Zero Fatalities.

Sixteen reasons why Zero is the only acceptable number.

2007

The Utah Department of Health Violence and Injury Prevention Program would like to thank all the families who so graciously shared their stories.

While Utah has a goal of Zero Fatalities – it isn't about the numbers.

Each person who leaves this life also leaves a gaping hole in our hearts. They are not just a number on a chart.

These pages tell of the suffering and struggles 16 families have endured as a result of unsafe driving behaviors. While these stories represent only a fraction of the people killed on Utah roads each year, they represent some of Utah's future – our teens.

The parents of these teens have agreed to share their stories in hopes of reminding people of the responsibility we bear when we get behind the wheel of a vehicle.

It is the parents' hope that their children's stories will help young drivers understand the importance of wearing their seat belts, paying attention, and driving safely. Sometimes, what it takes to a save a life is hearing how someone lost theirs.

DANIEL BAKER

Daniel Baker, age 19

Daniel was born 10 days early so I have always thought of him as my gift.

Growing up, Daniel always had to touch everything and gave me many scares in many stores. He sometimes was a little daring in some of the things that he did, like climbing onto the roof of the chicken coop, the boom on his Dad's tow truck, or even on the roof of the house. Luckily, he was not hurt in any of these escapades.

I thought that I would forget his voice until I went through some of my recordings and found one that begins with Donna trying to coax Devin to speak. There is a moment of quiet and then there are a few minutes of Daniel trying to do the same thing. I will keep this recording safe so that years from now I will still be able to hear Daniel's voice.

It wasn't until after his death, that I found out how much Daniel wanted a motorcycle and especially that it needed to be a bullet bike. I do know that he had to outdo a friend when it came to speed, as the friend had a Mustang, and the cheapest way he could accomplish this was to buy a used bullet bike. I'm sure that he accomplished this speed thing as he had gotten the bike up to around 130 miles per hour.

Our children are our most precious commodity and we need to do whatever we can to protect them. Daniel did not have his driving license for a full year or his motorcycle endorsement when he died. I don't know the logistics, but I think laws need to be tougher when it comes to youth and motorcycles. I also realize that not all youth are the same, but when it comes to bullet bikes, age does not make that much difference. Speed must be a macho thing.

"Our children are our most precious commodity and we need to do whatever we can to protect them."

At the time of his death, Daniel was working at Burger King, and was about to be put into a beginning managerial position. Who knows where he might have gone.

Daniel loved to play video games, and was good at winning even the games for which he had no instructions. He was very into Halo and was excited about Halo 3. Unfortunately, he died before it came out. He had been at the Harry Potter party for his last book, but because he did not use a bookmark, we do not know if he managed to finish it.

In July, we went as a family, Daniel, my daughter Donna and her son Devin, and I went to see the "Transformers" movie. It is so bittersweet to watch the video of that movie now, but it also brings us closer to Daniel.

Every person who has died while on their motorcycle was someone's child.

Daniel is missed by everyone in our family and not a day goes by that we do not think of him in some way.

ANDREA BELLMAN

Andrea Bellman, age 18

Andrea was helping her aunt with driving to California. They made it there safely but it was when they were coming home that was the problem. Andrea drove that night until 3:00 a.m. and then it was her aunt's turn to drive. While her aunt was driving she fell asleep at the wheel, causing the jeep to flip. Andrea was thrown from the vehicle. She never had a chance – she was pronounced dead at the hospital.

Andrea was a senior at Dubuque Senior High School and had plans of furthering her education in art, with dreams of being a storyboard artist. She was a caring, free-spirited person who loved music and spending time with her friends.

Andrea talked about her dreams of marrying her fiancé, Andrew "Andy" Peterson, on a beach so that she could run into the ocean after the ceremony.

Andrea was only eighteen years of age. She had her whole life ahead of her and now all that is gone for her and for the family as well. Our family has had a huge part of our life taken away from us, it hurts every day. I still cry, I can't talk about her without crying. Her brothers lost their sister and their friend and they are now closer to each other than before. My husband keeps things inside only letting his feelings out sometimes.

She will forever be loved and missed by all those who knew her. She will never be forgotten.

"She had her whole life ahead of her and now all that is gone for her and for the family as well."

CHANDRA L. BURNETT

Chandra L. Burnett, age 19

My daughter was a passenger who was killed when she fell out of a moving truck at 2:30 a.m. on July 7, 2007. Sadly, she and the other passengers, along with the driver, had all been drinking at the time.

