

# Prevention<sup>IN</sup>Action

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## Summer Season – Parents' Scariest Months of the Year

As reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2014, 2,270 U.S. teens (ages 16–19) were killed and 221,313 were treated in emergency departments for injuries suffered in motor vehicle crashes.<sup>1</sup> That means six teens died every day from motor vehicle injuries. At the time of the study, young people (ages 15–19) represented only 7% of the U.S. population, however, they accounted for 11% (or \$10 billion) of the total costs of motor vehicle injuries.<sup>1</sup>

Since statistics consistently show that June and July have the highest numbers of teenage crash deaths of any calendar months, let's look at ways to help ensure our teens don't become another statistic.

### **Provide Parameters**

Since more than half of motor vehicle deaths among teenagers occurred on Friday, Saturday or Sunday, and most frequently between 9:00pm–12:00am, we need to continue to provide restrictions and guidelines for our young drivers.

### **Consider High Risk**

Males ages 16 to 19 are more than two times at high risk for motor vehicle crashes compared to their female counterparts.<sup>1</sup> Teens driving with teen passengers increase the risk as well as newly licensed drivers. The crash rate per mile driven is 3 times higher for 16–17 year olds, as compared to 18–19 year olds.<sup>2</sup> We should use these telling statistics for decisions on teen driving.



### **Institute Proven Strategies**

The CDC created this [factsheet](#) that provides guidelines for teen driver safety.

### **Use Seat Belts**

Of the teens who died in passenger vehicle crashes, approximately 53% were not wearing a seat belt.<sup>2</sup> Research shows seat belts reduce serious crash-related injuries and deaths by about half.<sup>3</sup>

### **Not Drinking & Driving**

Enforce minimum legal drinking age and zero blood-alcohol tolerance laws for drivers under age 21.

### **Graduated Driver Licensing Programs (GDL)**

GDL provides longer practice periods, limits driving under high risk conditions for new drivers and requires greater parent participation.

### **Eight Danger Zones**

Ensure awareness of the leading causes of teen crashes for better decision making: driver inexperience, driving with teen

passengers, nighttime driving, not using seat belts, distracted driving, drowsy driving, reckless driving and impaired driving.

It will always take time for inexperienced drivers to build their skills, but with guidelines and support we can help protect our young drivers while reducing the devastating impact of teen-related crashes.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [Online]. (2014). National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (producer). [Cited 2016 Sept 20].

2. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). Fatality facts: teenagers 2014. Arlington (VA): The Institute; 2014 [cited 2016 Sept 20]. [www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/t/teenagers/fatalityfacts/teenagers](http://www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/t/teenagers/fatalityfacts/teenagers)

3. Kahane CJ. Injury vulnerability and effectiveness of occupant protection technologies for older occupants and women. p. 216. 2013. [cited 2015 Oct 9]. [www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811766.pdf](http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811766.pdf)



Next Issue: Keeping Youth Engaged & Substance-Free

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