

MASK Shows Students Danger of Texting and Driving

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MASK (Mothers' Awareness on School-Age Kids) launched their final drill for the Paradise Valley School District 2009/2010 school year. The topic was the dangers of texting and driving and was held at Pinnacle High School in North Phoenix.



MASK collaborated with The Phoenix Fire Department, Phoenix Police and AirEvac to capture the students' attention through an innovative approach. "We call it our 'shock & aw' approach" stated Kimberly Cabral, Founder/President of MASK.

On the morning of the drill, students witnessed an unusual scene as they approached the parking lot. Fire trucks, police cars, news crews and a wrecked vehicle with an injured woman grabbed the attention of many as they pulled into the school. Parents dropping off kids, school buses filled with students, and just young drivers approaching the scene witnessed firsthand what the consequences could be when texting and driving. Diane Ryan from Fox 10 news covered this event.

Later that morning MASK put on an assembly to talk with Junior and Senior students about the dangers of texting and driving and the similarities of drinking alcohol and driving. Research shows that texting while driving is the equivalent of having two to three alcoholic beverages in your system. "Prom season is approaching and we thought we would tie the two topics together and feel the outcome from awareness can be impactful" says Cabral.

Students watched videos, listened to educational information presented by Pam Baumann, Vice President of MASK, and heard real testimonies from Phoenix Fire, Police and AirEvac.

"Pinnacle High School is proud to partner with MASK in helping keep our students safe. The presentation and mock crash really helped understand the serious repercussions of distracted driving. Mask did an excellent job and I am sure that we will be working with them for many years to come."stated "David Appleman , Vice Principle Pinnacle High School.

After the drill hundreds of students signed the "MASK Blue Ribbon Pledge," making the pledge to not to drink or text while driving.

The mission of MASK is to educate both parents and children on the issues facing our youth, and to empower them to make safe, healthy choices. MASK educates from Kindergarten through College. As the age increases so do the methods as we approach them. Our "Trauma Drills" are meant to capture kids' attention and deliver our message. Every child learns differently so MASK uses several techniques to reach them. Visual simulations, videos, verbal communication and art programs to name a few. For additional information please visit www.azmask.org.