

The Dangers of Drunk Driving

(ABC 6 NEWS) -- More than 130 Minnesotans have been killed in drunk driving crashes this year. Many of them caused by young drivers.

That's why law enforcement and health officials are targeting high schools and college campuses.

On Wednesday they stopped by the University of Minnesota Rochester.

"We all go through life at that age thinking that we may be invincible and we don't think about the consequences that may happen because of our decisions," State Trooper Thomas Wright explained.

Between 2008 and 2010 in Olmsted County, people between the ages of 21 and 29, had more DWI incidents than all other ages combined.

For many kids, a simple lesson in drinking and driving won't do the trick. So experts found a way for them to experience it for themselves.

"It just gives kids, students a glimpse into what it would be like so that they don't have to experience it in real life," Safe Communities Coordinator Karen Schaar said.

The program uses simulator software to show students how they can hurt others.

Todd Emanuel, who runs the simulator, says now is the best time to get the word out.

"This is getting close to not only holidays but the break time for many colleges where they're going to go home, meet up with friends, probably have some fun and party a little bit," Emanuel said.

However, the goal isn't to stop kids from partying this holiday break. It's simply to remind them that if you drink, you shouldn't get behind the wheel.

"We want everyone to just be cautious when they're out there driving. Plan for a designated driver or a sober ride home," Schaar said.

Officers also showed students a DVD of various crashes and DWI related deaths in Minnesota and talked about alcohol poisoning and other negative side effects.