

GoodCharacter (almost) Monthly Bulletin

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Making Good Choices Behind the Wheel

Here's a hypothetical question to ask your teen: "you are at a party and you have ALL been drinking ... how do you decide which one of you should drive you all home?"

If you spotted this as a trick question, go to the head of the class. Obviously none of these kids should get behind the wheel of a car. Unfortunately in "teen think," kids might select as their designated driver their most sober peer. What you want to hear from your teen is: "none of us should drive. We need to find a safe alternative."

As adults we are forced to recognize the obvious: teenagers drink alcohol. We are not encouraging it. We don't condone it. But it happens. And as we all know, this is one violation of the law that too often results in tragic consequences. We could name several of them, but we won't.

And, by the way, let's not unfairly dump on teens. Anyone who listens to the news knows that it's not just teens making rotten choices. But teens, for at least one important reason, are more prone to do dumb things. And that's because the part of the brain responsible for executive functioning (translation: smart, reasoned, not impulsive choices) hasn't fully developed. And it won't until the teen is no longer a teen. As one brain scientist pointed out, only the car rental companies got it right — they don't rent cars to people until they are at least 25 years old. *(More after this special offer.)*



Do you know you have three **discount codes**?

Yup — one for a generous 15% off, one for a remarkable 20% off, and one for an unbelievable 25% off. And if you put them to good use, they'll save you a lot of money on some tremendously useful videos and other classroom resources for character education, guidance, and life skills.

You'll find the complete story at the very bottom of this page.



And now, there is something new to send chills up our backs. Something that's every bit as dangerous as drinking and driving, maybe even more so. That is texting while driving. Yes, texting! They really do that. This is something we didn't have in our repertoire when we were teenagers, and it's probably a very good thing we didn't. This brave new era of the smart phone has really opened up some exciting new possibilities for people to do monumentally dumb things.

In response to all this risky behavior, we at Live Wire Media have assembled a library of DVDs to help teens make good choices around the old technology of cars, as well as the new technology of cell phones.

Among our newest resources is a sobering DVD called "[Scenes from the Salvage Yard.](#)" A car crash expert takes us on a tour of a junk yard to analyze exactly what happened in several fatal accidents. He makes fascinating observations, like pinpointing precisely where the passenger's head went through the windshield and at what speed. It's not all gore, though. The video is filled with valuable tips to teach teens how to drive safely and defensively. But if the reasoned approach doesn't always do the job, maybe a good scare will take up the slack. This video provides both.

We also have videos about dangerous and outrageous cell phone use, but we don't have space here to go into detail on any of those. (Our limit in these introductions is 2,685 characters). You can find them on [our website store](#), though.

So, for those of you who don't have any money to spend on videos (and even for those who do) we bring you a variety of useful free stuff we've gleaned from the web to help you provide badly needed guidance for all our precious children. And we're not just talking about teens — this includes the little ones, as well.

Freddy & David

"Have you ever noticed that anybody driving slower than you is an idiot, and anyone going faster than you is a maniac?"
—George Carlin

Background

One of the most important organizations encouraging teens to drive soberly is [Mothers Against Drunk Driving](#). Their mission statement says their organization "provides grassroots leadership to create major social change in the attitude and behavior of Americans toward drunk driving." [Here](#) MADD lists some scary statistics you might want to share with your teens.

The Center for Disease Control has created a [very informative webpage](#) on why teens drink, and how to prevent them from drinking, along with easy to read graphs, charts and tips on how to encourage students not to drink.

"The problem with drinking and driving is the mourning after."
—Author Unknown

Lesson Plans for K-12

"In the Mix" from PBS has a [lesson plan](#) and video that explains for high school students the dangers of alcohol and how teens are targeted by the media. The lesson plan is useful even without the video, or you can find the [video on YouTube](#).

Alcohol's Effect on the Mind and Body This lesson plan, called "[Alcohol's Effect on the Mind and Body](#)," demonstrates for students how alcohol works on a biological level. Within this lesson plan are links to additional valuable recourses.

The [National Institute of Health](#) offers suggestions to students about how to set alcohol limits.

Here are some [activities and resources](#) (PDF) for grades 3 to 11 to help students understand the dangers of drinking. Although the lesson plan mentions a documentary, much of the lesson plans can be completed without having seen the documentary.

From Alberta Health Services, this PDF lesson plan provides an [in-depth guide](#) to the dangers of binge drinking as well as information on marijuana use.

Here's a great idea that gets kids reflecting personally on the dangers of drinking and driving. The lesson has students [writing letters to a drunk driver](#).

One of the videos we produced for our nationally televised PBS series, "[The Power of Choice](#)" is entitled "[Drinking and Driving](#)" hosted by Michael Pritchard. (program #7). You can use [this guide](#) (PDF) successfully with or without the video .

"The one thing that unites all human beings, regardless of age, gender, religion, economic status, or ethnic background, is that, deep down inside, we all believe that we are above-average drivers."
—Dave Barry

News and Articles

Many parents believe that it's okay to drink in front of their children, or to provide alcohol to minors as long as they're around. [This article](#) explains why it's still illegal to provide alcohol to those under 21 no matter where you are. The article also includes a study that shows that teens and alcohol don't mix.

The following two articles appeared before the Holidays, but the information is valuable at any time of the year.

1. This news article contains statistics and tips on [how to keep teens safe from alcohol](#). It is an excellent discussion starter.
2. This holiday season article is filled with [excellent tips for both parents and teens](#). For teens, it provides suggestions for what to do if you know you are going into a situation where alcohol will be consumed.

This CNN article explains how teachers, parents and teens all need to be involved in talking about the danger of drinking and driving. The article highlights [stories, not statistics](#), to help teach teens think and plan.

Here is some [good news](#) for a change: "The number of high school students who drink and drive has decreased by half in the past 20 years." This Christian Science Monitor article provides some reasons why. But, of course, we can't become complacent; we have to keep educating our young people about the dangers of alcohol and other drugs.

"The best car safety device is a rear-view mirror with a cop in it."
—Dudley Moore

About those **discount codes**:

We, at Live Wire Media (the publisher of this bulletin), are just as unhappy as you must be about the way school budgets have been stepped on in the last few years. So, to do our part for the common good, we've just launched our first-ever global price-reduction sale. From now until March first we're discounting everything in our store for those lucky few people with discount codes (see below).

So, here's how it works:

Step 1: Visit our store at [LiveWireMedia.com](#) and see what's there.

Step 2: Pick out all the things you could really use.

Step 3: Treat yourself to a discount when you order by March 1.

If your list price subtotal is:	You get a discount of:	By using discount code :
Less than \$250	15%	heart
\$250 – \$500	20%	mind
More than \$500	25%	spirit

Go ahead, indulge. You deserve it.

This offer is good from February 7, 2013 until March 1, 2013. Your discount may not be combined with any other discounts and is not applicable to previous purchases. Shipping and handling will be added automatically to credit card orders. If you are ordering by Purchase Order, please add a shipping & handling charge of 8% of the total before discount. Customers outside of the U.S. and Canada, please contact [sales@livewiremedia.com](#) for shipping costs. California residents, please add applicable sales tax.

Please send us your comments, suggestions, character education stories, and anything else that you think would be of value to our subscribers. [Email](#) us today!

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