GET IT IN WRITING.

Don't just talk about safe driving; set your family's own driving rules and get your teen to agree to them in writing through a Parent-Teen Driving Agreement. Put a copy of your agreement on the refrigerator. Keep it visible as a daily reminder of the importance of safe driving. Then update your agreement as your teen gains new skills. This will help them see their progress and give you an opportunity to continue talking about safe driving. The key to your teen's safe driving is in your hands. Use it.

1. Download a Parent-Teen Driving Agreement here: www.cdc.gov/ParentsAreTheKey/agreement or use the one in this brochure.

2. Read it.

3. Discuss it.

4. Make changes that fit your teen's schedule and your family's driving needs.

5. Have you and your teen sign it. Today.

It doesn't guarantee your teen won't have a crash, but it does guarantee everyone in the family is on the same page when it comes to driving safely.

PARENTS ARE THE KEY TO SAFE TEEN DRIVING. LEARN HOW.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES USA

CDC CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

PARENTS ARE THE KEY

CS258878A

PARENT-TEEN DRIVING AGREEMENT

I, _____, will drive carefully and cautiously and will be courteous to other drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians at all times.

I promise that I will obey all the rules of the road.

Always wear a seat belt and make all my passengers buckle up

Obey all traffic lights, stop signs, other street signs, and road markings

Stay within the speed limit and drive safely

Never use the car to race or to try to impress others

Never give rides to hitchhikers

I promise that I will make sure I can stay focused on driving.

Never text while driving (writing, reading, or sending messages.)

Never talk on the cell phone — including handsfree devices or speakerphone — while driving

Drive with both hands on the wheel

Never eat or drink while driving

Drive only when I am alert and in emotional control

Call my parents for a ride home if I am impaired in any way that interferes with my ability to drive safely, or if my driver is impaired in any way

Never use headphones or earbuds to listen to music while I drive

I promise that I will respect laws about drugs and alcohol.

Drive only when I am alcohol and drug free

Never allow any alcohol or illegal drugs in the car

Be a passenger only with drivers who are alcohol and drug free

I promise that I will be a responsible driver.

Drive only when I have permission to use the car and I will not let anyone else drive the car unless I have permission

Drive someone else's car only if I have parental permission

Pay for all traffic citations or parking tickets

Complete my family responsibilities and maintain good grades at school as listed here:_____

_____

_____

_____

Contribute to the costs of gasoline, maintenance, and insurance as listed here: _____

_____

_____

_____

RESTRICTIONS:

I agree to the following restrictions, but understand that these restrictions will be modified by my parents as I get more driving experience and demonstrate that I am a responsible driver.

For the next _____ months, I will not drive after _____ pm.

For the next _____ months, I will not transport more than _____ teen passengers (unless I am supervised by a responsible adult).

For the next _____ months, I won't adjust the stereo, electronic devices, or air conditioning/heater while the car is moving.

For the next _____ months, I will not drive in bad weather.

I understand that I am not permitted to drive to off limit locations or on roads and highways as listed here: _____

_____

_____

Additional restrictions: _____

_____

_____

I agree to follow all the rules and restrictions in this agreement. I understand that my parents will impose penalties, including removal of my driving privileges, if I violate the agreement. I also understand that my parents will allow me greater driving privileges as I become more experienced and as I demonstrate that I am always a safe and responsible driver.

PENALTIES FOR AGREEMENT VIOLATIONS

Drove while texting (composed, read or sent message or email with phone).
NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS

Drove while talking on the cell phone (including handsfree or speakerphone).
NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS

Drove after drinking alcohol or using drugs.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS

Got ticket for speeding or moving violation.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS

Drove after night driving curfew.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ WEEKS/MONTHS

Drove too many passengers.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ WEEKS/MONTHS

Broke promise about seat belts (self or others).
NO DRIVING FOR _____ WEEKS/MONTHS

Drove on a road or to an area that is off limits.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ WEEKS/MONTHS

SIGNATURES

Driver:_____ Date: _____

Parent promise: I also agree to drive safely and to be an excellent role model.

Parent (or guardian): _____ Date: _____
Parent (or guardian): _____ Date: _____

PARENTS
ARE THE KEY
ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SAFETY FEATURES
FOR YOUR TEEN DRIVER IS YOU.

