

Montesano Students Reminded of Impaired Driving "Every 32 Minutes" Today **Local News**

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MONTESANO, Wash. - Sirens and choppers at the high school today are just a drill, as students will be medically evacuated, bodies pulled from a wrecked car in the school's softball field, other students will be pronounced dead. It's all part of the "Every 32 Minutes" program taking place today at Montesano High School. Susan Bradbury with the Grays Harbor's Target Zero Task Force tells us Every 32 minutes someone in the US is killed by an impaired driver. Montesano students today will hear the dispatch report of a collision every 32 minutes, while others read the carefully crafted obituaries of their friends over their PA system. A grim reaper will visit classrooms and pick out "victims," who will not interact with other students for the rest of the day. Students will also see a mock car crash with full paramedic response, as well as the investigation and arrest of a fellow classmate for driving while under the influence. The event is presented by Grays Harbor's Target Zero Task Force, Local police, and area schools. Bradbury tells us this will be the fifth year for this successful program on the harbor.

The following is a synopsis of the 2011 HHS program: What this project does is put students as close to an impaired driving fatality as you can get without it actually happening. Statistics show that every 32-minutes someone in our country is killed by an impaired driver. Previously every 15-minutes…so we are making progress. Students have been selected in advance with parental permission and involvement. Parents and students have been meeting with staff so they fully understand their roles and the delicate nature of the program. On day one, students will go to class as normal. Every 32-minutes, a dispatch report of a collision will go over the school intercom. At some point in the day, the selected students get a visit from the "Grim Reaper" in class. Paramedics will put them on a stretcher and a close friend or sibling the student will read an obituary over the loud speaker. The "dead" student will be taken to our staging area, their face will be painted white and they will wear a black robe. The student then returns to class but will not talk or interact with anyone the rest of the day. They are "dead". On Thursday, we will have a mock car crash in front of the entire student body where paramedics work on an "injured" student. Officers will investigate the intoxicated driver and make an arrest. A LifeFlight helicopter will land at the scene to remove one of the grievously injured students from the mock crash. At the end of the day, the "dead" students will be taken to a local hotel where law enforcement and school officials will chaperone. Students will take part in team building activities and learn about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Some family members will receive a visit from law enforcement and receive a mock death notification. Law enforcement will go through what would happen had their child really been involved in a fatal accident. (Parents have been asked to do this ahead of time and can opt out of the death notification if it is too difficult for them) The next morning, the "dead" students are taken to breakfast and then to school. They will prepare for the assembly taking place later that morning. Finally assembly: At the final assembly on Friday, the entire school and all parents are invited. This is highly emotional as students speak about their perspective, parents talk about what death notification visit was like and describe officers telling them their child was deceased.