Chandra was the second oldest of eight kids. She had a full time job and was excited to have just bought her first car. In fact, the day of her crash, Chandra had made her first car payment. She was also making plans to attend ITT Tech in Arizona in the next few weeks.

By sharing Chandra's story I hope that it will awaken teens to the danger in which they place themselves when they drink and use drugs. Chandra's death not only affected us, it affected our whole community. Friends still visit her grave and leave mementos.

"By sharing Chandra's story I hope that it will awaken teens to the danger in which they place themselves when they drink and use drugs."

CARRIE CURTIS

Carrie Curtis, age 19

Carrie was engaged to be married 5 weeks after her death. She had taken the day off work to go to St. George from Cedar City to meet with one of her bridesmaids and make final arrangements for her wedding cake. She rolled her fiancé's truck near Leeds. We found out later that a patrolman saw the accident in his rearview mirror and saw her fly from the truck because she wasn't wearing her seat belt.

We will probably never know what happened to cause the accident. Speed was not a factor. Witnesses said that everything appeared normal as the truck came toward them on the other side of the freeway. She didn't appear to be impaired in any way. There was no mechanical failure, such as a blown tire. We even checked her cell phone bill but the phone was not in use at that time. We have just had to accept that it was a tragic accident made worse because she had chosen to not wear her seat belt.

I don't even know how to begin to describe the impact this has had on our family. Each person has dealt with it in his own way. Some immersed themselves in work or school and just tried to keep moving. Others couldn't talk about it for a long time and just spent a lot of time alone trying to come to grips. We have finally reached the point that we can talk about her and remember the good and funny times without totally breaking down. The hardest times haven't necessarily been the firsts…birthday, Christmas, Easter, etc. The toughest thing is when I'm not prepared and catch myself thinking of her or about something that I would normally have shared with her. Her dad thinks about the might-have-beens and then makes sure everyone has their seat belt on. Life happens and life goes on, but it definitely isn't easy!

"We found out later that a patrolman saw the accident in his rearview mirror and saw her fly from the truck because she wasn't wearing her seat belt."

JOHN EDWARDS

"We will always have to live with the horror of that crash, but we are asking in our John's name for our society to realize that this was not an accident; it was a totally avoidable crime. Our John's death should not have to be in vain. No other family should have to experience the pain and heartache we are now living with, each and every day without John."

John Edwards, age 17

John was killed by a repeat drunk driver. John was a back-seat passenger in a car that was stopped for a traffic light on 31st street in Ogden when a drunk driver slammed into the rear of their car with his pickup truck. It was estimated the truck was going at least 63 mph at impact. John was killed instantly. The drunk driver never stopped and left the scene of the accident. Witnesses followed him to a home where police found him. A blood test showed he had a blood alcohol level of 0.17, more than twice Utah's legal limit. The drunk driver was driving on an alcohol-restricted license from an arrest for drunk driving in August 2005, and two other alcohol-related incidences. On June 19, 2008 he was sentenced up to 15 years.

As a mother and as a victim, it is difficult to try to put into words the emotions and pain that this drunk driver has put our family through. There is no greater impact on a family than the loss of a child. We loved John and in an instant he was taken from us. Each and every day I relive that night. You can't believe the pain that shoots through you when a highway patrol officer knocks on your door in the middle of the night and tells you there has been a horrible accident and your child was killed. Our John died instantly in what was left of a metal wreck that was once a Mercury Sable.

Since his death the healing process has been slow. All of us find it hard to concentrate on much of anything. Some days everything is fine and on others we fall backward, reliving that horrible night over and over. We will always have to live with the horror of that crash, but we are asking in our John's name for our society to realize that this was not an accident; it was a totally avoidable crime. Our John's death should not have to be in vain. No other family should have to experience the pain and heartache we are now living with, each and every day without John.

I'm hanging in there. I just try not to break down every time someone mentions the accident or John's name. I have to be strong for his brothers Milton and Nicholas. I'm so glad that his Grandpa, Grandma, and Uncle Mike had the opportunity to see him briefly that day before he was taken from us. It feels like it was just yesterday and I still remember everything that I said to John the evening I dropped him and Milton off over at their friend Carson's house. As John was getting out of the car I told him, "John, pull your pants up. Nobody wants to see your underwear." He answered, "Okay, Mother," while looking at me with that smirk on his face. Then I remember saying, "You guys please be careful. I love you." Simultaneously, they both said, "Love you too, Mother," as John closed the car door and they walked up the driveway. I would never have thought that would be the last time I would ever see John and hear him call me "Mother" again. It hurts so bad to know I will never have the opportunity to hug him, touch him, hear his voice, see his face, or be able to stand next to my big six-foot-four baby boy again.

