Safe Holidays with YOVASO

**Dates to Remember:**
- **Mission: Possible Campaign:**
  - January 27 - February 14
  - Entry forms due by January 17
- **Middle School Campaign:**
  - March 10 - March 21
  - Entry forms due by March 3
- **YOVASO Spring Campaign:**
  - April 7 - May 16
  - Entry forms due by March 31

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**MISSION: POSSIBLE Campaign**

Close to half of all fatal crashes involving teen drivers in Virginia are caused by excessive speed. To help address this important issue, YOVASO will kick off a new statewide campaign in January 2014 called, “MISSION:POSSIBLE. Slow Down. Buckle Up. Zero Tolerance.” The campaign is open to member high schools statewide and will run from **January 27 to February 14.**

The Mission: Possible campaign is a competition between participating Virginia high schools to encourage teens to slow down, buckle up, and obey the state’s Zero Tolerance Law. Pre and post campaign surveys will help determine students’ attitudes about these top driving issues and the effects of the campaign on their driving behaviors.

According to statistics, young males, ages 16-20, are overrepresented in all crashes nationally and statewide, particularly those related to speeding. Member schools are encouraged to use the Mission:Possible campaign as an opportunity to reach out to all students, but with an emphasis on young, male drivers.

Schools competing in the campaign will complete three components based on the campaign’s theme: 1. Develop a fun and impactful creative activity for students. 2. Distribute and collect pre and post student safe driving surveys. 3. Conduct call to action activities on speeding, seat belt use and Zero Tolerance throughout the campaign. In addition, extra points will be given to schools that complete weekly missions and word puzzles. Schools may also participate in the campaign without competing for prizes.

To encourage regional competition and excitement, all participating schools will be divided into regions, with each region competing for prizes. Schools will be assigned to regions once all campaign entries are received.

**Entry forms are due January 17.**

Schools may begin registering online at www.yovaso.org after January 1. Don’t miss out on this great opportunity to help reduce speed-related crashes and fatalities among young drivers at your school.

**Steer into the New Year! Drive Responsibly**

YOVASO has kicked off a holiday campaign asking high school students to “Steer into the New Year” by driving responsibly and encouraging their friends and loved ones to do the same.

Throughout the holidays, students from 51 Virginia schools will “Steer it Forward” by signing a pledge promising to drive safely during the 2013 holiday season. Students then pass the pledge card to friends and loved ones to sign in the spirit of showing someone they care this holiday season. The Campaign focuses on celebrating and driving responsibly and also offers safe winter weather driving tips.

To order remaining campaign materials, call Haley Glynn at 804-548-4117.

Let’s promise to make this a safer holiday season by driving responsibly!
Student Spotlight – Dana Hunter, Middlesex High School

Dana Hunter became involved in YOVASO when she attended a YOVASO Summer Leadership Retreat at Lynchburg College with her school. She is a senior at Middlesex High School and an active member of her school’s YOVASO Executive Board and YOVASO’s Richmond Youth Advisory Council (YAC). In addition to her work with YOVASO, Dana is involved with the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and is the manager of the girls varsity basketball team.

As a YOVASO representative, Dana has been instrumental in the success of her school’s traffic safety efforts. Middlesex High School was named the 2012-2013 YOVASO Club of the Year at the YOVASO Annual Awards Banquet this summer and recently won the 2013 Save Your TAIL-gate, Buckle Up Campaign.

Dana’s close friend Kirsten, a former Middlesex High School student, was severely injured in a car crash this summer and has been in the hospital for four months. Middlesex High School chose to focus their Save Your TAIL-Gate campaign efforts on fund-raising for Kirsten’s hospital stay.

With club sponsor Melvina Robinson at the helm, the school sold t-shirts and pizza, created motivational videos, and organized a pep rally in Kirsten’s honor.

“It was truly inspirational to see the YOVASO club and the Middlesex community come together to support such a worthy cause,” said Haley Glynn, YOVASO Marketing/Project Manager. “Dana has persevered during this personal tragedy to raise awareness about traffic safety in her school and community.”

Dana plans to attend the Arts Institute at Virginia Beach for photography and ultimately go to Virginia Tech for veterinary school.

YOVASO Youth Advisory Council Helps the Community

As the school year continues full-swing, the YOVASO Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is dedicated to making a difference in schools and communities across the state.

On October 20, the Richmond YAC group participated in the Hands On Greater Richmond Event, Arts in the Alley. Arts in the Alley takes rundown city streets and alleys and transforms them into beautiful, bright works of art. In the past 5 years, they have painted more than 60 murals throughout Richmond. By cleaning up and revitalizing this area on Marshall Street in downtown Richmond, the YAC group helped make it safer for residents, schools and businesses. On November 23, the group helped the Henrico Police Athletic League stuff and deliver Thanksgiving Food Baskets to needy families throughout the community. “Giving back to the community has given these student leaders a sense of personal accomplishment and fulfillment,” said Haley Glynn, Richmond YAC Adviser.

