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“It was an accident!”, that is the only statement that a person will hear from a drunk and distraught teenager after the incident. Apologies do not bring back the dead, they do not allow that weeping mother to watch her daughter or son walk across the stage during graduation. Apologies do not allow that mother or father to watch his or her child walk down the aisle during their wedding, apologies do not bring back a life. There are numerous ways that a person can accidentally die but, drinking and driving is not accidental, it is just a simple form of suicide.

Statistics for underage drinking and driving or just drinking and driving in itself have increased tremendously over the years. These days it is just seen as a bad habit or a normal thing to do at the end of the night. It is sad for parents to think about how they watched their daughter or son leave the house but, not return. As teenagers, we have to be responsible when we go out to events that involve alcohol. Although most teenagers these days do drink, some do not. Those teenagers that are above the influence should try to monitor the drinking levels of others around them. When they see that someone is way beyond their intake level, car keys should be taken away and no more alcohol should be allowed to that person. When someone is under the influence, it is harder to communicate with the person because they have a tendency to get more aggressive and argumentative. Although this occurs, the sober friend should have a solid determination to not allow that friend to drive or risk alcohol poisoning. As a teenager, it is hard to not do what everyone else is doing and it is really hard to stand up to friends. If more teenagers think about the consequences of actions being taken and less about living in the

moment, a lot of teenage “accidents” can be prevented.

A stable community is very important when it comes to positively influencing the community members. Billboards, road signs, posters, and even curfews are all different techniques a community uses to try and keep stability. A person may know that drunk driving is not safe but, when a person reads a sign that states “don’t drink and drive”, or when a person sees a huge billboard with the picture of a drunk driving victim on it, it has a greater impact on his or her perception. Being a member of the James Island community, I have noticed the increase in police patrols and also the changes to the DUI laws. These are just a few changes that our community is using to try and control drunk driving. I believe that the continuation of these actions will have a positive effect and lower the drunk driving statistics on James Island.