MANY PARENTS DON'T REALIZE IT, BUT THE **#1 THREAT** TO THEIR TEEN'S SAFETY IS DRIVING OR RIDING IN A CAR WITH A TEEN DRIVER. THE FACT IS, MORE THAN 2,000 TEENS LOSE THEIR LIVES EVERY YEAR IN CAR CRASHES. THAT'S SIX TEENS A DAY TOO MANY. THE MAIN CAUSE?

DRIVER INEXPERIENCE.

There are steps you can take to help make sure your teen stays safe on the road. The first thing to do? Be the parent. Get involved in your teen's driving. Putting a teen behind the wheel of a 2-ton vehicle — sometimes with friends, brothers, or sisters — is something that deserves extra supervision on your part. As it turns out, your guidance is pretty effective. Studies show that parents are an important factor in their teen's driving behavior.

On the next few pages you'll find some easy-to-follow steps that will help keep your teen safe on the road.

PRACTICE. PRACTICE. PRACTICE.

While it seems like a given, many parents don't realize that driver inexperience is one of the biggest factors in car crashes. The risk is highest in the first year drivers have their license. Experience truly is the key to safer driving. The more they practice, the better. Bikes start with training wheels for a reason. It's the same with driving. It takes time to become skilled.

Here's what you can do: Ride along with your teen for at least 30-50 hours. Watch closely and make suggestions on how they can improve. Practice at different times of the day, in different kinds of weather, and in heavy and light traffic. Make sure your teen has experienced what it's really like to drive in the real world — not just on the way home from the grocery store or school. Your guidance — and helpful, calm advice — will stay with your teen long after he or she takes the car out alone.

PUT THE BRAKES ON PASSENGERS.

The risk of crashing goes up when teens ride with other teens. And it's no wonder. They have a lot to talk about. School. Sports. Music. Boys. Girls. All of those subjects can be real distractions. Follow your state's teen driving law for passenger limits. If your state doesn't have a rule, limit your teen to zero or one young passenger for at least the first six months they have a license.

WATCH THE CLOCK.

Fatal crashes for every age group are more likely to happen after the sun has gone down. For your teen driver, the risk is especially high.

Here's what you can do: Make sure your teen is off the road at night. For the first six months your teen is behind the wheel, make sure they're home by 9:00 p.m. But don't forget to practice nighttime driving with your teen when you think they are ready.

BUCKLE UP!

Make buckling up a family rule that is simply not broken. With seat belt use, the risk of dying or being badly injured in a crash is cut in half. Yep, half. There's no better way to keep your teen driver, the rest of the family, and friends safe. Even if you think your teen always buckles up, ask them if they do. Stress the importance of always buckling as both a driver and passenger. Buckling up saves lives.

DO NOT TEXT AND DRIVE. EVER.

There's already enough to keep track of while driving without adding a cell phone to the mix. Texting while driving takes your teen's hands off the wheel, their eyes off the road, and their mind off of driving. Distractions increase the risk of crashes, injury, and death. Tell your teen if they need to use or check their phone while driving to pull over to a safe place first.

When it comes to texting and driving, don't just warn your teen. Show them. Set an example. Put that phone away when you are behind the wheel. And then repeat the lesson over and over. Don't forget, the example you set while driving with your phone, will be the example your teen follows while driving with theirs.

GET ENOUGH SLEEP.

Did your teen stay up all night cramming for a test? Did she get home late from practice and then write a term-paper due in the morning? These are just two examples of when you may not want your teen to drive. He's tired. She's exhausted. Drowsy drivers cause thousands of crashes every year. Young drivers are at high risk. If your teen is worn out, don't let them drive. Take them yourself. Arrange a ride with someone else. Or, have them ride the bus.

S-L-O-W DOWN.

There are lots of risky driving behaviors to warn your teen about. Driving too fast in general and driving too fast for poor road or weather conditions — regardless of what the speed limit is — are two important ones. Tailgating, failure to use turn signals, and being distracted are among several other common risky habits that lead to crashes. Point out these behaviors. Your teen will gain more experience over time and begin to see them more instinctively, on his or her own.

SET A GREAT EXAMPLE.

Your teen is watching every last thing you do. Even though they may seem bored, even embarrassed by what you say and do, they're taking mental notes. So, as much as they roll their eyes, they're probably listening. (Don't tell them you know, it will ruin the act.) Set a good example. Every time you get behind the wheel. Set the example by always buckling up, never driving impaired, never driving distracted, driving the speed limit, and driving safely. Remember Parents Are the Key to safe teen driving.