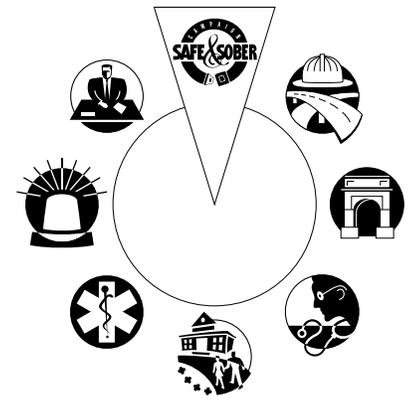


Designated Driver Programs (DDPs) and Ride Service Programs (RSPs) are community-based approaches to preventing impaired driving. Both approaches are described in this piece. It is not sufficient to have an individual DDP at a local restaurant, or a few taxi cabs providing safe rides home on the weekend to reduce a community-wide problem such as alcohol-impaired driving. These programs must pervade the community to have their impact on drinking and driving. Accordingly, these programs are described as a package of community-wide programs demanding the active cooperation of a healthy mix of community partners to succeed.



Designated Driver Programs

What is a Designated Driver?

A designated driver is one person, in a group of two or more drinkers, who agrees not to drink alcoholic beverages, and to transport the members of the group home safely.

Server-based DDPs are set up in public or private establishments that serve alcohol, where the idea of using a designated driver is introduced by the server. DDPs may also be drinker-based. Any people drinking in groups, at parties or sporting events, or a friend's back yard, may decide that one member of the group will be a designated driver to get the other group members home safely.

Community-wide DDPs are designed by a centralized organization in a community, composed of a wide spectrum of partners, all of whom have something to gain by reducing alcohol-related crashes.

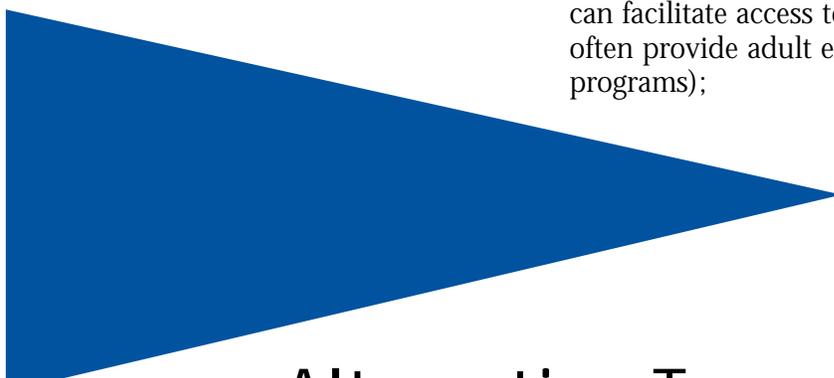
Who are the community partners that can help you set up a community-wide program?

- Local government, such as the mayor;
- Police or sheriff's department;
- Court personnel, such as a judge who handles DWI cases;
- Business and professional organizations, such as a local Chamber of Commerce;
- Medical and social service organizations, such as hospitals, local libraries, and providers of prevention, intervention, and treatment services for alcohol and other drug abuse;
- Liquor license holders (don't forget fraternal organizations, such as the VFW, that serve alcohol);
- Your local liquor licensing agency, which in some states is called the Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) Board;
- Schools (although the DDP should target only adults, public schools can facilitate access to adults, and often provide adult education programs);

- Local chapters of national citizen activist groups, professional organizations, and business associations involved in highway safety, such as MADD and RID;
- The media, such as local radio, television and cable, newspapers, and billboard companies;
- The clergy;
- Businesses, such as driving schools, insurance and advertising agencies, retail stores, health and recreational clubs, and any other businesses that want to be identified as a community sponsor; and
- Citizens at large.

Why is a community-wide program better?

In a community-wide program, the costs of developing and disseminating promotional materials can be spread across many sponsors, so that single organizations or groups do not have to carry that burden alone. When messages encouraging designated drivers come from many sources, more people are exposed to the DDP concept, and more people may be likely to use designated drivers.



Alternative Transportation Strategies to Prevent Alcohol Impaired Driving

Community-wide DDPs splash the DDP concept throughout the community, rather than just introducing it piecemeal in isolated establishments.

Who should coordinate a community-wide designated driver program?

A single agency, such as the mayor's office, the local police agency, the downtown business association, or a local ABC Board can coordinate the program. It could be any of the major community partners. Just make sure there's no duplication of effort!

What must individual service establishments do to run a good program?

