



Share *the* KEYS

Resource Guide

Dear Parent:

This guide contains research based tools and resources you can use to cultivate safe driving attitudes and behaviors in your teen. By supporting and monitoring your young driver, you can substantially lower their risk of being involved in a motor vehicle crash. In fact, research conducted by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) points to specific actions you can take to lower your teen's crash risk by as much as **50 percent**;

Understand the Graduated Driver License (GDL)

While the NYS GDL law is effective at lowering teen crash risk, it is a complicated system with differing rules depending on the driver's geographic region, stage of licensure, and time of day. In order for parents to effectively enforce the law, they need to understand its components. NYSDOH staff, with the aid of the Young Driver Team (comprised of representatives from the NYS Department of Health, the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles, the NYS Police, and the NYS Association of Chiefs of Police) developed a "Brief Overview to the NYS Graduated Driver Licensing Law: A Parent's Guide. Please refer to this guide for a summary of the GDL law, information by licensing stage and region, in addition to driving restrictions and requirements (i.e. nighttime and passenger restrictions, required hours of practice, etc.).

Be a Good Role Model

Research by CHOP, Travelers Insurance and other institutions found that teens mimic their parent's driving behaviors. You'll find that the resources enclosed in this guide will help you set strong examples of safe driving behaviors. "Children are great imitators. So give them something great to imitate." - Anonymous

Effectively Enforce the GDL at Home

Although each part of the GDL was designed to create better, safer drivers, the two restrictions of the GDL that have the most lifesaving potential are the curfew and passenger restrictions. Forty percent of all teen fatal crashes occur after 9pm and teens with just one passenger have nearly twice the risk of being involved in a fatal crash as teens driving alone. The driving contracts enclosed will support you in effectively enforcing the GDL at home.

Increase Practice Driving Hours

During the first 12-24 months of driving, teens are at the greatest risk for being involved in a crash. That risk decreases with driving experience. In addition to the resources presented in this guide, the Motor Vehicle Commission's *Parent Guide* will assist you in your instruction and practice driving with detailed lessons and progress checklists.

Control the Keys

Research conducted by CHOP revealed that teens who requested permission to use the car were 50% less likely to be involved in crashes when compared to teens that had primary access. Drivers whose parents controlled the keys were also less likely to violate the provisions of the GDL. By using the techniques presented in the orientation and the contracts within this guide, you can help your teen successfully build safe driving behaviors.

Use the tools and resources presented in this guide to develop safe driving attitudes and behaviors that will ensure your child's safety and help keep New York's roadways safe for everyone.

Pre-Survey for Parents

Please take a few minutes to complete this anonymous survey before the program begins and return it before you leave.

- Program Information:

Date Location

- Does your teen currently have:

Permit Junior License Unrestricted License

- Check one statement that best describes your attitude about your teen's driving.

- I trust my teen will drive safely.
- My teen will have to learn from his/her mistakes.
- I support my teen's safety by ensuring he/she earns all driving privileges.
- When it comes to driving, my teen will do as I say.

- On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your understanding of the Graduated Drivers License (GDL) requirements?

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't Understand Somewhat Understand Fully Understand				

- How would your teen describe your driving? (Check)

Excellent Good Fair Poor

- How many hours per month do or did you dedicate to practice driving with your teen?

0-3 hours 3-5 hours 5-7 hours 7 or more hours

- I am confident that when my teen is behind-the-wheel, s/he: (Check all that apply)

- Follows the nighttime driving curfew
- Only drives with one passenger
- Requires everyone wear a seatbelt
- Has asked for permission to use the car
- Does not text or use a cell phone while driving
- Does not drive under the influence of alcohol/drugs



- List one of your driving behaviors that you would not want your teen to imitate?

Thank you! Please complete the Post Survey on the reverse side after the program concludes.

Post-Survey for Parents

Please take a few minutes to complete this anonymous survey after the program concludes and return it before you leave.

- On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you now rate your understanding of the (GDL) requirements?

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Don't Understand Somewhat Understand Fully Understand

- Based on the information you received during the program, are you likely to increase the amount of time you spend practice driving with your teen? (Check One)

Yes No

- Do you feel more inclined to enforce the GDL restrictions as a result of this presentation?

