

Teenagers are told they need to grow up fast: by society, adults, and each other. At 17 and 18 we are supposed to pick where we are going to spend the next 4 years that determine what we do with the rest of our lives. We are told that after those years in college, we have to find a good job and a nice house to be successful. That we need to get our lives together and have a plan, but at the same time to make memories because we're only a teenager once, and we don't have a lot of time to spend with our high school friends. When I ask to go out, a lot of times it's a no because it's too late or a school night, but it's a school night 5 out of 7 days and late means 7 o'clock. "Why don't you trust me!" is always the argument, but it gets shut down every time with "It's not you I don't trust."

The parents are right though, but it's frustrating for us. We just want to make the most of our teenage years, and why should that be ruined because some people can't control themselves and use their heads? How hard is it to not drink and drive? For some, very. But we all think, nothing will happen to us. We refer to the small town we live in, or the state, or just luck in general, because all we have is fun in mind.

My mom told me a story once after I had left the house without her knowledge. My friend and I thought it'd be fun to just drive around. Our plan was that there wasn't one, to just listen to some music and talk; to make a memory. It was around 11 because Hannah had just gotten out of work and we decided neither of us were tired. About 15 minutes into the drive, I got a call. When I looked at the screen it read "Mom." When I answered I could hear the concern in her voice and the message loud and clear was that she was not happy.... "Come home right now!" We came home immediately, thinking about how our little adventure was cut short, but at least we had made a memory. She told me how her friend's daughter had the same idea once, and I could see the hurt in her eyes.... something had happened... and after reflecting a bit, I realized that child could have been me.

It was a Friday night, November 7th, 2014, and Ella's phone lit up from across the room. Stephanie was sleeping over at the time and the girls shrieked with excitement when they saw the name across the screen was Ethan. He was with his friend Danny and they asked the girls if they wanted to drive around for a little bit because they didn't want to go home yet. Ella replied yes because she knew her parents were sound asleep and she had snuck out before. It was foggy out but it wasn't too bad. The group decided they would just wing it and take whatever turns they wanted to, they could always use a GPS to get back home if they got lost. As they were rounding the bend of a tree lined road, Ethan was showing the girls how fast he can go... 40, 50, 6-. The car stopped, but not on purpose. A driver coming from the other direction was completely over the yellow line, and hit the car head on.

It's 2 am, and the doorbell rings at Ella's house. Her mother opens the door to 2 officers and a glare from their blue lights flashing in the driveway. The first officer asks her if she has a daughter named Ella Donaldson. She replies yes, confused at why she was being woken up for her daughter who is asleep in her room. They inform her that there had been an accident and her daughter didn't survive. She ran upstairs to prove to them that it's not her daughter, because hers is sound asleep in bed. When she opens the door, she turned blue. You could hear her sobs from 10 neighborhoods away. Her daughter was not in her room, and just like that she would never return to her room either.

The driver was drunk, and in a blink of an eye... he ended the lives of 4 teenagers. Don't be the person that the cops have to tell a mom or dad that their child is dead because you couldn't control yourself. Accidents happen, but someone always pays when it involves drinking and driving, whether it's the drunk one or not.