



## A MOTHER'S MESSAGE

### Why I Started Student Safety Month

by  
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The tragic accidental death of my son, **Mickarl D. Thomas, Jr.**, (affectionately known as Mikey) was a devastating experience for me and my entire family. To lose a child who you have loved, nurtured, guided, and disciplined for so many years seems unimaginable; yet my loss happens to thousands of families every year. Before I could crawl into a corner of my home and dissolve into a ball of tears, tragedy struck three other mothers who I know. Three days following my son's funeral one mother's son drowned trying to save another teen who also drowned. The sons of the two other mothers (Harvard University sophomores living and working on the West Coast during a summer internship) died in a car accident while traveling from San Francisco to Los Angeles. It struck me then, that I was not alone in my grief!

My own misfortune, and the misfortune of many others have formed the impetus of Student Safety Month. It has been especially created to assist young people in making the right choices when driving automobiles, attending graduation parties, proms, and socializing with others where alcohol, other drugs or the possibility of violent behavior may be present.

I did not know that my son drank and smoked marijuana with his classmates. As the only person in the car at the time of his death, his blood alcohol level was twice the legal limit here in Massachusetts. He was a great kid, always wanted to become a lawyer, and yet like so many young people, was susceptible to the vices of society. A high achiever who took honor classes at Milton High School and the co-captain of the football team, all of Mikey's dreams and aspirations of attending Morehouse College on a full academic scholarship blazed away as his life shot into eternity.

It is with that background that I am reaching out to you, in order to help young people find more effective ways to live, play and develop in safety. As a parent, educator, community leader, or student, safety issues affect all of us. From the various school shootings that have ripped across the country (and Canada), to the myriad of socio-economic factors that influence our youngsters, this special observance is designed to save lives.

We welcome your comments, suggestions, resources, websites and materials as our project goes forward. Maybe you have a story

to share or wisdom to pass on...we want to hear from you. Write, call, or email us, and help in this nationwide campaign to save our young people. Our children are our future, and keeping them safe will guarantee the progress that we must make throughout the coming years.

Enjoy Student Safety Month.

Warmly,  
**Carole Copeland Thomas**  
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Founder



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