When I look in on Milton playing Playstation, it's John I see. When Nicholas looks at me that certain way, it's John I see. When they hug me, it's John I feel. When Milton wrestles Nicholas to the ground, I hear John yelling for his Mom to help him. I see and feel a part of him in both Milton and Nicholas everyday and as strange as it may seem, it's comforting. I know that he will always be with us.

John's death is the hardest thing to accept in this world and hopefully someday I'll learn to accept it. He will always be alive in our memories and in our hearts. We miss you so much John!

KAREN HOPKINS

Karen Hopkins, age 16

It was May 13, 2007 and the day started out by Karen calling me and waking me up to say, "Happy Mother's Day." I got ready and went to see Karen and Sarah (her sister). When I got to my mom's house, Karen was on the phone with her boyfriend. Karen and her sister had been fighting and Karen was trying to calm down. After I was there for a little while, both girls had apologized to each other and hugged.

Karen had work that evening until 10 p.m. and did not have a way to get home because her car was broken down at the time. Her foster mom had told her that she either needed to find a ride or walk home after work. In order for her not to miss work as a CAN, she arranged with her grandparents to take their Toyota pickup truck.

I helped Karen pack her clothes so she could go to work and then back to her foster home. When everything was packed and she was ready to leave she kissed everybody. She kissed me last on the left cheek and said, "I love you, Mom. Happy Mother's Day and I'll see you next weekend." She then walked out onto the porch and screamed, "I love everybody in my family!" I didn't know that those would be the last words I would ever hear Karen say.

She got into the truck, put on her seat belt, and drove away. Ten minutes later she passed a vehicle, her suitcase slid, and she reached over to pull the suitcase back up onto the seat. When she did that the truck swerved a little and she tried to correct it, but over-corrected. She then tried to correct it again, but over-corrected and the truck started fish-tailing. Then the truck went off the road and flipped end-over-end once and then rolled twice. Somehow in the course of all of this her seat belt had come off and she was thrown from the truck.

The EMTs worked on Karen for quite awhile. When I got there they were putting her into the ambulance. The police wouldn't even let me get close to Karen. I followed the ambulance to the hospital. When I got there I wanted to go to her, but the doctors made me wait until they were done hooking her up to machines. They kept Karen at Castleview Hospital for four hours trying to get her stabilized. She went into cardiac arrest three times before she was taken by Life Flight to the University of Utah Hospital. Once she was there they took her into surgery immediately; however, she died on the operating table. The doctor told me that Karen's liver was lacerated in the part that clots the blood, she had two head injuries, her neck was broken in three places, and that her left arm and left leg were broken. He said if Karen would have lived she would have been paralyzed from the neck down with limited brain function.

The only thing left for me to do at the hospital was to kiss my daughter, my Karen, goodbye.

This was the most gut-wrenching feeling and the worst day of my life. I still feel the loss and emptiness every day without Karen here with me. Thank God I still have my daughter, Sarah.

"I still feel the loss and emptiness every day without Karen here with me."

ADRIAN MAXSON

Adrian Maxson, age 18

On the evening of April 3, 2007, Adrian was attending an event put on by the Weber State University campus chapter of Amnesty International. It was a little campaign called "Make Some Noise for Darfur." He was at that with his friends, and they had a band there, and all kinds of information, and he just felt right at home. I got the feeling that he was very comfortable with the students involved with Amnesty International on campus at Weber. Anyway, this is the story as it was related to me. I've never looked at the police report, just because I know I can't bear it. So I'll tell it to you how it was told to me.

Adrian and his friends were in an automobile traveling northbound on Harrison Boulevard, right in front of the campus at Weber State. Adrian dropped his glasses out the window, for whatever reason, that accidentally happened. So his friends dropped him off, and he was out in the street looking for his glasses. Not a smart thing to do, but I think he was concerned about the glasses, and he knew I'd probably, not be upset. While he was in the street, a person who was speeding came up over the rise, and didn't see Adrian, and hit him. Adrian flew up over his car. Adrian didn't really know what happened, it was so quick. The officer told me that the car that hit Adrian was a newer model that was extra quiet. Anyway, terrible, terrible accident.

Since Adrian was a little boy, I can remember telling him not to play in the street because it was dangerous. The investigation showed that there was no alcohol or drug use involved. He was just with friends, probably extra giddy, extra happy, just not thinking clearly. So I think the one thing that could be said about it is that it was not a good decision to look for his glasses. He should have just let them be, or he should have done something different.

