting a phone interview with Mr. Bucks, CEO of Sudsweiser. You ask him whether his company feels any responsibility for Bud’s crash.

Mr. Bucks (CEO of Sudsweiser)

While being interviewed, you deny any responsibility for the crash, saying that you heard the man was talking on the cell phone—which caused the crash. “Was he drinking MY product?” you demand. “I’m not responsible for people’s drinking habits!”