

CAN I BORROW THE CAR?

Ten Tips To Reduce Teen Auto Accidents

(NAPSA)—Primarily due to their inexperience behind the wheel, teenage drivers are much more likely than adults to get into accidents. Fortunately, there are things parents can do to help keep their teens safe on the road, while boosting their own peace of mind.

In its new safety brochure, "Can I Borrow the Car?," GEICO offers these 10 tips for parents to help reduce accidents among their teen drivers:

1. Limit night driving. Many teen car crashes take place between 9 p.m. and 12 midnight. Beginning drivers should be restricted to driving during the day initially.

2. Keep it slow and safe for starters. Remember that teens need to stay away from fast-moving, high-volume traffic until they feel comfortable in such situations.

3. Train for poor weather conditions. Limit your teen's driving during periods of bad weather until the teen demonstrates a high level of competence and confidence.

4. Restrict cell phones to emergency use only. Don't let bad habits begin. Provide your young teen with a cell phone for the car for emergency situations only.

5. Choose safe vehicles for your children. Proper attention to the vehicle a teen drives is as important as his or her actual driving.

✓ Avoid small cars, trucks and sport utility vehicles.

✓ Look for automobiles with high safety ratings (air bags, crumple zones, etc.).

6. Remember you are a role



Parents need to set very specific ground rules before giving their teens the keys to the car.

model. New drivers learn a lot by example, so practice safe driving. Teens with poor driving records often reflect the behavior of parents with poor driving records.

7. Supervise as much practice driving as possible. Parents should take an active role in the teenager's driving practice. Make a firm schedule to supervise your future driver and stick to it.

8. Be firm about safety belt use. Require that your teenagers wear safety belts at all times—no exceptions.

9. Discuss realistic consequences of drug and alcohol use. Let them hear it from you that alcohol and drug use is totally unacceptable when driving.

10. Restrict passengers. Having more passengers in a car increases the chance of greater risk-taking, because of greater peer pressure and because it leads to greater distractions.

To get a free copy of GEICO's "Can I Borrow the Car?" Ten Tips brochure and other teen safe driving materials, go to www.geico.com/cars/teen_safety.htm.