I do want to say that Adrian was the most amazing kid. There is no one like him in the whole world, and there will never be another. In his memory, we have set up at Weber State University a scholarship fund. It's called the "Adrian L. Maxson Scholarship for Social Justice." This is a scholarship that has actually reached the first endowment level, so we are pretty excited about that. There is a website for this, http://organizations.weber.edu/AdrianLMaxsonScholarship/, and that's where people can go to learn more about it, or download the form.

"He never exhibited that trait to me of, "I am teenager, therefore, I am immortal." He made a bad judgment call; he should not have been in the street. Conversely, the driver should have been paying attention, he shouldn't have been speeding."

Adrian was a passionate kid. He loved life, he wasn't reckless, he wasn't fool-hardy, and he never thought he was above danger. He never exhibited that trait to me of, "I am teenager, therefore, I am immortal." He made a bad judgment call; he should not have been in the street. In conversely, the driver should have been paying attention, he shouldn't have been speeding. So that is the story of the accident. Needless to say, our life will never be the same. It's changed in so many ways. There were 300 people at his funeral; the church was totally jam-packed.

SHELBIE MCAFFEE

Shelbie Mcaffee, age 16

She was a daughter that you could look into her eyes and see her heart. She was loved by everyone who made contact with her. Shelbie was a sophomore at Wasatch High School and was looking forward to her sixteenth birthday. She belonged to the yearbook committee and FFA. She loved to sing and especially dance. She loved to ride horses and she danced with the Academy of Dance for several years, helping her team win numerous trophies.

The morning of her birthday, her dad let her skip first period and took her to the Drivers License Division where she received her driver's license. She was so excited. The Homecoming Dance at her high school was approaching and she was asked to go. She went shopping with her mother, sister, and a friend to find that perfect dress. After several shops she found the one that she like best, not to forget the BIG blue diamond ring that made it complete.

The day of Homecoming, September 30, 2007, she and her date and another couple went on a day date. They went driving in the mountains and enjoyed the scenery, carving their names on trees. Shelbie's mom received a call from her asking how long she thought it would take her to get ready for the dance. Now, Shelbie was one of those lucky girls who could jump out of bed, run a comb through her hair, and look beautiful. She told her mom that she thought it would take a couple of hours to get ready, so they stopped at a restaurant and had a bite to eat before returning home. As Shelbie was getting ready, her sister and mother watched as she put on her makeup, curled her hair, and added that final touch that made her glow. We were all so excited for her because this was her first legal date. Her date showed up and they exchanged flowers.

Shelbie, her date, and another couple went to the dance and decided to go to Salt Lake City to a haunted house, but on the way heard from some friends that it was closing. They decided to go to Denny's and eat. Her mom received a phone call from Shelbie saying that they were on their way home. After not returning home, her parents tried calling her cell phone several times and no answer. They knew that something wasn't right because Shelbie always answered her phone and kept in touch with them.

Shelbie's brother came home from his date and we asked him if he had seen Shelbie. He said no, but he had passed a Highway Patrol heading out of town. We called dispatch and they said that there had been an accident on I-30. Our hearts dropped as we knew that this could possibly be our daughter. Our son drove to the scene with some friends and he identified the car. He told them that this was his sister, but they wouldn't let him near the scene. She was only 5 miles from being home.

The car left the highway and traveled 500 feet in the median before rolling several times. All 4 children were ejected from the vehicle. We were notified that she was being taken to LDS Hospital. As we approached the hospital our hearts were still in disbelief that this was our child, hoping and praying that she would be okay. Shelbie died of brain trauma and had internal injuries. She had no pulse and was not breathing at the scene. The driver had either fallen to sleep or was using his cell phone. The reason is unknown according to the Highway Patrol.

This has had a devastating effect on our family. Our hearts are still aching and feeling lost. Our son and family members struggled to get through school. It has put a big impact on our community. She was a fun-loving girl who was looking forward to a lot of firsts. To lose a child has left an empty spot that will never heal. It is hard not having her with us camping, shopping, holidays, day by day seeing her beautiful smile and telling her goodnight, we love you, at the end of the days. We miss her VERY much. Her memory is always with us and she will never be forgotten. We feel that driver responsibility should be recognized before getting behind the wheel.

"We miss her VERY much. Her memory is always with us and she will never be forgotten. We feel that driver responsibility should be recognized before getting behind the wheel."

