



Teen Driver Safety

How to Safely Hand Over the Keys to Teen Drivers

What is the Problem?

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teens.¹ In 2009, about 3,000 teens in the United States ages 15 to 19 were killed, and in 2008 more than 350,000 were treated in emergency departments for injuries suffered in motor vehicle crashes.² In one year alone, crash-related injuries and deaths among teens ages 15 to 19 cost \$14 billion in medical care and productivity losses.³



Who is at Risk?

Among all age groups, the risk of motor vehicle crashes is highest among 16- to 19-year-olds.⁴ Teenage males, teenagers who drive with their peers in the vehicle and novice drivers in their first few months of licensure are at highest risk.⁵ Per mile driven, teen drivers are four times more likely than adult drivers to crash.⁶

Prevention Tips

Teen motor vehicle crashes are preventable.⁷ There are proven policies to improve the safety of young drivers on the road.⁸ Review these safety tips for more information:

- Enroll in a Graduated Driver's Licensing (GDL) program. These programs are associated with 38%-40% reduction of fatal/injury-related crashes among 16-year-old drivers.⁹
- Prohibit all cell phone use (talking and texting) for teens while driving.¹⁰
- Allow teenage drivers to be stopped and ticketed if their passengers are not wearing seat belts.¹¹
- Enforce ZERO tolerance policies for drinking and driving, especially drinking while underage.¹²



Plan of the Week (POW):

Parents are the primary component in keeping their teen drivers safe, and knowing their state's GDJ laws will help them enforce the safety precautions.¹³ Parents should **ALWAYS** enforce no technology use (texting/cell phone) while driving.¹⁴ Parents should also advocate for a learner's permit before driving.¹⁵

References

1-3, 6-15 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Policy Impact: Teen Driver Safety. <http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/teenbrief/>. Updated 27 June 2011. Accessed 26 September 2013.

4, 5 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Teen Drivers: Fact Sheet. http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/teen_drivers/teendrivers_factsheet.html Updated 2 October 2012. Accessed 26 September 2013.

Photo: PHIL Library, CDC.

NMCPHC Injury Prevention and Violence Free Living Webpage

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/injury-violence-free-living/Pages/injury-violence-free-living.aspx>

Add Local Information/Logos Here