

Operation Graduation



Graduating from High School is supposed to be the beginning of the rest of your life...

Don't let a ~~CAR CRASH~~ on graduation night make it the end!

Need additional help?

Contact YOVASO Headquarters!

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Graduation Safety Booth

Materials Needed:

- The YOVASO display board* and table or your own display board
- Pictures of seniors who participated in YOVASO or other traffic safety organizations
- Traffic safety statistics
- Graduation paraphernalia

Setting Needed:

- The booth should be set in the front lobby where the graduation will occur

Project Description:

- *The booth will serve two purposes: first, you will be honoring the graduates who were involved with the traffic safety organization. Second, and most importantly, you will be making the graduates and their families aware of the consequences of making wrong decisions while driving during graduation celebrations.*
 - Request permission from your administration. If your ceremony is not held at the school, be sure to ask whoever is in charge of the ceremony for permission.
 - Request pictures of all seniors involved with YOVASO in advance.
 - During graduation, set up a booth with traffic safety information and some type of “Congratulations” message from YOVASO.
 - Provide special information pertaining to graduation at the booth.

**YOVASO has a limited number of display boards for loan.*

Senior Chain

Materials Needed:

- Small pieces of colored paper
- Markers

Setting Needed:

- You will need one location to set up a table and have students sign the pledge- possibly during lunches in front of the cafeteria.
- You will need another location to hang the chain of papers. The front lobby is usually good as long as it will be seen.

Project Description:

- *You will be making a chain of signed papers to serve as a senior pledge. The pledge should say something like, "Keeping our futures together by pledging to buckle up and drive safely." Hang a banner in the hall stating the pledge so the underclassmen will know what the pledge is for.*
 - During lunches (or any other period of time designated) have a table set up for seniors to sign the pieces of paper (the paper will have the pledge printed on them).
 - One day after school, designate a group of students in the club to help put the chain together.
 - Make a banner to hang with the chain explaining what the pledge is all about.
 - Hang the chain in the main lobby along with the banner the week before school lets out for the summer.

Mock Crash

Materials Needed:

- A crashed car or two
- Participation from local fire departments, police departments, and emergency crews
- Student volunteers to be victims
- Script of the crash scenario
- P.A. system or loud speaker on police vehicle
- Fake blood/paints for injuries

Setting Needed:

- You will need to schedule the event in advance (at least a month or two) and reserve a large time period (at least an hour) during the school day. The best place to have the crash will be in a parking lot or stadium.

Project Description:

- *A mock car crash is a very effective demonstration of the severe consequences of making bad decisions while operating a vehicle.*
 - One to two months in advance- get permission from administration for the activity and reserve the time and place at this time.
 - One to two months in advance- call local wrecking/towing companies to donate a crashed car(s).
 - One to two months in advance- call the local fire department, police department, and emergency medical crew to role play during the crash. These individuals may also be willing to help you plan the event and “paint” injuries on the crash victims.
 - Assign volunteers to role play as victims.
 - Write the script of the crash and go over it with the “crash” victims. You may also want to record it as the “crash” victims read their lines

and play the recording at the mock crash. (Contact YOVASO if you need help with a script).

- Hold a meeting before the event to make sure everyone understands their role during the crash demonstration.
- Invite the media.
- Assign a person to coordinate everything on the day of the event to make sure it runs smoothly and stays on schedule.
- Thank all of the participants after the event; a card is good way to do this.

Crashed Car

Materials Needed:

- A crashed car
- Poster board/ banner

Setting Needed:

- The best place to park the crashed car is outside the school where most students and parents will see on their way to and from school.

Project Description:

- *Placing a crashed car in front of your school will lead to opportunities to bring about awareness through discussion.*
 - Ask permission from your administration.
 - Call local wrecking/towing companies and see if they will let you borrow a recently crashed car (sometime the companies will even give you a car that was crashed specifically because of a drunk driver or excessive speed, if you ask).
 - Place the car in a frequented place outside the school.
 - For added impact, put a message on or around the car. (This is optional)

Funeral Assembly

Materials Needed:

- A coffin
- Candles
- A podium
- Teacher and student volunteers to give eulogies
- 6 student volunteers to act as pallbearers

Setting Needed:

- The best setting for this activity is in an auditorium big enough for the whole student body.

Project Description:

- *Your club will put on a mock funeral for a student who is about to graduate, but was hypothetically killed in a car crash.*
 - First, ask permission from your administration, and set up a date and time for the assembly.
 - Call a local funeral home and request the use of a coffin.
 - Find volunteers:
 - Six students to serve as pallbearers
 - One teacher and several students to give eulogies
 - Meet with the volunteers and plan the ceremony and what each volunteer's role will be.
 - Hold a meeting with your administration after all the planning is finished to let them know the details
 - Make sure that during the assembly the focus is on a death because of a bad decision made while driving a vehicle. Also talk about the things this person was planning on doing after graduation and now will not be able to do (i.e. college plans, work, etc.).

Fake Diplomas

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Volunteers to stuff the diplomas

Setting Needed:

- This activity works best at an event where all of the graduating seniors are together.