While community-wide coordination of programs is critical, running successful DDPs in restaurants and bars also requires attention to details. A successful DDP should do the following:

- 1) Monitor entrances to the establishment
 - Assign a staff member at all times
 - Check for age and fake IDs
 - Deny entry to intoxicated people
 - Count the number of patrons on the premises to prevent overcrowding
 - Provide a proper patron-staff ratio
- 2) Actively encourage food consumption
 - Offer reduced food prices during late afternoon/evening
 - Have low cost snacks or food available at all times
 - Provide incentives to servers for increased food sales

- 3) Promote alternative beverages
 - Price non-alcoholic drinks significantly less than those containing alcohol
 - Promote non-alcoholic drinks on table tents
 - Stock and promote light beer and light wine
 - Set lower prices for light beer and light wine
 - Evaluate servers on total sales, including non-alcoholic products

- 4) Train all staff
 - Involve all staff in server training, so they understand what a DDP is
 - Pay staff for training time
 - Keep an incident log of all problem situations

- 5) Provide house policies
 - Provide a written statement of policies to all staff
 - Prohibit drinking on the job by employees
 - Reinforce policies by offering staff incentives for effectively managing intoxicated patrons and for selling alternative beverages

- 6) Never serve minors
 - Establish when to ask for identification
 - Train staff to identify minors
 - Identify what forms of identification are acceptable
 - Provide staff with guidelines to deal with underage patrons
 - Set guidelines to recognize and deal with false identification

- Ensure that staff understands its legal duty regarding service to minors
- Verify that all servers are legally old enough to serve beverage alcohol

7) Monitor drinking

- Provide staff with consumption limit charts and supporting rationale
- Provide staff with guidelines for recognizing the signs of intoxication

- Set guidelines for dealing with intoxicated patrons

8) Publicize the establishment's position

- Explain and market the program internally to patrons
- Indicate that the establishment wishes no patron to drink to intoxication
- Promote the establishment's position to the public at large
- Develop a mission statement and post prominently (for instance, in the bathrooms and near the entrance)

If a designated driver is not selected, identify alternative transportation options for patrons.

Ride Service Programs

What is a community-wide RSP?

As an alternative to DDPs, community-wide RSPs provide safe rides home for individuals who are judged (by themselves or others) to be too alcohol impaired to drive themselves home. Rides home might be provided in taxis, vans, or private vehicles.

Who are the community partners in RSPs?

The same array of potential partners that were cited in community-wide DDPs should also support RSPs.

Who should coordinate a community-wide RSP?

Again, as with the same question for DDPs, a single community agency is best, but it doesn't really matter which one.

Who are the program targets and who is eligible for RSPs?

Targets would be drinkers who drive, organizations and establishments where they drink, social hosts, and specific groups at high risk for drinking and driving, such as young males and patrons of alcohol-serving establishments. The criteria for eligibility to use the RSP should be relaxed, while still focusing on the person who is impaired, especially by alcohol, who probably would have driven after drinking.

How is the program publicized?

The community offering an RSP should publicize it through as wide a variety of media as possible (newspapers, radio, television, billboards, signs on public transportation, direct mail, and at establishments that serve alcohol) to reach the broadest audience. The name and phone number of the program must be made available everywhere, in the public media and at the establishments where drinking is done.

For RSPs limited to holiday periods, a media "blitz" should start at least one week before the service begins and continue throughout the period. For year-round programs, the publicity should occur periodically with less intensity than the holiday blitz, and with greater intensity during high-risk DWI holiday periods.

Are other prevention services available?

An RSP, in addition to safe rides, often provides other relevant prevention and intervention services, such as training alcohol-serving establishments about responsible service; providing corporate event risk-management; and offering non-intrusive written information to customers on BAC levels, signs of substance abuse, and phone numbers where they may receive information or help.

How are RSPs funded?

A model RSP, especially a year-round program, receives a relatively small proportion of funding from many different community sources (perhaps the same community partners who set up a DDP) to ensure consistent funding and reduce the risk that withdrawal or reduction of funding from one or two sources would create problems. Maintaining a variety of sources increases the administrative workload of the program, but reduces dependence on larger donors. Funding resources can include cash, in-kind services (publicity), and equipment. Resources might be sought from such groups as:

- Hospitality industry groups;
- Alcohol-serving establishments;
- Alcoholic beverage manufacturers and distributors;
- Local government agencies;
- Health care organizations;
- Service clubs;
- Citizen groups;
- Community groups;
- Insurance companies;
- Media organizations; and
- Business groups.

Should the program use existing transportation systems?

The use of existing transportation systems, such as cab companies, to provide the vehicles, drivers, and call-in and dispatch services, appears successful in many cases and is likely to reach the largest number of potential users.

What should the program cost the user?

A model program would provide rides at no or minimal cost to the user, if the ride is provided within the rules of the services (for instance, within certain geographic boundaries, provisions of a voucher, or ride starting from a member establishment).

Does the program enable drinkers to drink more?

There is no evidence that these programs promote or encourage drinking. Think of it as a “friend” walking someone home who has had too much to drink. Getting someone home safely has nothing to do with condoning excessive drinking!



U.S. Department of Transportation