Absolutely Not sure, but giving it more thought Not at all

Comments: _____

- Based on the information you received during the program, will you control the keys to your teen's vehicle? (Check One)

Yes No

- Do you feel that the materials provided in the resource guide will help you? (Check all that apply)

Better Understand the GDL
 Increase Practice driving with your teen
 Enforce the GDL restrictions at home
 Control the keys
 Establish a driving agreement (contract) with my your teen



- What additional materials would you like to see included in the resource guide?

- Comments:

Thank you! Your feedback is important to us and will be used to improve this program.

Share the Keys



New York Parent/Teen Safe Driving Orientation

Kean University in partnership with the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety and New Jersey State Police has developed *Share the Keys*, a research based, data-driven orientation designed to reduce teen driver crash risks by increasing parental involvement. This orientation was then modified to fit the state of New York.

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws are recognized as the single most effective tool for reducing teen driver crashes, injuries and deaths. While New York's GDL is effective at lowering teen driver crash risk, it must be clearly understood and supported by parents to save lives. To that end, ensuring that parents and teens fully understand the risks and responsibilities associated with driving is essential to teen driver safety.

Parental involvement has a significant impact on teen driver safety. *Driving through the Eyes of Teens, A Closer Look*, a research report from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute and State Farm, examined the impact parenting styles had on teen driver safety and found that teens whose parents set rules and pay attention to their driving activities in a helpful, supportive way are **half as likely** to be involved in a crash. The report presents the numerous safety gains experienced through this balanced parenting approach (authoritative) and provides a series of best practices.

These best practices were used to define the key objectives for the orientation program:

Understanding the Graduated Driver License (GDL)

The GDL is one of the most complex traffic laws and can be very confusing.

Being a Good Role Model

Research by CHOP, Travelers Insurance and many others found that teens mimic their parent's driving behaviors.

Effectively Enforcing the GDL at Home

The two restrictions of the GDL that have the most lifesaving potential are the curfew and passenger restrictions. Forty percent of all teen fatal crashes occur after 9:00 pm and teens with just one passenger have nearly twice the risk of being involved in a fatal crash.

Increasing Practice Driving Hours

During the first 12-24 months of driving, teens are at the greatest risk for being involved in a crash, which decreases with driving experience.

Controlling the Keys

CHOP's research also revealed that teens who requested permission to use the car were fifty percent less likely to be involved in crashes when compared to teens that had primary access. Drivers whose parents controlled the keys were also less likely to violate the provisions of the GDL.

Parent – Teen Driving Agreement

Number of Passengers (1)

The presence of even one passenger can nearly double a teen's risk of being involved in a fatal crash.

AGREEMENT

CONSEQUENCE

REWARD

Curfew (9:01 PM – 5:00 AM)

40% of fatal teen driver crashes occur at night.

AGREEMENT

CONSEQUENCE

REWARD

Seatbelts – All Occupants

56% of teens killed while behind-the-wheel, weren't wearing their seatbelts. Seatbelts significantly increase your chances of surviving a crash when worn.

AGREEMENT

CONSEQUENCE

REWARD

Speeding

Speed is a leading contributing factor in 40% of fatal teen driver crashes.

AGREEMENT

CONSEQUENCE

REWARD

Teen Driver

I promise to abide by the agreement outlined above. If I break any part of this agreement, I will accept the consequences.

TEEN SIGNATURE

DATE

Cell Phones & Texting

The University of Utah found that people talking or texting while driving were as impaired as when they drove under the influence of alcohol at the legal limit.

AGREEMENT

CONSEQUENCE

REWARD

Driving Under the Influence

One in 10 teens in high school drinks and drives. Young drivers are 17 times more likely to die in a crash while driving drunk.

AGREEMENT

CONSEQUENCE

REWARD

Distractions

Anything or anyone that takes my focus from driving is a distraction.

AGREEMENT

CONSEQUENCE

REWARD

House Rules

AGREEMENT

CONSEQUENCE

REWARD

Parent/Guardian

I promise to help my teen succeed in following this agreement and make time to help my child become a safe and responsible driver. I understand this is an evolving agreement and promise to make myself available to discuss these rules and their consequences when necessary.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

DATE



Teen Driver Pledge

I pledge to *Put It Down!* and *Just Drive*. Beginning right now, I will do my part to help put an end to distracted driving by pledging the safest driving behavior. I commit to:

I will not text or use my phone while I am driving. If I need to use my phone, I will pull over to a safe location.*

I will ask other drivers I know to do their part to end distracted driving. I pledge to make a difference.