KYLE MILES

Kyle Miles, age 18

Saturday, Dec 22, 2007 – this is the day that would change our family forever. It started out like any typical Saturday morning, trying to finish up last-minute Christmas shopping, decorating and present wrapping. All day long, Kyle kept trying to get his Dad and me to let him open just one present. You would have thought he was 5 instead of 18 he was so excited. Of course, he knew what the present he wanted to open was but I wouldn't let him, the present was an official team jacket for the New York Jets, Kyle's all-time favorite football team. I just couldn't let him though, he didn't have that many gifts, I wanted something for Christmas morning. Kyle never got to open that gift.

At 11:30 that night we all said goodnight and told each other "I love you." We never went to bed without saying those three simple words, "I love you", and I am so grateful that we did. John and I went to bed, so did Kyle and his brother. Unknown to us, Kyle had decided to "borrow" his Dad's car keys to go for a quick joyride. The roads were wet and spotted with patches of black ice. Kyle did not have a driver's license, nor did he have very much driving experience. He was traveling at a high rate of speed and was just cresting a small hill in the road when he hit a patch of ice and lost control of the car. He tried to veer to the right so he would not hit any oncoming traffic, but the car was out of control, he smashed into a telephone pole, which threw him into a spin, causing him to hit the next pole, killing him on impact. We said "Goodnight, I love you son" at 11:30 and Kyle was pronounced dead at the scene at 11:55 p.m. He was less than a mile from home.

Kyle was a very happy-go-lucky casual kind of guy. He loved life, he loved sports, he loved his family. We will never know what potential he would have had or what special gift he would have left this world, but I know he did leave a great impact on his dad and me, also on his brother and sisters and many friends. Kyle was an organ donor; we are very proud of him for making that decision, he knew he wanted to be a donor for many years. Our family encourages organ and tissue donation. Through organ donation Kyle has helped several people. What a great legacy for our son.

"It is not just alcohol and drugs that cause accidents it is also driving distracted, talking on the cell phone, messing with the other kids in your car, and texting. NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SAFETY."

It has been eight months since we lost our little boy. It does not get any easier, some days even harder. Not a day goes by that I don't cry at least once, usually several times a day. His dad and brother are having just as hard of a time. You can't put a time line on it, you never know what is going to set you off, you just learn to deal with it, you have no other choice. If I could pass anything on to teens and younger children, it is you never know what will happen. Live your life to the fullest, enjoy every day and be kind to all others around you, you never know the things they are dealing with to get by, day by day. He will be sorely missed and remembered often. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all of the families that are dealing with their losses. Teach your children well; it is not just alcohol and drugs that cause accidents, it is also driving distracted, talking on the cell phone, messing with the other kids in your car, and texting. NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SAFETY. Car accidents are the number one killer of people between the ages of 16 and 25. Now the last thing we say to each other is "I love you, please be safe."

LAUREN ELIZABETH MULKEY

Lauren Elizabeth Mulkey, age 17

Lauren was a radiant human being, a beautiful, independent soul who will live eternally in the hearts of all she touched. Her smile was magical and well known by the countless friends and family who were drawn to her. She was known as an honest, articulate, intelligent individual who love the sun, the snow, and life itself. She was a celebration of youth. She was known as the type of friend everybody should have. Her confidence is enduring. Like her father, she was a driven athlete. She was a track superstar at East High School. Like her mother, she exuded an outer beauty that was only matched by her inner beauty and soul. She had a great aptitude in the latest trends and styles. She graduated early in the fall of 2006 and was currently pursuing an education at Westminster College.

Lauren grew up in Salt Lake City. She was a member of the Cottonwood Club swim team. She loved the beach, the pool, and any vacation. She was an animal lover, particularly dogs, the hairier the better. She was a gifted artist. Perhaps her life is best described by the countless friends and relatives who love her. She was the center of our family, the keystone of our lives, a binding eternal spirit who left this earth far too early. In turn, she left a gap in our souls.

We will grasp her zest for life with the first snowfall at 'The Bird.' We will remember her endearing style when we wear flip-flops at the beach. We will envision her grace when we see a diving board or a track meet. We will feel her presence at her favorite restaurants. We will hear her echo whenever there is laughter and wherever there is love. Lauren, you live eternally in each one of us.

"Perhaps her life is best described by the countless friends and relatives who love her. She was the center of our family, the keystone of our lives, a binding eternal spirit who left this earth far too early. In turn, she left a gap in our souls."

