



joshua  
brown  
FOUNDATION

**CDC**

**State and Territorial Injury  
Prevention Directors Association Meeting  
June, 2006**

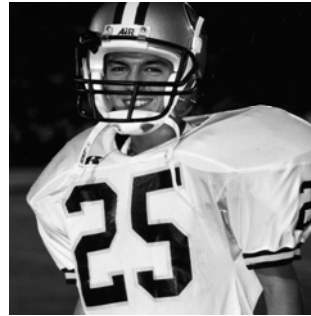
## Speaker Introduction

- Alan Brown is the Chairman of the Joshua Brown Foundation, a 2-year old non-profit organization designed to provide technologically advanced driver education for every public and private school. He and his wife, LuGina, are the parents of Joshua, who lost his life in a single-car crash. As the author of Joshua's Law, he returned the opportunity for funded driver education to every Georgia teen.
- Among all of his business and personal success, he considers being Joshua's father as his most important distinction.

## Joshua

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- ❑ Accomplished and spiritually attuned young man
- ❑ Lost control when his vehicle hydro planed and went out of control
- ❑ Inadequate and unavailable driver education in a rural Georgia town
- ❑ As a parent, would not know how to train in this situation
- ❑ Parents stood at his bedside for 9 days as his life slipped away



## Joshua's Law

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- ❑ Developed legislation after much research and divine intervention
- ❑ Contacted my local State Senator, Preston Smith
- ❑ Drafted the final version of the bill
- ❑ Driver education required for license before age 17
- ❑ 5 % fee on all traffic violations creating approx. \$12 million annually
- ❑ Appointed commission to oversee appropriate allocation of funds
- ❑ Fought to successfully get it out of the Georgia General Assembly Senate and House in the first year (after 8 years of killing every teen driving bill in Committee)

## 21st Century Driver Education

- Research led to implementation of interactive curriculum that includes tactical (traditional) training, crash reduction, simulation, and behind-the-wheel driving experience
- Created a prototype classroom at Cartersville High School
  - Raised \$250,000 from the local community
  - Contacted local School Board for permission to integrate driver education in classroom
- Developed the Teen Safety Research Center at the A.L. Burruss Institute of Public Service at Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, GA
- Brought together the most recognized experts in driver education and adolescent behavior as a research resource—International Workshop
- Creating an on-going research project in classrooms throughout America



## Key Factors in the Success of the Joshua Brown Foundation

- Too many teen deaths on the front page of newspapers across the nation
- Compelling need and personal tragedy
- Divine intervention
- Ability to attract an effective group of employees and researchers
- Structural organization that includes research, advocacy, and training
- Network of people who care and are affected directly or indirectly by teen injury and death
- Political opportunity
- Hard work
- A father that understands what went wrong and why



## **Goals of the Joshua Brown Foundation**

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- Develop affordable, accessible, and evaluative driver education
- Create interactive 21st Century Driver Education (tactical, simulation, crash reduction, behind-the-wheel)
- Develop meaningful parent training and involvement
- Redefine “accredited” driver education through analysis of traditional 30/6 education curriculums
- Provide model legislation that provides funding for comprehensive driver education
- Create partnerships with all professionals and community leaders dealing with driver education issues (i.e., educators, simulator technicians, researchers, lawmakers, etc.)



## **Lessons Learned and Key Factors for Successful Policy Change**

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- Create networks beyond government agencies
  - a. Parent school organizations
  - b. Private sector interests—especially the insurance industry
  - c. Other safety organizations
  - d. Law enforcement
  - e. Community leaders

## Lessons Learned and Key Factors for Successful Policy Change

- ❑ Cooperate with other efforts and organizational programs that are working
- ❑ Develop and maintain Legislator relationships—especially transportation safety committee leaders
- ❑ Adopt a practical, yet comprehensive, Legislative agenda
- ❑ Create practical funding mechanisms (Joshua's Law)
- ❑ Redefine "Accredited Driver Education"—think outside traditional 30/6 curriculums with measurements and 21st century technology
- ❑ Graduated Driver Education
- ❑ Parent training/supervision elements



*Alan Brown presenting Sen. Preston Smith with the Legislator of the Year Award during Joshua's Day at the General Assembly*

## Lessons Learned and Key Factors for Successful Policy Change

- ❑ Develop a working relationship with print and broadcast media
- ❑ Create a state-wide campaign—perception is an important element of success
- ❑ Understand and work with current providers of driver education
- ❑ Study what has worked in other states and countries
- ❑ Consider needs of urban and rural geographical communities
- ❑ Work with local School Districts to enforce driving as a life skill

## How States Work with Parent Groups to Reduce Teen Injury and Death

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- Meet and establish working relationships to minimize duplication of effort
- Victim organizations (MADD, SADD, TeensRemembered)
- PTA or school parent organizations--statewide and local groups
- Safety organizations (National Safety Council, AAA Foundation, etc.)
- Other safety organizations
- Law enforcement
- Attend parent organization meetings to strengthen understanding

## How States Work with Parent Groups (con't)

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- Find opportunities to participate in teen safety research addressing leading causes of novice driving deaths
- Support existing projects or safety campaigns that work
- Understand the problem
- How many teens died in your state last year?
- Why and how did they die (the leading cause of death)?
  - During the first year of licensed driving, 1-in-5 male and about 1-in-10 female 16-year old drivers will have a crash. (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)
  - Teens are involved in three times as many fatal crashes as other drivers. (NHTSA)
  - Teens have the lowest seat belt use rate of all drivers. This rate becomes worse when there are other teens in the car. (AAA Foundation)

## TeensRemembered.org

- Honors the lives of teens who have lost their lives in car crashes
- Provides parents an opportunity to move from grief to solving a problem
- Organizes parent and teen advisory boards to facilitate research and teen driving safety advocacy
- Funds teen safety research for improved driver education opportunities
- Links to other parent safety efforts



## What States Can Learn From the Georgia Experience

- Research and technology has proven we can do a better job protecting our teens through 21st Century Driver Education
- Public policy leaders need to be better informed about teen driving safety in their communities
- School Boards are an important, and often less informed, part of local solutions
- It takes a team of parents, novice driving experts, law enforcement, business, lawmakers, and caring communities to improve existing resources
- Novice driving safety is a continuing program of research and training—it will always be with us as long as we have teens who drive



## Conclusion

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- 21st Century Driver Education must be a national priority
- A driving safety culture must be developed and promoted through statewide campaigns
- Parents can be a solution rather than part of the problem
- All the research and development in the world cannot decrease the number of injuries and death among teens without a commitment from parents and lawmakers