If you are interested in volunteering, email haleyglynn@yovaso.net

Bedford Schools Awarded Grants for Traffic Safety Efforts

On October 25, BEDCO Cares– a Bedford County teen safe driving organization, awarded the YOVASO clubs at Jefferson Forest, Staunton River, and Liberty high schools a $1000 grant each to help fund their safe driving initiatives.

BEDCO Cares Chairman, Tim Groover, presented the grants to the schools during a YOVASO 101 Training. Groover’s daughter was tragically killed in a car crash several years ago and he has dedicated much of his time to teen safe driving programs in Bedford County and throughout the state.

The BEDCO Board voted on the grants and believe strongly in the work and impact that the YOVASO clubs have on changing teen driving behaviors and attitudes in their respective schools.

BEDCO Cares is committed to the work of the YOVASO Clubs to help save young lives in Bedford County. Huge Thanks to BEDCO Cares!

Welcome New YOVASO Advisory Committee Board Members

Cpl. Ryan Hilbish, SRO, Jefferson Forest High School, Bedford County Sheriff’s Office

Ken Frederick, Academy of Driving, a commercial driving school in Lynchburg, Va. Ken is also a board member with VADETS (Virginia Association for Driver Education and Traffic Safety) and works with Teen Driving Solutions School.
Danielle Gately is the Security Officer and YOVASO Club Sponsor at Battlefield High School in Prince William County. She has worked at Battlefield since the school opened in 2004 and has been involved with YOVASO since 2011.

In the fall of 2010, Gately was hit by a distracted driver and narrowly escaped severe injury. Since then, she has been advocating for traffic safety in her school and community.

In 2011, Gately and a group of Battlefield High School students were selected to attend the National Organizations for Youth Safety Distracted Driving Summit in Washington D.C. Only 11 teams throughout the United States were selected for this honor. The team learned how to bring awareness to the dangers of distracted driving and received $1000 to host a distracted driving summit in their own community. The team collaborated with another YOVASO group based in Richmond and organized a statewide teen distracted driving summit in the spring of 2012.

In addition, the club has participated in a variety of YOVASO campaigns and events since 2011.

**Prince William Approves YOVASO Clubs**

The superintendent of Prince William County Public Schools recently endorsed YOVASO as an approved club for all county schools. With assistance from Gately and local state troopers, YOVASO plans to implement clubs in all of the Prince William County high schools in the coming months.

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**Winter Driving Tips: Follow these simple tips for safety**

- Slow down for wet, snowy, and icy conditions.
- Avoid quick braking or acceleration.
- Find out about driving conditions before you go.
- Every time you go - buckle up!
- Take time to clear ice and snow from turn signals, brake lights, and windows.
- You should never use cruise control in winter weather conditions.

For more information on Winter Driving or to order the Winter Driving tip cards, visit the YOVASO website at www.yovaso.net.

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**Save Your TAIL-gate Winners**

A record 58 Virginia schools competed to increase seat belt use among students during the 2013 “Save Your TAIL-Gate, Buckle Up” Campaign. Schools organized close to 700 traffic safety educational and awareness activities and successfully increased seat belt use by an average 10.8 percent.

**Campaign Winners**

- **High School**
  1st – Middlesex High School
  2nd – Turner Ashby High School
  3rd – Mountain View High School

- **Middle School**
  1st – Forest Middle School
  2nd – Tazewell Middle School
  3rd – Hidden Valley Middle School

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**Welcome New Member Schools**

The following new schools have joined YOVASO this fall:

- A.G. Wright Middle School, Stafford Co.
- Galileo High School, Danville City
- Page County High School, Page Co.

YOVASO now has 121 member schools! To register your school, go to http://www.yovaso.org/member-schools
Please remember to complete and submit your 2013/2014 YOVASO School Membership Form to ensure we have the correct contact information for your school. The forms also enable us to better estimate materials and supplies for YOVASO Campaigns, School Trainings, YOVASO Retreats, and other activities.

Complete the School Membership Form on the YOVASO website [http://www.yovaso.org/member-schools/register-your-club](http://www.yovaso.org/member-schools/register-your-club) or email Brian Kitts at briankitts@yovaso.net for a printable form.

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**Staff News**

Sarah Watson (now Sarah Obenauer), YOVASO’s Program Development Coordinator, married on October 26, 2013, in Blacksburg, Virginia. Her new email address is sarahobenauer@yovaso.net

Congratulations, Sarah Obenauer!