

## **“Are There Consequences for Riding with Someone Pulled Over for a DUI?”**

By Alicia Williamson on 1/28/2008

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It has been found that a surprising number of parents with children in the car, get behind the wheel of the car while intoxicated. In fact, out of 2,000 children that died in car crashes involving drinking drivers, approximately 68 percent were riding in cars with a drinking driver and that person is often their mother or father. Children of course are vulnerable and don't have any say about whether their mom or dad drinks and drives. A report outlining weaknesses in state laws against child endangerment found that drivers who are caught drinking and driving with a child in the car are often not charged with child endangerment and many times when these charges are brought up, they are often reduced or dismissed. But what about when adolescents or adults ride with drunk drivers?

### **The Consequence for Passengers in Other Countries**

In other countries, such as Japan, if there is a drunken driving incident, all passengers in the car are liable. Why? Because in Japan the law states that each person in the car should be sharing in the responsibility of a sober driver. If someone is caught driving with a drunk driver, the penalties are \$5,000 for the first fine, three years in jail and demerit points on one's driver's license. As a result of this law, the arrest rate is now down 43 percent.

### **What Consequences Do Passengers Face in the U.S?**

We all know the potential consequences a person faces when pulled over for a DUI, but what happens to the passengers who foolishly choose to ride in the car with a person who is drinking and driving? Does that person who rides with a drunk driver face any consequences in the U.S.? In the United States law enforcement officers are stepping up their actions against the deaths and injuries caused by drunk drivers, but there are no penalties against the passengers. The truth is, for a passenger to be fined, they must have broken the law and because here in the United States, you can't put blame on someone for another's actions or crime, since a passenger hasn't committed a crime, they would not face any penalties. The only time a passenger could potentially be charged with a DUI would be if the police were unsure about who was driving at the time of the stop. Sometimes driver's and passengers switch seats and so law enforcement may have doubts about who was driving. At other times, when the police stop the car they may find out that the passenger has an outstanding warrant or the passenger might be found to be in possession of illegal weapons or some form of illegal substance. Those are usually the only times a passenger faces a fine.

### **Riding with Drinkers**

Newer findings indicate that riding with drinking drivers has become a significant health problem among adolescents. In fact, it has been found that the percentage of adolescents riding with drinking drivers is very high and shows that a large proportion of adolescents are at great risk for injury or death. Many states are calling for increased penalties and greater awareness training regarding these issues.

Yes it would seem that laws regarding passengers who choose to drive with drunk drivers should change. Perhaps we should pay a little more attention to the laws in Japan, since apparently, their laws are demonstrating far less arrests when it comes to passengers driving with anyone who has been drinking.

### **About the DUI Attorneys at Straight DUI**

We at Straight DUI do everything we can to get you off, keep your record clean and prevent you from losing your license to drive. We start by believing that you shouldn't have been arrested, so with that uppermost in our minds, we fight for you. When you place yourself in the hands of the knowledgeable [DUI attorneys](#) at [www.straightdui.com](http://www.straightdui.com), you know you will be treated fairly and will receive the best defense possible. We understand how important a good defense is to your case and so we do everything to protect your rights. Call us today at (800-353-6348) and let us help.