

Road Safe

Years 11–13

Focus area 3

This section of the Road Safe programme contains one of the following focus areas for students at years 11–13:

1. Attitudes to drink-driving
2. The consequences
3. **What the law says**
4. Pressure
5. Thinking ahead

Note: Research suggests that an effective programme should include learning experiences from each of the focus areas.

Focus area 3: What the law says

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Focus area 3: What the law says

Explanation

In this focus area students consider why it is unsafe to drive after drinking. They examine what the drink-drive laws say with regard to the under-20 driver and consider penalties for breaking the drink-drive laws. Information is given about tests for alcohol and drugs and the individual's rights and responsibilities with regard to these.

Curriculum links

Key competencies: Managing self; Relating to others; Participating and contributing

Learning area: Level 6 and level 7 Health and Physical Education – Strand A: Safety management

Resources

Copysheet: **Why can't I drive when I've been drinking?**

Copysheet: **Drink-driving and me**

Recent newspaper story about a young drink driver

Breath testing equipment

Ideally the School Community Officer, or other police resource person, should be present for this session.

Success criteria

At the end of this focus area students will be able to:

- explain why it is unsafe to drive after drinking
- make an informed choice to comply with the drink-and drive laws
- understand the procedure for testing for alcohol and drugs and their rights and responsibilities with regard to this
- consider the legal consequences of drink-driving.

Learning experience 1: Why can't I drive when I've been drinking?

Learning intentions

By the end of this learning experience students will be able to:

- explain why it is unsafe for young drivers to drive after drinking
- make an informed choice to comply with the drink-and-drive laws
- understand the procedure for testing for alcohol and drugs and their rights and responsibilities with regard to this.

Teacher's notes

New Zealand has compulsory breath testing. Make clear to the class that the law says you must not drive if the amount of alcohol in your blood or breath exceeds certain age-related limits. These limits are shown on the New Zealand Transport Agency's website:

www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/roadcode/about-limits/alcohol-and-drugs-limits.html

If they have not been arrested, they will be dealt with through the normal youth justice system, that is, they will be referred to Youth Aid with a view to prosecution or whatever other action the Youth Aid Officer considers appropriate, such as a Family Group Conference. If they have been arrested for the offence they will appear in the Youth Court. The court will order a Family Group Conference and consider the recommendations of that conference before making any court orders.

Activities

1. True or false

Put students into small groups or pairs.

Give each group a set of the statements cut up from Copysheet: **Why can't I drive when I've been drinking?**

Ask the groups to discuss each statement, decide whether or not it is a reason for not drinking and driving, and then sort them into two piles - true and false. Take reports from groups.

Inform the groups that all statements are true!

Ask:

- How would you describe someone who drove after drinking, despite knowing these facts?
- How will knowing these things affect your attitude to drink-driving?
- Why do people continue to drive despite knowing these facts?

2. The law and the under-20 driver

Refer class to the information on alcohol and drugs limits on the New Zealand Transport Agency's website, paying particular attention to how this law affects young people under 20.

www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/roadcode/about-limits/alcohol-and-drugs-limits.html

The YouthLaw website also has information about this topic:

www.youthlaw.co.nz/information/driving/alcohol-and-driving/

Go over these with the class. The School Community Officer should answer any queries that students may have.

Ask:

Why do young people sometimes lose their good intentions of not drinking too much?

Do you think the advice 'don't drink at all if you intend driving' is sound? Why or why not?

Put

3. Breath testing

The School Community Officer, or another police officer, demonstrates how breath testing is done, using the teacher as a subject.

It is important that students are quite clear on their rights and responsibilities when stopped at a random check-point and throughout the testing process. The importance of giving correct personal details should also be reinforced.

Refer students back to the following page on the New Zealand Transport Agency website, and scroll down to the section 'Testing for alcohol and drugs' for reference:

www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/roadcode/about-limits/alcohol-and-drugs-limits.html

Copysheet: Why can't I drive when I've been drinking?

Even when you drink a small amount of alcohol you will be less inhibited and so more likely to take risks when you drive.	Your visions may be blurred and your side vision reduced.
Your reaction time will be slower. This will get worse the more alcohol you drink.	You may feel drowsy and may even fall asleep at the wheel.
If you drink alcohol it may give you a 'false confidence' which will make you think you are driving better than you are.	Your ability to react appropriately in an emergency is diminished.
When you drink your perception, judgment and concentration will be decreased. This will get worse the more you drink.	Alcohol affects your body's central nervous system and slows down messages to and from your brain.
You need perception, judgment and concentration to drive a car safely.	If you get caught drinking and driving you may go to court and be convicted.
You will find it more difficult to judge distances.	Alcohol is a major factor contributing to road deaths.

Learning experience 2: Case study

Learning intention

By the end of this learning experience students will be able to consider the legal consequences of drink-driving.

Activities

1. The case

Put students into small groups. Read or display a recent newspaper story about a young drink-driver – but don't disclose any penalties they received.

Each group discusses the case and decides what they think a suitable penalty should be.

Ask each group to report on their penalty and record these on the board.

2. Penalties

Compare the students' suggested penalties from Activity 1 with those from the newspaper story, and also those shown on one of the following websites:

Ministry of Transport – Zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit for drivers under 20 years:
www.transport.govt.nz/news/newsevents/ZeroBACdriversunder20/

The Official New Zealand Road Code – Alcohol and drugs limits:
www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/roadcode/about-limits/alcohol-and-drugs-limits.html

YouthLaw – Alcohol and driving:
www.youthlaw.co.nz/information/driving/alcohol-and-driving/

Ask:

- How do these penalties compare with the ones you have decided on?
- Do you think they were fair?
- Do you think they would deter a young person?

Read out Copysheet: **Drink-driving and me**. Explain that this is a letter was written by a real drink-driver as part of their penalty.

Students could either:

- write their own essay
- write a poem
- write a letter to the editor about drink-driving.

Optional learning experiences

Arrange with your local police for a visit to see the 'booze bus'.

Get students to discuss the New Zealand Transport Agency's website with their parents:

www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/roadcode/about-limits/alcohol-and-drugs-limits.html

Some discussion starters could be:

Did you know the legal limits for under-20 drivers?

What do you think of these?

What do you think should be done with young drivers who consistently break the drink-drive laws?

Do you think it is fair that anyone can be breath tested, anytime, anywhere?

Copysheet: Drink-driving and me

As you probably know or guessed I have been done for drink driving, and it has had a huge impact on me as I am only 17 and a holder of a restricted licence.

So far I have had a meeting with Gary Linton a youth aid officer and John Conway a policeman and we came up with some terms for me to complete from which this essay is one of them to help me through it.

Also I have come up with some questions.

WHY DO PEOPLE DRINK AND DRIVE?

Well as for me I didn't realise or think before I drove. I guess that would be the case for most of us who get stopped. We just don't realise until we are actually down at the police station thinking about it and then it hits fast.

Another one is WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF DRINK DRIVING?

The thing that I keep thinking of is what if I had hit someone or had an accident. But I am extremely lucky. Some of the consequences are imprisonment, fines and disqualification of licence.

My last question is HOW DOES ALCOHOL AFFECT THE BODY, ESPECIALLY THE ABILITY TO DRIVE?

As I have read books where I have been researching this topic I have found out that alcohol is a depressant and it affects all body systems, it slows your reaction time, the ability to think properly and affects eyesight. That's how it affects drivers even though I didn't feel like it at the time, but it still did.

Well I've come to an end, and I would like to thank all who helped me through this and I wish to thank all who read this as well.

Craig Ramsay ¹

¹ This essay has been amended slightly to align it with subsequent changes in the law.