

Teen Driving

Half of all teens will be involved in a car crash before graduating from high school. The more you know, the more you can do to prevent these crashes.

Laws Aren't Enough - But Household Rules Can Come Close

- No state has laws strong enough to fully protect new teen drivers. Household rules about passengers, nighttime driving and cell phone use can fill gaps in state laws.
- A written, signed agreement (some call it a contract) with your teen is a great way to help reduce crash risk. It can be very simple, containing restrictions, privileges, rules and consequences. It might also include financial issues, personal safety, maintenance procedures and a schedule for sharing the car with the rest of the family. You should mold it to fit your family's needs, but keep the document as simple as possible to help you focus on the most important issue: driving safety.
- Make sure you set clear expectations and that you both understand how these expectations can change over time. Restrictions should be set early in the process and relaxed later, as your teen gets more experience on the road.

Teens Crash Because They Are Inexperienced Drivers

- Contrary to popular belief, teens crash most often because they are inexperienced. They struggle judging gaps in traffic, driving the right speed for conditions and turning safely, among other things. When inexperience meets the road, crash risks increase. Practice builds experience and reduces risk.



**COMMUNITY
PROTECTION**

Young Passengers Are Risky

- A single young passenger, even a sibling, increases the chances of a deadly crash by 44%.

Teens Struggle with Speeding

- New teen drivers often fail to drive the appropriate speed for conditions. This comes with experience.

Teens Don't Wear Seat Belts

- About half of teens killed in crashes were not wearing a seat belt. As parents, we need to lead by example and make sure we wear our seat belts each time we drive. We need to impress upon our teens that each and every time they get behind the wheel, they need to buckle up. Putting on a seat belt should be second-nature for everyone.

Teens Should Stay Off the Roads At Night

- The fatal crash rate of 16-year-olds is nearly twice as high at night, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.
- Most of these tragic crashes happen relatively early - between 9 p.m. and midnight. Inclement weather is also dangerous.

Parents are the biggest influencers on their teen drivers, even if you think they aren't listening. Set these rules before they hit the road:

- No cell phones while driving
- No extra passengers
- No speeding
- No alcohol
- No driving or riding without a seat belt

Source: National Safety Council

Check out our course list online for a variety of safety trainings provided across the state at

www.ndsc.org

The North Dakota Safety Council is a private non-profit organization supported through grants, donations, memberships and training.