TEEN SIGNATURE

DATE

*Under the New York law, drivers are prohibited from using handheld electronic devices.

Parent/Guardian Driver Pledge

I pledge to *Put It Down!* and *Just Drive*. Beginning right now, I will do my part to help put an end to distracted driving by pledging the safest driving behavior. I commit to:

I will not text while I am driving.†

I will not text while driving and will use only hands-free calling if I need to speak on the phone while I am driving.

I will not text or use my phone while I am driving. If I need to use my phone, I will pull over to a safe location.

I will ask other drivers I know to do their part to end distracted driving. I pledge to make a difference.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE

†Under the New York law, drivers are prohibited from using handheld electronic devices.

The Facts About Distracted Driving

Distracted Driving Kills

The friends, family, and neighbors of the thousands of people killed each year in distracted driving crashes will tell you it is a very serious safety problem. The nearly half a million people injured each year will agree.

- Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. All distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety.
- More than a third of young adults say they have been involved in a near-crash because of their own or another motorist's distracted driving.
- Cell phone use was reported in 18% of distracted related fatalities in America.
- Our youngest and most inexperienced drivers are most at risk, with **16% of all distracted driving crashes involving drivers under 20.**
- Texting is the most alarming distraction because it involves manual, visual, and cognitive distraction simultaneously.
- A quarter of teens respond to a text message once or more every time they drive. 20 percent of teens admit that they have extended, multi-message text conversations while driving.

THE AVERAGE TEXT TAKES YOUR EYES OFF THE ROAD FOR NEARLY FIVE SECONDS.
AT HIGHWAY SPEEDS, THAT'S ENOUGH TIME TO TRAVEL THE LENGTH OF A FOOTBALL FIELD.

STOP THE TEXTS

STOP THE WRECKS



OF DRIVERS 16 TO 24 SAID THEY HAVE TEXTED WHILE DRIVING.
(AAD COUNCIL, 2011)



OF YOUNG ADULTS WHO TEXT WHILE DRIVING AGREE THAT TEXTING IS A PROBLEM.
(AAD COUNCIL, 2011)



OF YOUNG ADULT DRIVERS ARE SOMEWHAT TO VERY CONFIDENT THAT THEY CAN SAFELY TEXT WHILE DRIVING.
(AAD COUNCIL, 2011)

A TEXTING DRIVER IS 23 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO GET INTO A CRASH THAN A NON-TEXTING DRIVER.
(2009, VTD)



STOP THE TEXTS.
STOP THE WRECKS.



Don't text. Don't call.
Just drive.

JUSTDRIVE.COM

Say Yes to Life Contract

This contract empowers teens to make decisions based on their personal safety, eliminating peer pressure and judgment. The agreement between parent and teen provides young drivers with a safe way out of dangerous – and potentially life threatening – situations.

The contract's name originated from the Rebeka Verea Foundation's motto *Say Yes to Life*. The foundation's mission is to create awareness about the life saving importance of safe driving behaviors and encourage young drivers to make responsible decisions. Modeled after that mission and from research conducted by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, the intention of this contract is to save young lives.

Teen Driver Agrees to:

contact _____ if I ever find myself in a situation in which I do not feel safe (i.e. the driver has been involved in an argument, is drinking or has taken drugs etc.) with the **code word** _____ to indicate I need help to get home safely. I understand that I will be asked to discuss what happened following a **cool off** period and will be expected to work on strategies that will assist me in avoiding dangerous situations in the future. I also agree to do my best to avoid situations involving risky behaviors.

Teen Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Agrees to:

pick up _____ if I receive a text or call that includes our **code word** _____ no matter the time of day or night. I will do my best to avoid a socially awkward situation for my teen by either creating an excuse for picking them up or by acting in an overprotective manner relieving them from any social judgment or pressure. I further agree to **reward** my teen for making a courageous and responsible decision by not penalizing or lecturing them. I will take the **cool off** period to gain more perspective before discussing what they've learned and work with them to develop strategies for avoiding situations that involve risky behaviors.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Choosing a Driving School



Quality driver education can provide a great foundation for safe driving. Driving instructors help teens get road ready by ensuring they have the basic skills and knowledge needed for safe driving.

