



## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **Minnesota Youth Winner of the Above the Influence Drugged Driving Poster Contest**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Drug use in the United States increased significantly between 2008 and 2009 (NSDUH, 2009). According to the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), an estimated 10.5 million people aged 12 or older reported driving under the influence of illicit drugs during the year prior to being surveyed, and an estimated 12 percent of persons aged 12 or older (30.2 million persons) drove under the influence of alcohol at least once in 2009. Motor vehicle crashes are still the number one cause of teen fatalities and driving while under the influence is a lethal combination for our youth. Now is the time for health and safety sectors to join forces to help prevent drugged driving crashes from occurring. A very important component of this prevention outreach effort is peer-to-peer education and youth engagement, and The Office of National Drug Control Policy's (ONDCP) Above the Influence media campaign provides opportunities for youth to help spread awareness about the dangers of drugged driving.

*Above the Influence* is a media campaign to help teens stand up to negative pressures and to inspire them to think critically about drug use. A key goal is to help youth make more informed choices and urge them to "be true to themselves by rejecting negative influences in their lives."

(MORE)

To support National Youth Traffic Safety Month® (NYTSM), ONDCP Above the Influence partnered with National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS) to host a Drugged Driving Prevention Poster Contest. Over 50 youth from around the nation sent in posters that represented the dangers of drugged driving, but only one winning poster was chosen.

NOYS youth chose Kaylen Larson from East Grand Forks, Minnesota as the winner for the 2011 Above the Influence Drugged Driving Prevention Poster Contest. Her artwork not only displayed creativity and ingenuity, but effectively illustrated the dangers of drugged driving. Kaylen's winning poster is going to be unveiled by ONDCP Director Gil Kerlikowske during the National Youth Traffic Safety Month® press event on May 11, 2011 in Washington, DC.

Kaylen Larson is a leader and advocate for youth traffic safety. She is a member of the National Teen Distracted Driving Prevention Leadership Team and Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), an avid supporter of the STANDUP Act and STARS Act, and is currently implementing several distracted driving prevention projects in her school and local community. She has also worked closely with her state legislators, including Senator Amy Klobuchar to advocate for teen traffic safety.

Join leaders and partners from across the nation to celebrate National Youth Traffic Safety Month on May 11, 2011 on Capitol Hill. For information on how to become a partner, attend the events, and get involved in projects and programs, visit [www.noys.org](http://www.noys.org).

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#### **National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS)**

Founded on February 8, 1994, National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS) is a coalition of over 60 national organizations, federal agencies, and business and industry leaders that is strategically situated to provide leadership and vision to address youth health and safety issues through youth engagement and youth empowered leadership. Through this network, NOYS influences more than 80 million youth and adults. The mission of NOYS is to promote youth empowerment and leadership, and build partnerships that save lives, prevent injuries, and enhance safe and healthy lifestyles among all youth. NOYS created National Youth Traffic Safety Month to empower youth to develop and lead teen traffic safety projects that will positively impact their communities. For more information visit [www.noys.org](http://www.noys.org).

#### **National Youth Traffic Safety Month**

National Youth Traffic Safety Month® (NYTSM) is held each May. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration indicates that in 2009, nine of the top 10 deadliest days for youth traffic-related deaths historically fall between May and August. In 2009, more than 3,000 youth died as a result of a motor vehicle crash and 350,000 were injured. Hosting this international campaign in May allows the youth to work the entire school year on their projects with a grand finale activity right before prom, graduation and the summer driving season.