Young girl paralysed at 15 says 'you are not invincible'

Friday 8 March, 2013

At 15-years-old Jordan Bone's life changed forever when she made the decision to get into a car with a newly qualified driver.

The car crashed, breaking Jordan's neck and leaving her paralysed from the chest down.

Jordan and her friend accepted a lift from their 17-year-old friend on a wet day in May 2005. "I was hesitating because I wouldn't normally get in a car with someone who had just passed their test. I don't think I really thought of the consequences," said Jordan, who is from Kings Lynn.

"The music was really loud and I remember thinking to myself that it didn't feel very safe. Before the impact I grabbed my friends hand and thought I'm dead.

"When I became conscious, everyone else was out of the car. I knew something was really wrong because I was stuck. The longer I was stuck there, the more I thought I was paralysed. The seat belt was wrapped around my neck. I couldn't breathe at all. My body seemed to give way."

Jordan was rushed to hospital, where she spent five days in the Intensive Care Unit before being airlifted to Sheffield's spinal unit, where she stayed for the next six months. The driver of the car and the two other passengers walked away with minor injuries

Now 23 and working with Fixers, the national movement of young people 'fixing' the future, Jordan wants to make young drivers realise that they are not invincible and that they shouldn't take unnecessary risks on the road.

A report about her campaign will feature on ITV News Anglia on Tuesday 12 March, from 6pm.

Jordan, who is confined to a wheelchair, has managed to regain some of the use of her arms. But she still needs help with everyday things, such as getting dressed.

"Luckily I taught myself to do my make-up again," she says. "I sat at a nurse's station and practiced, practiced, practiced. My life has changed so much. Now I have to think about things such as if somewhere is accessible, or can I fit under a table.

"My Fixers project is to make young drivers think about the choices they make on the roads. I want them to realise they are in control of a vehicle and that they need to think about the passengers, pedestrians, themselves and other drivers.

"I also want to inspire young people; I want them to realise how important they are and not make one bad decision that can change your life."

"The project is important to me because I want a positive to come out of a negative situation. I want young people to realise how important their lives are and think about risks they take. You only have one life and you should make the most of it.

"I really hope my project will make people think about the actions they take when they get into a car. If I could save one life then I will know I have done my job. It will make me feel amazing."

Since her accident, Jordan has worked hard to make a future for herself and now runs an online vintage shop.

"I feel quite proud of myself that I've gone out there and pursued something that I wouldn't have done before the accident. I feel you should always follow your dreams no matter what," she said.

Sandy Reid, Road Safety Officer at Norfolk County Council, said: "About a third of crashes involve young people under the age of 25 in Norfolk, which makes them quite a risky age group. Some of it's to do with peer pressure, the fact they haven't had experience of life and take risks.

"When we talk to young drivers, one of the stats we give is that one in five of them will have a crash in their first year of driving. I think Jordan is doing a wonderful job here because anything we can do to raise awareness in making young people think while driving a car is well worthwhile."

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Fixers is a movement of thousands of 16 to 25-year-olds across the UK who are supported to take action and change things for the better, addressing any issue they feel strongly about.

How each Fixer tackles an issue is up to them – as long as they benefit someone else.

The award-winning Fixers project has already supported almost 7,000 young people aged 16 to 25 across the UK to have an authentic voice in their community.

Now, thanks to a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers aims to work with a further 20,000 young people over the next three years.

Each Fixer is supported to create the resources they need to make their chosen project a success, with creative help from media professionals to make their own promotional material, such as films, websites or print work.

Fixers is a trademark of the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT), a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.

“Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea… an idea given a voice by some 7,000 young people over the past five years,” says Margo Horsley, Chief Executive of PSBT.

“They have reached thousands of people with their work, on a national stage as well as in and around where they live. They choose the full array of social and health issues facing society today and set about making their mark. Fixers are always courageous and their ideas can be challenging and life-changing, not just for themselves.”

Peter Ainsworth, Big Lottery Fund UK Chair, said: “The Big Lottery Fund is extremely happy to be supporting Fixers to engage with more young people to change things for the better. Thousands of public-spirited young people across the UK are campaigning to make improvements in their own communities. By providing a platform to highlight their voluntary work and many achievements, Fixers demonstrates the positive contribution thousands of committed young people are making at a local level and challenges negative stereotypes.”

For images, interviews or more information, please contact Sue Meaden in the Fixers Communications Team by email sue@fixers.org.uk or phone 01962 810970.

There are lots more stories about young people doing great things on the Fixers website, Twitter and Facebook pages:

http://www.fixers.org.uk
http://www.twitter.com/FixersUK
http://www.facebook.com/FixersUK

Notes to editors:

• Since 2008 some 7,000 young people in England have become Fixers and created 800 projects. Now with a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers is extending into Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.
• The Public Service Broadcasting Trust is a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.
• The Big Lottery Fund (BIG), the largest distributor of National Lottery good cause funding, is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised for good causes by the National Lottery.
• BIG is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need and has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since June 2004. The Fund was formally established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.
• Since the National Lottery began in 1994, 28p from every pound spent by the public has gone to good causes. As a result, over £29 billion has now been raised and more than 383,000 grants awarded across arts, sport, heritage, charities, health, education and the environment.

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