When deciding on the right driving school for you and your teen, consider the following tips:

Seek Advice

Ask other parents and teens about their experiences with driving schools, why they selected the school and if they would recommend it to others.

Enroll in a New York State Education Department (NYSED)-approved DTSE Program

Make sure the Driver's Education program is licensed by NYSED. For a list of approved programs, visit: <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/career-technical-education/dtse-programs-10-25-2021.xlsx>

Visit the Driving School

- **Is behind-the-wheel training thorough and personalized based on the needs of each teen?**
Make sure they offer personalized training that addresses your teens' unique training needs.
- **Do they address issues like road rage, cell phones, and text messaging?**
These are all important safety issues that should be addressed.
- **What percentage of the time is spent on real driving, classroom learning, and driving simulations?**
Choose a program that offers your teen maximized on-road driving lessons, as well as tips for you to continue supervised parental practice and involvement.
- **Does the school prioritize face-to-face interaction between the driving instructor and the parent?**
It's important for parents to know what skills they need to work on with their young driver during practice driving.
- **Is the course designed to make sure students pass the driving test, or is it focused on developing safe driving skills?**
Passing a driving test doesn't mean your teen has developed the skills needed to handle complex driving situations.

Make Sure Your Teen is Comfortable With the Driving School and Its Instructors

A good driving school will involve a lot of time alone or in small groups with the instructors. Teens can find it difficult to learn when they're not comfortable with their instructor.

Selecting a Vehicle for Your Teen Driver



According to the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, teens who have primary access to a vehicle were **50% more likely** to be involved in a crash. Research shows in order to reduce crash risk it is best for your teen driver to share, not own a car for at least the first year of driving. Then, based on the successful completion of the GDL process and even after they obtain a basic license, parents need to honestly assess whether their teen is ready to have his or her own car. You know your teen best. If you're unsure, consider postponing the purchase. Remember, your role is to keep your teen safe.

When selecting the vehicle your teen will drive, keep these important points in mind:

Avoid high performance vehicles: They are too advanced for inexperienced drivers.

Teen drivers not only lack experience, the area of their brain used for risk assessment and risk taking hasn't fully developed resulting in a disconnect between risk assessment and risk taking. As a result, speeding and reckless driving are common among young drivers and sports cars and other vehicles with high performance features, encourage these behaviors.

Avoid driving vehicles that are not as stable.

Sport utility vehicles & minivans, especially the smaller ones, are inherently less stable than cars because of their higher centers of gravity. Abrupt steering maneuvers commonly occur with inexperienced drivers and can cause rollovers.

Pick a vehicle that offers modern crash protection features.

Teenagers should drive vehicles that offer state-of-the-art protection in case they do crash. The best models have side and curtain airbags, as well as the standard driver and passenger ones. Electronic Stability Control (ESC) and an Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) are also great features for helping your teen avoid a crash, but new drivers need to be thoroughly trained in their use. Unfamiliarity with (ABS) systems can affect emergency braking. To obtain safety ratings for a vehicle, visit www.safercar.gov.

Size matters.

Small vehicles offer much less protection in crashes than larger ones. However, this doesn't mean you should put your teen in the largest vehicle you can find. Many mid- and full-size cars offer more than adequate crash protection. Pick a vehicle, preferably a passenger sedan between 3,500 and 4,500 pounds curb weight.

Practice SAFE Driving



Since crash risks decrease dramatically with driving experience, it is crucial that teens get at least one-hour per week of deliberate practice driving. Finding the time for practice can be difficult but is achievable. Plan your teen driver's practice driving around your normal day-to-day activities. The following are examples of opportunities to fit in **deliberate** practice driving. We call it, "SAFE" driving;

S

Shopping trips can be an excellent opportunity for a new driver to learn how to successfully navigate commercial districts which pose unique challenges to new drivers.

A

Activities, whether it's after school or meeting friends at the movies, every activity is a new driving experience that can be used to teach navigation, the use of alternate routes and build on regular driving lessons.

F

Family outings can provide teens with experience driving on different roadways such as "toll roads" and "multiple lane highways". They can also learn how to manage the distraction of additional passengers.

E

Errands such as picking up a prescription or the dry cleaning can provide a young driver with additional time behind-the-wheel. Use them to assess their progress, refresh a lesson such as entering and exiting a commercial district or yielding when entering a roadway.

