

Tips On Protecting Young Teen Drivers



Driving is the biggest risk teens face. Here are safety rules to help protect them.

(NAPSA)—According to data from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, car crashes take more young lives than all other causes—and in larger proportion than for any other driving age group. And most of the fatal crashes and serious injuries come in the very earliest months of unsupervised driving.

So what can parents do to protect young drivers? Here are some suggestions from the highway safety experts at GEICO:

1. Be aware that this is the most dangerous driving time for your teen. Take extra precautions especially during the first six months after your teen gets his or her license.

2. Help your teens develop the right habits especially during the first six months of solo driving. Let them know right away these are the rules:

- Use of safety belts is mandatory.
- Teen passengers won't be allowed initially.
- Night driving will be limited.
- Protect against drowsy driving.
- Distractions (e.g., text messaging) are prohibited.

• Speeding must be expressly prohibited. Since most new drivers don't have the experience to handle vehicles at high speeds, it's the source of many deaths and injuries.

• There will be no alcohol or drug use.

3. Set a good driving example:

- Wear your safety belt always.
- Don't speed.
- Practice defensive driving.
- Don't use your cell phone.
- Don't run red lights.

4. Develop a parent/teen driving contract. An example is available from the National Safety Council at www.nsc.org/issues/teendriving/agreement.pdf. Many states also have sample agreements.

5. Plan to provide your teen with extra practice time in a variety of weather conditions so he or she can gain experience and confidence.

6. Reinforce state graduated licensing programs so teens must have a longer period of supervised driving and more restrictions in the early months.

For more safe-driving information for teens and parents, go to www.geico.com/auto/safety.