



Barney Bear Travels the Province to Raise Awareness on Driving Safe and Sober

Insurance Brokers and OSAID Partner Together with Barney Bear to Put an End to Drinking and Driving

TORONTO, October 18th, 2009. Today, the Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving (OSAID) and the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario (IBAO) announced the official launch of *Barney Bear* to promote the OSAID Ambassador Program.

Barney Bear, a rare breed of Long-Eared Listening Bear, is commencing a province wide tour today following the OSAID Region Representative and Board of Directors work weekend. Each OSAID region will pack an item with an impaired driving message into Barney's backpack to prepare him for his voyage. Barney will also be carrying a diary, where his 'owner' will be invited to record his adventures. The photos and diary entries will be available on OSAID's new interactive website www.OSAID.org.

Regional representatives are encouraged to bring *Barney Bear* to exciting events, such as school assemblies, regional workshops and holiday celebrations. The final owner will be asked to bring *Barney Bear* to the May 2010 OSAID Provincial Leadership Conference, where a welcome back ceremony will occur.

Partners for more than a decade, IBAO and OSAID are committed to teaching Ontario students about the dangers of driving while under the influence. The goal of the *Barney Bear* initiative is to inform students around the province about the Drive Safe message.

"OSAID is always looking for creative ways to spread the Drive Safe message," stated Randy Carroll, IBAO CEO. "We are proud to be a part of the *Barney Bear* initiative, and continue to partner with OSAID in educating Ontario students about the dangers of driving while impaired."

The OSAID program is produced and executed by secondary students across the province. It is a program designed to educate students on the dangers of driving while impaired and reminds students that impaired driving is the leading cause of death for teenagers. Young individuals are encouraged to change their future and the future of their fellow students to shape a more responsible and safe environment.

"If a student hears about the Drive Safe message from a respected peer, he or she is more likely to make the responsible choice." added Carroll.



For more information on becoming an OSAID Ambassador or starting an OSAID chapter, students are encouraged to visit www.OSAID.org.

Encouraging safe driving has been and continues to be a central focus for IBAO and its members. Central to IBAO's safe driving initiatives has been their long-standing commitment to OSAID.

"IBAO is very proud of our work with OSAID," concluded Carroll. "Our brokers are committed to keeping students safe."

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The Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario (IBAO) is a 'not for profit' association that represents and serves the interests of over 10,000 independent Property & Casualty Insurance Brokers in the Province of Ontario.

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