



**BRUCE M. BRYANT**  
*Sheriff*

**OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF**  
*Moss Justice Center*  
*1675-2A York Highway*  
*York, South Carolina 29745-7430*  
*Tel: (803) 628-3059 Fax: (803) 628-3075*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Press Release: Sheriff Bryant announces his participation in the Alive at 25 program**

**Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2008**

**Contact(s): Sheriff Bryant, Major Hudgins, or Lori Stoneburner: 803-628-3057**

**York County, SC:** The York County Sheriff's Office has joined forces with the National Safety Council to promote and support Alive at 25, a national program that provides a driving safety course for drivers between the ages 15 and 24, as this age group is the one most likely to be involved in fatal collisions.

This course is not designed to teach driving skills or techniques, but will instead emphasize the necessity for drivers and passengers to make correct choices while in an automobile. Statistics tell us that some course of action in this area is a vital need. The course can only be taught by certified police officers who have completed specialized training in a vigorous and demanding course provided by the National Safety Council. This training is a 30 hour course taught over a period of three and a half days that results in a pass/fail grade. Once this course is passed, the officer is eligible to teach Alive at 25 classes during off duty time (evenings and weekends).

Sheriff Bryant worked with the National Safety Council and arranged to have local officers apply for acceptance into the training class. Sheriff Bryant provided the facility for the class. He, along with Solicitor Kevin Brackett, and Sabrina Gast, who at the time was serving as the York County Coroner, covered the cost of the tuition for those accepted into the program through money allotted for that purpose in their budgets. Sheriff Bryant has been in communication with the school districts in York County and they have all pledged support for this endeavor.

Sheriff Bryant states, "Today's new drivers have to contend with dangerous issues while driving, such as cell phone calls and text messaging, whereas in earlier years these were not the prevalent problems they are now. We have to make a commitment to take training for young drivers a step farther than 'red means stop.' The techniques of driving are not enough. I am committed to giving young people the education they need to keep themselves and others safe on the roads of York County."

"I feel this is a worthwhile program simply because it can impact the decision making process of young drivers. Driving is the first real sense of freedom that young people experience, but unfortunately, they do not always comprehend the responsibility that comes with that freedom. If my officers can prevent one death because they make young drivers aware of what a bad decision behind the wheel can cause, I will commit to keeping this program in York County."

The Alive at 25 course is hands-on and taught in a classroom setting. The material takes just over four hours to cover and tries to impress upon young drivers these truths:

- People in their age group are more likely to be hurt or killed in a vehicle crash.
- Inexperience, distractions, and peer pressure cause unique driving hazards.
- Speeding, alcohol, and “party drugs” greatly increase their risk of injury or death.
- As a driver or passenger, they can greatly reduce their risk by taking control.
- Committing to changing their driving behavior makes personal, legal and financial sense.