

Lives Changed Forever BY UNDERAGE DRINKING AND DRIVING

- Traffic crashes are the number one killer of teens, and nearly one-third of teen traffic deaths are alcohol-related.
- National traveling photo exhibit highlights far-reaching effects of underage drinking and driving and free MADD victim services

DaimlerChrysler has teamed up with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) to produce "After the Crash," a national traveling photo exhibition that provides a glimpse into the lives of 10 families changed forever by underage drinking and driving. The exhibition aims to educate teens and their parents about a tragic consequence of underage drinking—devastating motor vehicle crashes—as well as the ongoing and critical need for victim support.

In 2004, nearly 2,000 people were killed and another half million injured in alcohol-related traffic crashes involving an underage drinking driver. Research continues to show that young drivers (age 15-20) are more often involved in alcohol-related crashes than any other comparable age group. Traffic crashes are the number one killer of teens, and nearly one-third of teen traffic deaths are alcohol-related.

The stories highlighted in the exhibition also demonstrate the need for MADD's victim services, including: emotional support, guidance through the criminal justice system and community referrals for financial assistance. As friends, family and survivors struggle to

navigate through the grief process, many are also confronted with unexpected legal and financial challenges. Victims can find support by calling 1-877-MADD-HELP (1-877-623-3435), which connects them to trained staff and volunteers who can provide emotional support and practical information. Last year, MADD's network of trained advocates provided assistance to more than 38,000 victims/survivors.

Jan Withers, whose story is featured in the photo exhibit, is a drunk driving survivor who has become a MADD victim advocate. Fifteen years after an underage drunk driver killed her daughter, she dedicates her time to guide other victims/survivors through the grieving process.

"There is no timeline on grief. It's an eternal timeline," said Withers. "The support of MADD's victim services was critical to my survivorship, and now I work to instill that same hope in others." By calling a local MADD affiliate, a victim/survivor will be put in touch with an advocate who can provide comfort, help and guidance. Victim advocates can assist with the criminal justice proceedings and, in many cases, will accompany victims to court. They also may be able to provide a list of local

professional counselors, civil attorneys and clergy who are skilled at working with crash victims. Victim advocates can also help victims apply for government Crime Victims Compensation funds.

"After the Crash," featuring the photography of Pulitzer finalist Jeffrey Lamont Brown, (www.jeffreybrown.com), will travel to 10 cities, displayed in major shopping malls from late summer through the fall. MADD staff and volunteers will be on site at each location to provide information about their victim services.

For more information about the exhibit and the families featured, please visit:

www.afterthecrash.org

DaimlerChrysler also promotes teen driving safety through its Road Ready Teens program, which is an effort to reduce teen traffic crashes through increased awareness about the risks and responsibilities teens face as new, inexperienced drivers. For more information, visit:

www.roadreadyteens.org.

MADD's mission is to stop drunk driving, support the victims of this violent crime and prevent underage drinking. For more information, visit:

www.madd.org ■



Survivor Stephanie Collings was severely injured in an impaired driving crash, Collings is one of the subjects featured in the exhibit.



Chrysler Group COO Eric Ridenour, left, and MADD National President Glynn Birch, center, celebrate the opening of "After the Crash." Joining them is MADD Victim Advocate Jan Withers, who was among the subjects featured. "After the Crash" will travel to 10 cities this fall.

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