Project Description:

- *If your school has a graduation rehearsal practice, it would be good to give out the diplomas then.*
 - Ask permission from your administration to pass out fake diplomas at graduation rehearsal.
 - Contact the person in charge of the rehearsal and ask permission to hand seniors fake diplomas when they walk across the stage.
 - Recruit volunteers to help put together the fake diplomas.
 - The fake diploma should contain a copy of the poem “I Went to a Party, Mom” (attached- the words can be adapted to fit any situation) and a copy of a letter written by your organization asking the graduates to make graduation time fatality and injury free by driving safe. Make the diploma special and tie it with ribbons of your school colors.
 - Pass the diplomas out as the students practice walking across the stage.
 - If possible, take a few minutes to explain the importance of the message in the fake diplomas.

See the next two pages for examples of diplomas and a speech.

Sample Speech (to be made by a student)

Good morning class of _____!

Because this is one of the last times we will be all together as a class, I thought it would be a great opportunity to get in one last “lecture” as YOVASO President. So, please, before you roll your eyes, hear me out. You noticed the certificate on your chair when you came in. This should serve as a reminder of how quickly life can be taken away. Right now we are all ready to party and head down to the beach. But, I do think the deadly consequences severely outweigh the benefits.

I’m not saying, “Don’t ever drink alcohol”- but when you do it, be smart about it. Don’t get behind the wheel of a car, or ride with someone who has been drinking. I know there are some of you out there who have been lucky enough to not get caught. But, luck doesn’t last forever. I know I’m not alone in the hope that the class of _____ will make it not only through graduation, but to reunions as well, alive and healthy!

So in this time of celebrations and parties, please be safe. Don’t drink and drive, and ALWAYS buckle up!!

Thank you!

I Went to a Party, Mom

I went to a party, and remembered what you said.
You told me not to drink, Mom, so I had a Sprite instead.
I felt proud of myself, the way you said I would,
That I didn't drink and drive, though some friend said I should.

I made a healthy choice, and your advice to me was right,
The party finally ended, and the kids drove out of sight.
I got into my car, sure to get home in one piece,
I never knew what was coming, Mom, something I expected least.

Now I'm lying on the pavement, and I hear the policemen say,
"The kid that caused this crash was drunk," Mom, his voice seems far away.
My own blood's all around me, as I try hard not to cry.
I can hear the paramedic say, "This girl is going to die."

I'm sure the guy had no idea, while he was flying high,
Because he chose to drink and drive, now I would have to die.
So why do people do it, Mom, knowing that it ruins lives?
And now the pain is cutting me, like a hundred stabbing knives.

Tell sister not to be afraid, Mom, tell Daddy to be brave,
And when I go to heaven, put *Daddy's Girl* on my grave.
Someone should have taught him, that it's wrong to drink and drive.
Maybe if his parents had, I'd still be alive.

My breath is getting shorter, Mom, I'm getting really scared.
These are my final moments, and I'm so unprepared.
I wish that you could hold me Mom, as I lie here and die.
I wish that I could say I love you, Mom, so I love you and good-bye.

THINK! DON'T DRINK!

Other Awareness Activities

- **DUI Goggles:** Check with your school resource officer to see if he/she has access to DUI goggles through the police department or contact the YOVASO Office. Simple games can be set up during lunch period, such as walking a line wearing the goggles or touching the finger to the nose. The club could also talk with the principal about organizing a fun sports game at the end of the school day where the goggles are worn by opposing teams. A “tricycle basketball game” where students vs. faculty ride tricycles wearing the goggles and try to make a basket was successfully done by Giles High School. Similar games using soft, foam balls, such as Dodge Ball, Kick Ball, Tennis, Ping Pong would also work. The games could also be set up during half-time of a home sports game, such as baseball, soccer, basketball, football, etc.
- **Hall of Shame:** Ask teachers in the art department to have students design posters based on the tragedy of drinking and driving. Posters may include the tragic facts, newspaper clippings about DUI fatalities, poems, etc. Display these posters along the hallways and have students vote on them. Winning categories could include: Most Creative, Best Message, Best Impact, etc. A large banner in the hallway could say: “Hall of Shame.” Work with local businesses to get donations for prizes.
- **C U Alive - Texting Safety Tree:** Set up a table in the cafeteria during school lunches and encourage students to sign up to receive a text message on Fridays and Saturdays or on prom/graduation night reminding them to buckle up and drive alcohol and drug free. The registration forms should include the student’s name, grade, cell phone number, and a signature line. Have your club come up with fun safety messages to text to participating students and divide up responsibility for sending the messages.
- **E-mail Safety Messages:** Follow the instructions for the Texting Safety Tree above except get the students email addresses and send email messages instead.
- **The Face of Traffic Safety:** Set up a Facebook account just to promote your National Youth Traffic Safety Month efforts. Create some videos that promote traffic safety and upload them for everyone to see. Make sure to include a pledge wall on your Facebook and give teens some links to great resources they can use. Don’t forget to include the YOVASO website as one of the resources!