CHELSEA LANAE PEASLEE

"I would like to let teenagers know that even though you are trying to become independent, please be smart about what you choose to do. Don't follow your friends if you know what they are doing is stupid or dangerous. Be a leader not a follower."

Chelsea LaNae Peaslee, age 15

I would like to tell you about our daughter Chelsea, about her dreams, about the things she loved about life. She was such a good girl her entire life. She always had an infectious smile. She tried to be nice to everyone, wherever we went she always made a friend.

When she was in first grade she started going to Girl Scouts. She would sell over one thousand boxes of cookies every year. With the credits she would earn she would sign up to spend a week at Camp Cloud Rim. There she learned how to canoe and made lots of friends from all over the state. She went there for a week each summer for three years. She loved it there. She stopped going to Girl Scouts when we moved to Farmington in 2003, because we couldn't find a local troop.

Another of her great loves was soccer. She found out about soccer in the second grade when they played it in P.E. The following year she was on a team with AYSO and in fact played on two teams that year in Orem.

In 2007 she was still playing on a team in Farmington and two in Layton. She always wanted to be playing. She wanted to go to the University of Utah just so she could play on their soccer team. When you would ask her what she wanted to be when she grew up, it was always a professional soccer player.

Chelsea had a fascination with the ocean and everything about it. She loved being at the ocean and playing in the surf. Believe it or not… she also had a desire to swim with the biggest predator in the sea, the Great White Shark, just like they do on the Discovery Channel.

Most of all, Chelsea loved her family and we just adored her. She was extremely close to her great grandmothers, as well as grandparents who live in Louisiana. She loved her little sisters and would help them and play with them.

Even after death, Chelsea continued to help people through the gift of organ donation.

I would like to let teenagers know that even though you are trying to become independent, please be smart about what you choose to do. Don't follow your friends if you know what they are doing is stupid or dangerous. Be a leader, not a follower.

CHANDLER ROMAN

Chandler Roman, Age 18

I got the call about my precious boy while I was with my mother, sisters, and 4 of my nieces in Mexico on a vacation that we had planned for a year. Before I left, I gave him a hug goodbye and told him "I Love you Chandler, now don't do anything stupid while I am gone." Chandler told me "Oh mom, I love you too and I never do anything stupid," (wink-wink). The phones were down in our room but I got word to call home. I got the gut-wrenching news that my boy would not be alive when I got home over a pay phone in a busy hotel lobby during spring break. "NO! NO! NO! Why am I not fainting like they do in the movies so I do not have to deal with this news?" is what was going through my head. My husband was at the hospital frantically waiting for me to call so we could give our permission to donate his organs. Yes! Yes! Yes! Take every organ that they can use. He was a very healthy, athletic, strong, young man so surely several people would be able to benefit from this horrible tragedy. But he was bleeding so much internally that all the vital organs were not getting the blood that they needed to live and be helpful for someone else.

Our son Chandler Anthony Roman had a bullet bike and I hated it. He hadn't been on it all winter and the decision was finally made that it was going to be sold. Yeah! On Tuesday, March 13, 2007 he asked his dad if he cold take it for a ride and his dad said "No!" It did not have insurance and was going to be taken to the dealership that he worked at to be sold the next day. Chandler had a great day at school, played a fantastic game of soccer for his school, had a gig with the drum line, and was to pick up some friends to go four-wheeling that evening. He was to call his dad after the drum line performance but he never did. We think that he must have thought to himself "just one last ride." He was just a few miles away from the house. It was around 7:30 p.m. and the sun was setting. He was going up a hill and a lady pulled out in front of him. She was at a stop sign, waiting to turn left. She did not see him. She pulled out and from what the paramedics told me, he had no time to do anything. It happened so fast that he probably didn't know what happened to him.

We were overwhelmed with the outpouring of love by our friends, neighbors and all of his friends and the high school. His viewing lasted five and a half hours. We were blown away with the people that waited in line for hours just to say that they were sorry. He died two and a half months before graduation. We attended his graduation and the Vice Principal paid tribute to him in his commencement speech. There are kids from school that still go to his My Space account and leave messages. We find little notes at his graveside all the time.

We have been traumatized by his death. He has one sister who postponed her wedding for a year. Now that a year has passed we still think about him daily. The pain in our hearts is still very raw. We love to talk about him with anyone who will listen. I have found that the one thing that gives me anxiety is the fact that people will forget him. I feel like yelling sometimes "DON'T ANY OF YOU DARE FORGET HIM!"

