DROWSY DRIVING

Many people have experienced a brief state of drowsy unconsciousness even when one’s eyes are open. This is called “microsleep.” Millions of Americans experience microsleep while driving every day. People who are sleep-deprived behind the wheel have been compared to those driving drunk. DROWSY DRIVING is one of the main causes of motor vehicle accidents, including fatal accidents.

Common signs of driver fatigue are:
- burning sensation in the eyes
- eyelids feeling heavy
- frequent yawning
- twitching or muscle tension
- reduction of reaction time
- periods of time and distances that cannot be remembered
- wandering or disconnected thoughts
- staring but unfocused for periods of time

Many Scouting and Exploring activities involve long periods of driving. During the planning process for these activities, preventing adult leaders from DROWSY DRIVING should be a main part of the planning. In the planning process, consider the following to greatly reduce the possibility of drowsy driving:
- Prior to these activities, prepare by getting plenty of rest and developing healthy sleeping habits.
- Maintain healthy eating habits, and eat well-balanced meals.
- Maintain and manage proper medications and amounts.
- Allow for relaxation and avoid stressful situations before getting behind the wheel.
- Limit caffeine because it could overstimulate the mind and body.
- Maintain a flexible and regular schedule before driving.
- Plan and allow for all drivers to sleep and get adequate rest.

BE PREPARED. Driving is a large part of any trip or activity, so it should be included in the planning. Reducing and eliminating drowsy driving is one of the most important parts of any activity.