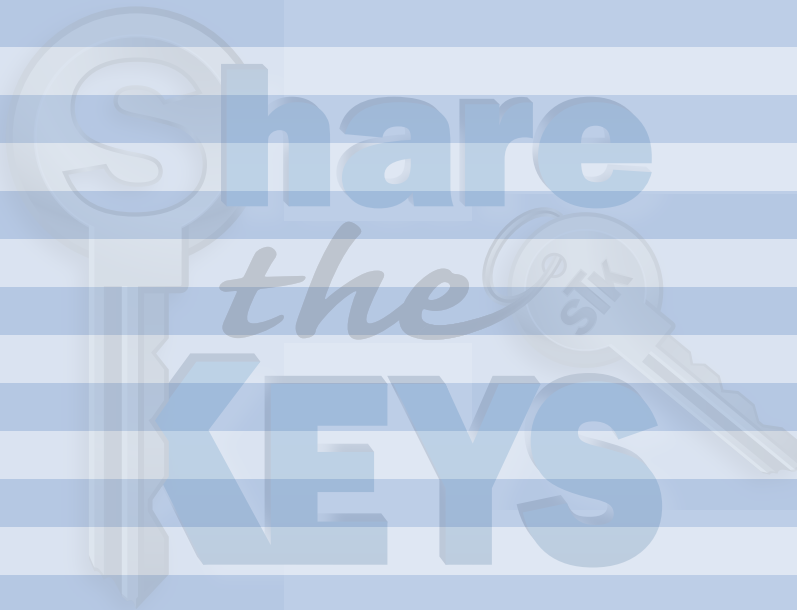
Parents are also encouraged to focus on difficult driving situations such as **driving at night**, during **inclement weather**, gradually introducing **different speed zones**, **merging**, **lane changes** and how to always **maintain a safe following distance**.

