



SADD Campaigns & Activities: Grim Reaper

Grim Reaper is a staple activity of many SADD chapters. But it is important to remember that “scare” tactics have been shown to have only limited impact. Think carefully about how you can make a real difference among your peers. Use this activity in conjunction with other steps that will have a lasting influence. The issues of underage drinking and impaired driving should be approached with a comprehensive education and prevention plan.

Every 33 minutes of every day, a life is lost as a result of an impaired driving crash. What can you do to help put this dangerous message across to your classmates? Bring the impaired driving victims to “life” and let other students see how many lives are lost every day.

What to Do

1. Select a “grim reaper” for the day. (When planning your day, don’t forget to receive permission from your principal and notify teachers of what will be taking place.) Dress him/her in all black and paint the face white. Blacken the eye sockets with black face paint.
2. Every 33 minutes, a gong will sound over the PA system and the grim reaper will enter a classroom and pull a selected student from the class. Each victim’s face will be painted white and have one teardrop outlined on his/her face. The victims will be “dead” for the rest of the day and cannot speak to anyone.
3. Make a placard for each victim that says something like “I died at 10:08” or “I’m just a memory now.” You may also give the victims death certificates and obituaries describing the impaired driving crash that killed them.
4. All of the “dead” should sit together at lunch, not speaking to anyone.
5. Display a coffin in the cafeteria with a mirror placed inside so that when students look in the coffin they will see themselves.
6. When school lets out, the victims lie side by side on the campus grounds – rows of bodies covered with white sheets.
7. Have posters, fliers, and/or pamphlets ready to hand out to students to explain the dangers of driving while impaired and to explain the “Grim Reaper Day” event.

If this dramatization is too elaborate or difficult to arrange in your school, you may choose to do this modified version.

In the morning, announce that every 33 minutes throughout the day a bell will ring to commemorate those Americans who will be killed by impaired drivers that day. Then ring the bell over the speaker system at the appropriate interval.

At the end of the day, read the following announcement: "If you were disturbed or troubled by the ringing of the bell every 33 minutes today, imagine how distraught and upset the friends and families of the victims of impaired drivers must feel."