

In the state of Maine more than 8,000 people were arrested for drunk driving in 2009. Many drunk drivers do not get caught and many are repeat offenders. The risks of drunk driving not only affect the drunks who drive around, but also affect their families, other people on the roadways and is a leading killer among teens and adults. If you think that your life can't be affected by a drunk driver you are wrong.

I am a normal kid from a small town in Maine living alone with my Dad and I never thought drunk driving would change my life. One Sunday at about ten o'clock at night I got a call from my brother, he said that my Dad left his friends house after drinking to come home and was off the road somewhere. At first I didn't think anything of it, I just thought that he would make it home like he always does, but I was wrong. He did make it home at about twelve o'clock, but it was in the back of a police car.

Seeing my Father get dropped off in a police car was scary and made me really mad as well as upset, but that was just the start of a series of emotional events that followed. The next day he had no license, a big fine to pay, along with a court date and counseling course that was mandatory for him to attend in Waterville. This had a huge affect on my Dad financially, and on me emotionally. My Dad losing his license put a ton of pressure on me to pass my driving test the next week. Not only did we have no one in the house with a drivers license, but also Dad had to pay for a hotel in Waterville for the weekend, his court fees, a license reinstatement fee, higher insurance rates as well as the everyday things that we needed to live. All the money that he owed from his OUI conviction came out of my college fund because it was our only financial savings.

After all the counseling and fines, my Dad still had to appear in court. Even though he was a first offender, he had to serve jail time because his blood alcohol content was three times the legal limit. The day I brought my Dad to jail was an extremely emotional day for me. I had to take the day off from school to drive him to Bangor. The hour ride was very quiet and I didn't know what to say. He did most of the talking, he said "You know that I love you and everything will be ok, I will be fine and so will you. I'll be back before you know it." He told me to take care of the house and stay out of trouble while he was gone. When we got to the jail house I tried so hard to hold back tears. It's like my whole heart just sank onto the car floor. I couldn't breathe, but stayed calm and strong for my Dad. He gave me a hug and told me that he loved me.

This experience changed my life in many ways. It made me understand that bad things can happen to anyone and everything has consequences. Some say that my Dad deserved to be in jail, because he shouldn't have been on the road endangering other families. I am just grateful that he made it home alive and didn't hurt anyone. Don't drink and drive. Don't let others drink and drive. Make it home alive.