

# Driving Under the Influence (DUI)

Every year approximately 13,000 people in this country are killed from offenders driving under the influence (DUI) with an alcohol level of .08 or higher (MADD). Los Angeles County is not immune to this problem. The County leads the state with twice the fatality rate of other counties. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is committed to changing this trend and making our streets safer through a comprehensive, multi-faceted strategy of education and enforcement.

To assist in carrying out the Department's goal of safer streets, the Risk Management Bureau (RMB), Traffic Services Detail (TSD) identified a grant offered through the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). Through TSD's efforts in the application process, the Department was awarded \$2.4 million for traffic safety operations held in the Department's contract cities. The grant is managed by RMB and offsets the salaries of a full-time deputy and sergeant as a management team.

This grant has benefitted the Department and contract cities with technological advancements that assist in traffic safety. TSD has obtained state of the art surveying equipment for collision scenes and an accommodating three dimensional graphical reconstruction program which can recreate collisions to scale, with the slightest measurement variance, viewable from any angle. This is an invaluable tool for investigators in traffic collision reconstruction.

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A state of the art DUI enforcement trailer was also funded by this grant, to be utilized at DUI checkpoints, public information campaigns, and other related operations. The trailer is equipped with cameras, networked computers (DMV, JDIC, etc), and a Datamaster CDM (the latest Department approved Breathalyzer).

Reducing the DUI offenses requires a short-term high visibility enforcement strategy, coupled with a long-term educational strategy. Utilizing grant money, TSD has conducted a total of 522 enforcement operations, including DUI checkpoints, DUI saturation patrols, court sting operations (targeting those individuals who lose their license to DUI offenses), and warrant service operations. This resulted in more than 1,100 arrests, 12, 101 citations, and 2,410 stored vehicles.

Educational strategies are directed at young adults. With developing values and principles, the young adults are more likely to embrace new values contrary to DUI offenses. The California DUI Court in Schools program is an interactive and multi-faceted educational program for teenaged students on the consequences of drinking and driving. It consists of three options, hosted at a middle-school or high-school: A real DUI trial, a DUI sentencing, and the Courage to Live Program.

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## DUI Court in Schools: DUI Trial and DUI Sentencing

This is a live DUI trial or the sentencing of a young adult defendant. The trial or sentencing is held at a participating school with a judicial officer, bailiff, defendant, attorneys and other staff appropriate to the trial. After the trial or sentencing, students are allowed to ask questions of any of the participants.

## Courage to Live: DUI Outreach Program

This program does not contain the elements of a Real DUI trial or sentencing. Instead, this program is an interactive educational platform which includes judicial officers, deputy sheriff(s), and a young DUI probationer. A PowerPoint and video presentation on the dangers of DUI accompanies this program.

This DUI trial education program is evolving and receiving more interest. In the Calendar year 2007, the Courage to Live component of this program was presented to more than 230 students. Further presentation opportunities are expected as partnerships with school board members grow.

The Department will continue its endeavor of safer streets. Against such a formidable challenge, success will be manifested through innovative strategies that increase Department resources and strategic operations that impact DUI offenses.