Practice Driving Log Continued

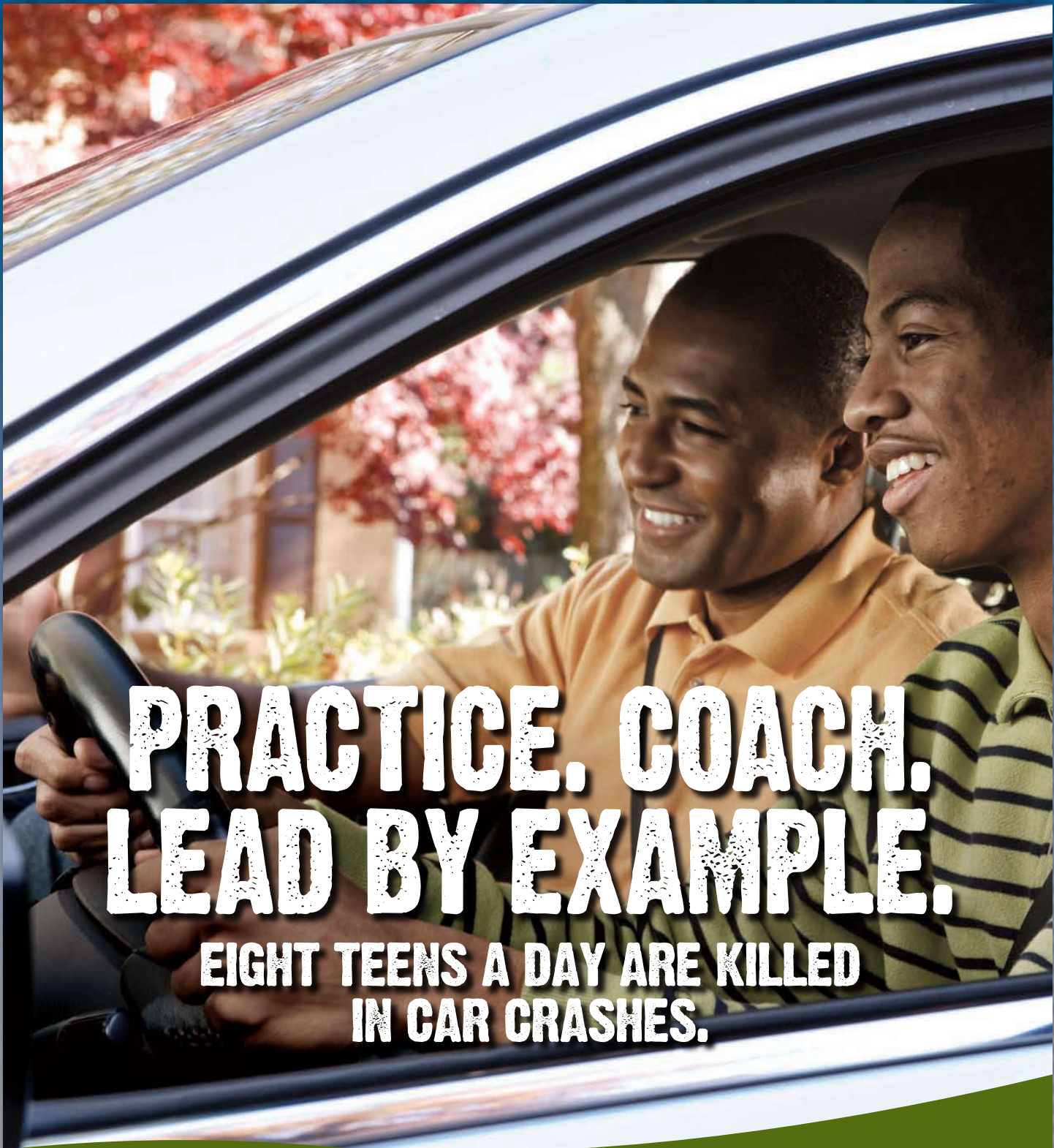
Date

Skills & Conditions • Example: Following Distance, Nighttime, Weather

Amount of Practice Time



Total Practice Driving Hours:



PRACTICE. COACH. LEAD BY EXAMPLE.

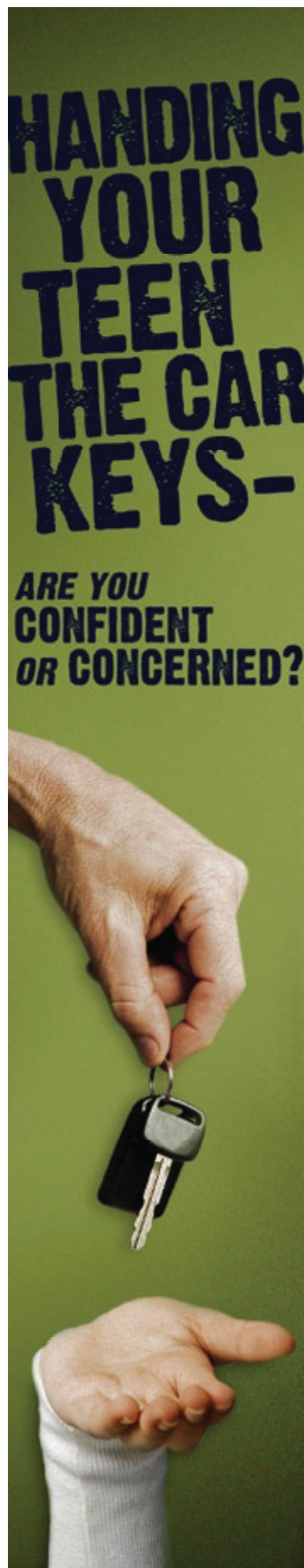
**EIGHT TEENS A DAY ARE KILLED
IN CAR CRASHES.**



**SET A GOOD EXAMPLE BEHIND THE WHEEL,
AND TALK TO YOUR TEEN ABOUT SAFE DRIVING.**

VISIT WWW.CDC.GOV/PARENTSARETHEKEY TO GET GOING.





PARENTS: Get the Facts on Safe Teen Driving

Car crashes—the #1 killer of teens—take about 3,000 young lives every year. That’s up to eight teen deaths a day that can be prevented. New drivers—even straight-A students and "good kids"—are more likely to be involved in a fatal crash, mostly due to driver inexperience. It's a fact. The good news is that you can make a difference by getting involved with your teen’s driving. Here’s how:

Fact: Proven Steps Save Lives

Practice driving as often as you can with your teen. The more experience he or she has behind the wheel, the safer they’ll drive. Make sure your new driver and their passengers always wear seat belts. Prohibit driving when crashes are more likely to occur—at night and when there are other teens in the car. And be sure to learn and enforce your state’s teen driving laws—you can find them at www.cdc.gov/parentsarethekey.

