

There's no excuse for driving under the influence of a mind-altering substance, legal or illegal. Driving while impaired is an irresponsible act with the most dangerous consequences. One of the worst things for a person to hear when they answer the phone is the news of their loved one being killed in an accident involving a driver who was under the influence of alcohol or drugs. It is obvious that mixing alcohol and/or drugs with the wheel is a deadly combination.

Alcohol alone is a dangerous drug. It has the ability to take the lives of innocent people who are not drunk, and who may never have even had a drink. But because of someone else's decision to drink and then get behind the wheel of a car, they are put at risk. Illegal and abused drugs can do the same type of thing. If someone has been smoking marijuana, or is operating a vehicle under the influence of a narcotic, and they are experiencing delayed reactions or poor judgment, their chances of getting in an accident behind the wheel dramatically increase.

It's not just the innocent who die at the hands of drunk or drug-impaired drivers. The drivers themselves are also often killed. The unfortunate waste of life caused by driving under the influence is an epidemic for which we must find a cure.

There are many ways that drunk driving and illegal substance use while at the wheel can be combated. Raising public awareness is one way. Public Service and Advertising campaigns can be launched by the government showing the painful effects of accidents caused by impaired drivers. Using media, such as television, radio, and advantage of programs such as designating someone else to drive after a party, or using taxis and public transportation to get home.

Organizations dedicated to raising awareness and educating the public are another way that these problems can be combated. For example a non-profit organization that's duty is to increase awareness of the dangers of drinking and/or doing drugs and driving, would be a great way to target specific audiences with this message. A school organization created to remember a student lost after a drunk driving accident can mobilize students. With scheduled meetings and fundraisers, organizations with a common goal can work together to help show the awful effects of making poor choices. Workshops and educational programs can further help educate new drivers to avoid these dangers.

Any of these options provide ways to heighten awareness about the deadly combination of drugs and alcohol behind the wheel. The, more educated the public becomes about these dangers, the less accidents we may have on the roads and the less lives lost to irresponsibility.

Driving while impaired, whether from drugs or alcohol, is extremely dangerous, not just to the one driving or the passengers, but to the other innocent drivers out there. Every effort possible should be made to reduce the number of people who make poor decisions to take the wheel after drinking or while under the influence.