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Driving While Intoxicated

In 2008, my dad was hit by a drunk driver. I woke up, ready to come downstairs, jump onto my parents, and greet them in my typical fashion; we started and ended our days the same way: with laughs, games, and playfulness. But this day, something was different. Instead of my parents greeting me in the living room that morning, it was our neighbors. “Daddy’s been in a bad accident,” “Your mom had to go to the hospital,” “Everything’s going to be just fine, sweetheart.” As a six-year-old, I believed them. I believed that everything would be “just fine;” that my parents would be back home, ready to goof off in no time. Now, at eighteen, I finally realize how grave the situation was.

My father was a dignified Maryland State Trooper, respected by his co-workers, known for his kindness and compassion, and an amazing father. On top of that, he was also an avid competitor in World’s Strongest Man amateur competitions. One night, while performing standardized field sobriety tests on a driver under the influence of alcohol, he noticed another drunk driver on the road, coming right towards them. He pushed the initial driver out of the way, just in time to get hit by the car, putting him in critical condition. His right leg received the most damage; all of the muscle had to be completely removed to prevent amputation. To this day, twelve years later, he cannot walk without limping; he can barely run without pain. Because of one reckless night of drunk driving, he lost his career *and* his hobby. My family’s story is only one of thousands. And sadly, my father is one of the lucky ones simply because he still has his life.

The common generalization is that teenagers are responsible for accidents caused by intoxication. However, according to a 2017 study by CEOWorld Magazine, the 21-to-24-year-old demographic holds the highest percentage of accidents caused by alcohol-impaired drivers: 27 percent (Papadopoulos, Anna). This age group involves the adults who are finally legally allowed to drink alcohol; once individuals are freely able to drink without repercussions, they are more likely to become reckless, making dangerous decisions. This results in many more accidents due to alcohol-impairment. A way to prevent this is to administer a breathalyzer test to each individual exiting a bar/club. If their Blood Alcohol Concentration is above the legal limit, and there is no Uber or designated driver in sight, the management of the business must call one for them. While this would take more time than usual, it would be much safer for all parties involved. These habits also apply to an individual's daily life; where alcohol is present, be aware of those without a safe form of transportation. Doing everything in one's power to find them a ride is the first step to making the roadway safer.

The effects of driving while intoxicated are painful and long-lasting. Simply making better choices will save lives and keep everyone better protected from the dangers of the road.

Works Cited

Papadopoulos, Anna. "What Age Group Has The Most Drunk Driving Accidents? >
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