



**Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
21 Minimum Legal Drinking Age (MLDA) Law
Support 21 Coalition
October 9, 2007**

Introduced in 1984, the 21 Minimum Legal Drinking Age law has proven to be one of the nation's most important and lifesaving laws to protect youth. Because of this, MADD supports the law and its enforcement. The law not only saves lives, approximately 1,000 per year, but it also makes it less likely that young people will abuse alcohol throughout their life. According to a July 2007 Gallup poll, MADD's position is in step with the American public's – more than three in four Americans (77 percent) say they would oppose a federal law that would lower the drinking age in all states to 18.

MADD supports the Minimum Legal Drinking Age law because it is a vital tool in our goal to eliminate drunk driving. In 2006, MADD launched the *Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving* which includes increased high-visibility enforcement such as sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols that also involve enforcing zero tolerance laws for those under 21, mandating alcohol ignition interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers (including minors), developing advanced technologies to prevent a vehicle from being driven by someone who is drunk and community mobilization in support of all of these strategies.

The Support 21 Coalition

MADD recently convened stakeholders committed to the vigorous defense of the Minimum Legal Drinking Age law and the science on which it is based to form the *Support 21* coalition. This coalition will set the scientific record straight on the importance of the 21 law and highlight the strong support among coalition members. Members of the *Support 21* coalition include:

- American Medical Association
- Center for Science in the Public Interest
- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
- Governors Highway Safety Association
- Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
- International Association of Chiefs of Police
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence
- National Liquor Law Enforcement Association
- National Safety Council
- National Transportation Safety Board
- Nationwide Insurance
- Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation

Educating Parents

In order to continue our efforts in combating underage drinking, MADD is developing a parent-focused program to empower parents and other caregivers/authority figures to take proven steps to reduce underage drinking. MADD is the premier organization and resource for parents on underage drinking prevention, with programs in schools nationwide and a variety of resources available online at madd.org. MADD will host a parent symposium in early 2008 bringing together experts from prevention, health, law enforcement and parenting fields to take the National Academies of Sciences recommendations from paper to pen to reduce youth access to alcohol and to reach parents with resources to prevent underage drinking to save lives and prevent injuries.