Because it is important to us that he be remembered, we are starting an annual bowling tournament. We are calling it the "Big Birthday Bowling Bash." It will always be held in September near his birthday. Chandler liked bowling, and was a crazy bowler, but we mainly decided on this activity because it is something which all of us, at any age, can participate in. We have trophies that represent different awards. They will travel every year to the home of the one who earned them and we are making a plaque with winners engraved on it so we have a history of the awards given throughout the years. This way, with all the new little ones that are being born into our family, they will know about Uncle Chandler and what a fun boy he was.

"The pain in our hearts is still very raw. We love to talk about him with anyone who will listen. I have found that the one thing that gives me anxiety is the fact that people will forget him. I feel like yelling sometimes 'DON'T ANY OF YOU DARE FORGET HIM!"

JOSEPH SALAZAR

"If I could say one thing to the young kids out there it would be stop and think before you act. Don't think about only yourself but how your family would feel without you."

Joseph Salazar, age 19

My son Joe was killed in a car accident. He was the unrestrained driver of a car that rolled five times and he was ejected. Since losing my son, my life has forever been changed. There is not a day that goes by that I am not constantly reminded. It can be as simple as a trip to the grocery store, getting plates out for dinner, a song, and most of all seeing boys and their mothers together.

I think if he could talk to me now he would say, "I am sorry for making you cry, mama. Please don't be sad." Joe was a happy kid who could always make you laugh. His presence could light up a whole room. Joe had a young son who will never get to know his daddy. He wonders why his daddy is always "home" and doesn't come to see him anymore. Joe's sister and brothers miss their brother and the one they could look up to. I will never understand why he chose not to wear his seat belt that day and drive so fast. I always taught him better than that.

If I could say one thing to the young kids out there, it would be stop and think before you act. Don't think about only yourself, but how your family would feel without you. Your mother, father, sisters, brothers, grandparents, relatives, and all your friends. Their lives will never be the same and the void they will feel when you are gone can never be filled. Please don't think that you are too cool to buckle up.

KIEFER SANDOVAL

Kiefer Sandoval, age 16

Beautiful, caring, creative, debate team president, award winning writer, son, brother, and friend left for his fourth day of his junior year with his younger brother (age 15) at 7:00 a.m.

It was August 23, 2007, a beautiful and sunny day, not a cloud in the sky. He got into his car, buckled his seat belt, and drove away. He turned onto Center Street on the east side of Lehi, a very narrow and winding road. As he headed up the first hill that curves to the left he was slightly over the center line and going 10 to 15 miles over the posted speed limit of 25 miles per hour. There were two cars coming down the hill around a blind corner. When Kiefer saw the first car he turned the wheel so as to not hit the car. He then overcorrected back across the center line where the second car was coming down the hill. At this time he overcorrected again and his car left the road and rolled down an embankment. His car landed upside down, wedged against a tree.

Kiefer died at 7:03 a.m. on that beautiful day, less than quarter mile from his home. His little brother had to help the men who stopped to get Kiefer out of the car. He had to get him out of his seat belt and pull him through the car and out the back window. On that day his brother lost not only a big brother and best friend but his innocence. I lost my oldest son, and the world lost a beautiful person, one who would have changed the world if given the time.

"I lost my oldest son, and the world lost a beautiful person, one who would have changed the world if given the time."

ALEX J. STEPHENS

Alex J. Stephens, age 18

On May 30, 2007, around 1:00 a.m. the vehicle driven by Alex was involved in a single vehicle crash on I-84.

TYLER V. GROVER

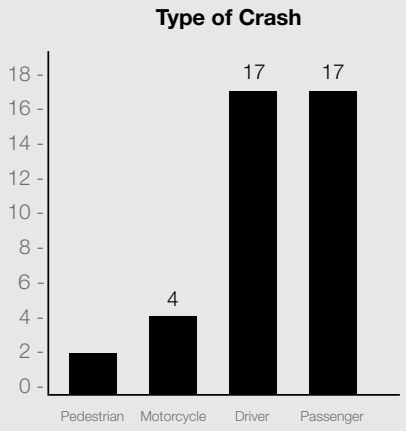
Tyler V. Grover, age 18

On April 17, 2007 at 1:48 a.m. a vehicle driven by Tyler failed to negotiate a curve going east-bound on SR6; crossed into west bound traffic and hit another vehicle head on.

