



Fact Sheet/Talking Points

Talk to Your Teen About the “5 to Drive”

National Teen Driver Safety Week Is October 16-22, 2016

The “5 to Drive” campaign highlights five necessary rules that teen drivers need to follow to stay safe behind the wheel in a car, truck, or SUV. These rules address the greatest dangers for teen drivers: alcohol, lack of seat belt use, distracted driving, speeding, and extra passengers.

THE PROBLEM — TOO MANY TEENS ARE DYING ON OUR ROADS

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15- to 19-year-olds in the United States, ahead of all other types of injury, disease, or violence.
- In 2014, there were 2,679 teen (15-19 years old) drivers* involved in fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes. An estimated 123,000 teen passenger vehicle drivers were injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes.
- Parents can be the biggest influencers on teens’ choices behind the wheel – *if* they take the time to talk with their teens about some of the biggest driving risks:
 - **Alcohol:** All teens are too young to legally buy, possess, or consume alcohol, however nationally in 2014, one out of five teen drivers (15 to 19 years old) involved in a fatal crash had been drinking. Remind your teen that driving under the influence of any impairing substance, including illicit or prescription drugs, could have deadly consequences.
 - **Seat Belts:** Wearing a seat belt is one of the simplest ways for teens to stay safe in a vehicle. Yet too many teens aren’t buckling up, and neither are their passengers. In 2014, a total of 763 passengers died in passenger vehicles driven by teen (15-19 years old) drivers. And 59 percent of those passengers were NOT wearing their seat belts at the time of the fatal crash. When the teen driver was also unrestrained, the percentage of those passengers unrestrained increased to almost 86 percent.
 - **Distracted Driving:** Distractions while driving are more than just risky—they can be deadly. In 2014, among teen drivers (15 to 19 years old) involved in fatal crashes, 10 percent were reported as distracted at the time of the crash.
 - **Speeding:** In 2014, almost one-third (30%) of all teen drivers involved in fatal crashes were speeding at the time of the crash.
 - **Extra Passengers:** Extra passengers for a teen driver can lead to disastrous results. Research shows that the risk of a fatal crash goes up in direct relation to the number of passengers in a car. The likelihood of teen drivers engaging in risky behavior triples when traveling with multiple passengers.

THE SOLUTION — TALK REGULARLY TO YOUR TEEN ABOUT THE DANGERS OF DRIVING

Parents – you’ve guided your teen this far. Driving is a new chapter, a step toward independence for many teens. But your job is not done. Surveys show that teens with parents who set firm rules for

driving, typically engage in less risky driving behaviors and are involved in fewer crashes. But your kids can't listen if you don't talk.

- From October 16-22, join parents across the country in the "5 to Drive" campaign.
- Get the facts about teen driving and share these serious statistics with your teen.
- Know your State's graduated driver licensing (GDL) restrictions, and help enforce them.
- Be a good role model for your teen driver with your own safe driving habits.
- Remind your teen that driving is a privilege, not a right, and should always be taken seriously.
- Set the rules before they hit the road.

REMEMBER THE "5 to Drive":

1. No Drinking and Driving.

Set a good example by not driving after drinking. Remind your teen that drinking before the age of 21 is illegal, and alcohol and driving should never mix, no matter your age.

2. Buckle Up. Every Trip. Every Time. Everyone—Front Seat and Back.

Lead by example. If you wear your seat belt every time you're in the car, your teen is more likely to follow suit. Remind your teen that it's important to buckle up on every trip, every time, no matter what (both in the front and back seats).

3. Eyes on the Road, Hands on the Wheel. All the Time.

Remind your teen about the dangers of texting, dialing, or using mobile apps while driving. Have them make their phone off-limits when they are on the road. But distracted driving isn't limited to phone use. Other passengers, audio and climate controls in the vehicle, and eating or drinking while driving, are all examples of dangerous distractions for teen drivers.

4. Stop Speeding Before It Stops You.

Speeding is a critical issue for all drivers, especially teens. Do not exceed the speed limit and require your teen to do the same. Explain that every time your speed doubles, your stopping distance quadruples.

5. No More Than One Passenger at Any Time.

With each passenger in the vehicle, your teen's risk of a fatal crash goes up. Check your State's GDL law before your teen takes to the road; it may prohibit any passengers in vehicles with teen drivers.

PARENTS — KEEP TALKING YEAR-ROUND

- Start the conversation with your teen during Teen Driver Safety Week, but continue the conversation every day throughout the year.
- Even if it seems like they're tuning you out, keep reinforcing the "5 to Drive". They're listening, and your constant reminders about these powerful messages will get through.
- Get creative! Talking is just one way to discuss safe driving. You can also write your teen a letter, leave sticky note reminders in the car, or use social media to get your message across.

- Get it in writing. Create a parent-teen driving contract that outlines the rules and consequences for your teen driver. Hang the signed contract in a visible place as a constant reminder about the rules of the road.

For more information about National Teen Driver Safety Week and the “5 to Drive” campaign, please visit www.safercar.gov/parents.

*Passenger vehicles only