

## Don't Drive, Call Home

It was just your average Friday night. Me and a bunch of friends were just hanging out. We were all pretty drunk and had no intentions of leaving. Suddenly our phones were blowing up and word had got out to our parents that we were all hanging out. Of course this was at the start of quarantine and we weren't allowed to hangout with anyone. So all our parents were very angry and wanted us home. Luckily, my mom is very understanding when it comes to drinking and she says if I ever get in a situation where I need a ride that I can call her. So I did, but my friends weren't so lucky. They needed to get home and would be in big trouble if they had told their parents that they couldn't drive because they had been drinking. I told them they could come home with me but they said they were fine. So on I went. The next morning I heard from all but one of my friends but I didn't think much of it because his parents are strict so I figured they took his phone away. As the morning arrives, I wake up to a knock on my door. I hear a "hey bud" from my mom. Not unusual. The door slowly opens and I catch a glimpse. Rubbing my eyes and yawning, her eyes are red and irritated. I can tell when my mom has been crying. She sits on my bed. My mind is racing and my body is shivering. I had thought that a family member had passed away, maybe a great aunt or uncle, or a distant family friend, this had happened before. She starts to explain an accident that took place last night. My mind racing, Derek? Is he okay? What happened? I refused to think the obvious. She stated, " your friend Derek never made it home last night". "He was in a terrible accident and didn't make it". I'm traumatized, my heart plummeted to the floor. We were later told that his car was traveling double the speed limit, went off the road, hit a tree, and engulfed in flames. Now I have to live the rest of my life knowing I could've changed the outcome just by making a better decision.

That one text or glimpse at your phone can be catastrophic. Today, drinking and driving is a very prevalent problem amongst teens, and has a great impact on our lives. It is important to understand that while behind the wheel, the life of you, your friends, and family can be ended in a split second due to a stupid mistake. Just staying the night, getting a ride home, or putting your phone down are all ways to help get you and others home safely. Don't make the same mistake I did. Be a good friend and don't let your friends drink and drive.