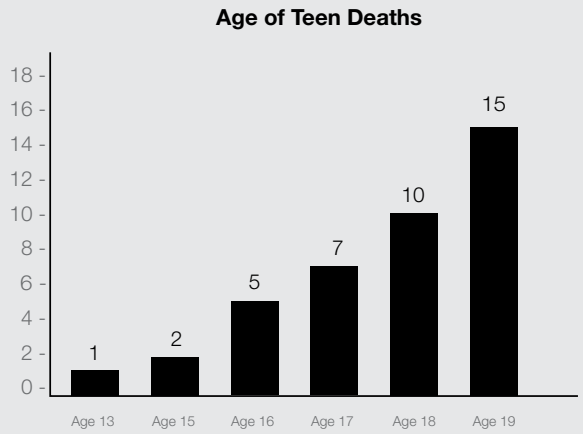
Zero Fatalities.

A goal we can all live with.

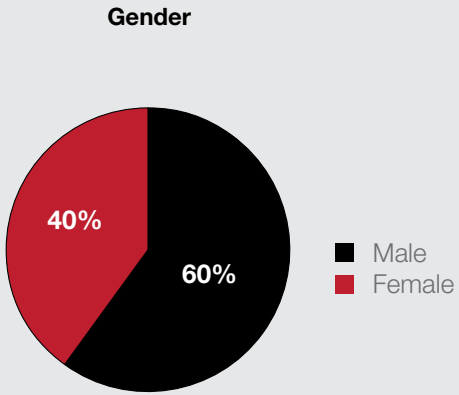
2007 STATISTICS



40. That's the number of teens who lost their lives on Utah roads in 2007. The majority of these teens were killed as either a driver or a passenger in a car.



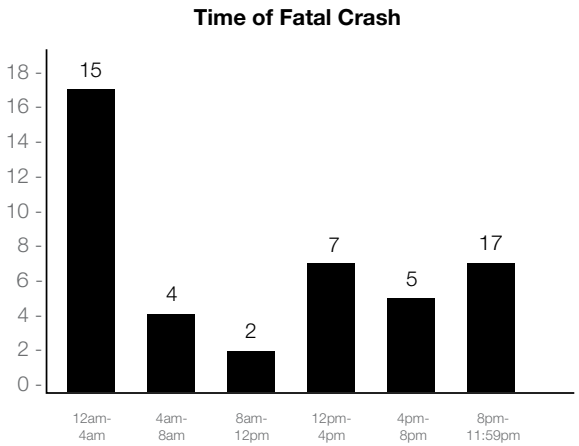
Teens ages 18-19 were involved in more fatal crashes than any other teens in 2007.



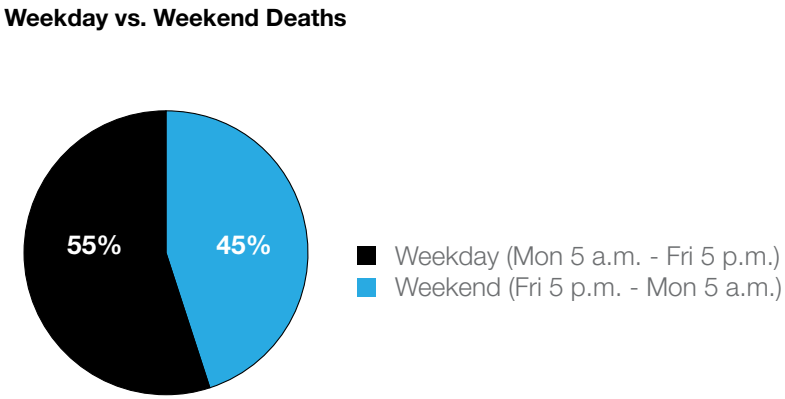
Motor-vehicle crashes are the #1 killer of teens in Utah. Of the teens killed in 2007,

- 60% were killed in a single car crash
- 61% had 2 or more passengers in the car
- 53% were not wearing a seat belt
- 71% of the crashes were during clear weather conditions

the numbers say it all



Almost half of these fatal crashes occurred between 12:00 midnight and 3:00 a.m. Driving on the weekends did not appear to play a significant role in these crashes.



These teens could have been anyone's child, brother, sister, or friend. There was no typical scenario that led to their deaths. However, poor judgment and distracted driving played a role in many of these crashes. Such tragedies could be prevented by making safe driving decisions. For more information visit www.health.utah.gov/vipp or www.zerofatalities.com.

The Utah Department of Health Violence and Injury Prevention Program would like to thank the following partners:

> **Utah Department of Public Safety**

> **Penna Powers Brian Haynes**

> **Utah Safety Council**

> **Davis County Health Department**

> **Utah Teen Traffic Safety Task Force**

> **Utah Department of Transportation**

zero™
Fatalities