

Parents Are the Key



Every day, eight U.S. teens die in car crashes, the #1 killer of teens in America. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is helping parents learn how to play a key role in keeping their young drivers safe on the road through its “Parents Are the Key” campaign. CDC offers parents safe driving resources—including fact sheets, tips and tools, flyers, a parent-teen driving agreement and more—for free at www.cdc.gov/parentsarethekey.

Experts agree that parents can help reduce the risk of a crash involving their teen driver. Take the following simple, lifesaving steps:

- **Extend your teen’s supervised driving period.** 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.
- **Set the rules of the road to reduce the chance of injury or death:** 1) Make sure your teen always wears a seat belt. 2) Limit your teen’s nighttime driving. 3) Restrict the number of teen passengers. 4) Prohibit cell phones and texting
- **Enforce your rules of the road with a parent-teen driving agreement.** Work with your teen to draft and sign the agreement. Include clearly written rules, as well as consequences for breaking the rules.

- **Set a good example behind the wheel.** Kids learn about road safety from a young age, so don’t wait until your teen is old enough to drive to start modeling safe driving behaviors.

“All beginner drivers, even straight-A students and ‘good kids’, are more likely than experienced drivers to be involved in a fatal crash—it’s a fact,” said Dr. Grant Baldwin, director of the Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention at CDC’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

To help spread the word about safe teen driving, start by sharing the materials available with other parents through e-mail, Facebook or Twitter. Reach out to folks at work, PTA meetings or other groups you belong to where you can reach other parents of young drivers.



“Car crashes do not have to be the number one killer of teens, and parents can make a difference. Take action yourself, and spread the word to others. Working together, we can help teens stay safe from motor vehicle crashes and live to their full potential,” said Baldwin.

For additional resources, visit:

www.facebook.com/cdcparentsarethekey
www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/Teen_Drivers/index.htm