Fact: A Parent-Teen Driving Agreement Sets the Rules of the Road

Discuss your rules of the road with your teen. Talk about why they are important to follow, as well as consequences for breaking them. Believe it or not, your children listen to you, particularly when they know you have their best interests at heart. Reinforce your talks by working with your teen to create a parent-teen driving agreement. You can find a sample at www.cdc.gov/parentsarethekey.

Fact: Parents Must Lead by Example

Don’t wait until your teen is old enough to drive to start modeling good driving behaviors. If you talk on the phone, text, speed or drive without your seat belt, so might your teen.

Fact: Other Parents Need This Information

Share your rules of the road with parents of other teens. Tell the parents of your teen’s friends about “Parents Are the Key,” because working together helps save lives. Take the next step by showing your support and sharing information on Facebook and Twitter.

VISIT WWW.CDC.GOV/PARENTSARETHEKEY TO GET GOING.



Avoid Aggressive Driving to Reach Your Destination Safely



Aggressive Driving is a Serious Problem on Our Roads

*Aggressive Driving Facts**

- Aggressive behaviors account for more than half of all fatal crashes
- A single aggressive act by one driver can trigger escalating responses from other drivers
- 80% of drivers believe aggressive driving is serious or extremely serious

*AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

What is aggressive driving?

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) defines aggressive driving as a combination of traffic offenses that endanger other people and property. These include:

- Running red lights or stop signs
- Tailgating
- Weaving through traffic
- Passing illegally on the right
- Making improper or unsafe lane changes
- Screaming, making hand gestures, honking horns or flashing high beams

What to do when confronted by an aggressive driver

- Make every attempt to get out of the way
- Don't engage the other driver, avoid eye contact and ignore gestures
- Pull over to a safe location and call #77 to report the incident

Emotions can greatly impact the ability to drive. When overwhelmed, it's best to pull over and take time to calm down before resuming your trip.

Parent to Parent



Talking Teen Driver Safety With Other Parents

Starting a friendly conversation with other parents about working together creates a better support system to protect teen drivers and passengers.

Share what you've learned.

A casual "Did you know?" conversation is a friendly and helpful way to support other parents in protecting their teen driver.

Provide tools and resources.

- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia: www.teendriversource.org
- Center for Injury Research and Prevention: www.teendriversource.org
- New York Department of Motor Vehicles: www.dmv.ny.gov/younger-driver/younger-driver-resources
- New York State Department of Health: www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/teens.htm
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: www.nhtsa.gov
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/parentsarethekey

Talk about your Parent/Teen contract.

Discuss the rules, consequences and rewards you've established. Explain how the contract protects your teen driver. Note that each section of the contract is supported by a related fact about teen driver safety.

Discuss ways you can support each other to ensure the safety of your teen drivers.

Picking up additional passengers and providing transportation in the event that driving privileges have been revoked are two of many great ways parents can work together to create a safer driving environment for their teens.

Work on a Get Home Safe contract (Say Yes To Life)

This agreement can include other parents as alternative or shared contacts.

Establishing good communication and mutual safety goals between parents are essential for your teens safe and successful completion of the teen driver's GDL process.

Teen Driving Web Resources



The following websites contain useful information and resources related to teen driver safety.

New York Department of Motor Vehicles
www.dmv.ny.gov/younger-driver/younger-driver-resources

Download resources for parents and young drivers including downloadable forms

New York Department of Health
www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/teens.htm

Teen driver safety and educational resources

Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey
www.bianj.org

Programs, resources and tools supporting

teens: www.ugotbrains.com

parents: www.njteendriving.com

educators: www.njdrivereducation.com

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Foundation

www.teendriversource.org

Tools and guides for parents, teens, policy makers and researchers

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
www.underyourinfluence.org

Tips, driving contracts, message boards and conversation starters for parents

Center for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/parentsarethekey

National Safety Council
www.driveithome.org

Alive at 25 teen driver awareness program and resources for teens and parents

National Organization for Youth Safety
www.noys.org

Tool kits, scholarships and more

The Rebeka Vereá Foundation
www.rebekavereafoundation.com

Say Yes to Life, Drive Responsibly

Project Graduation and teen driver safety educational and awareness programs

MP102016