

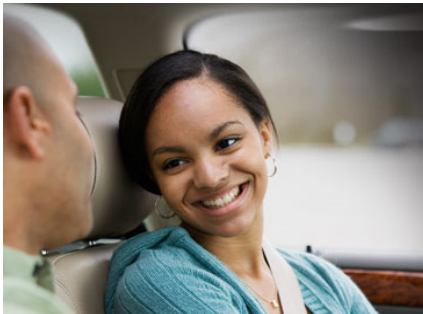
Safe kids

Healthy kids

Happy kids

Involved Parents Keep Teen Drivers Safer

Two studies by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia warn parents about giving teens their own car. Teens that own or have free use of a car are more likely to get in a car crash than teens who must share car privileges.



Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for teens in the United States. Statistics for 2007 show that car crashes that involved a teenage driver:

- Killed more than 7,000 people, including 3,000 teen drivers,
- And injured more than 250,000 teen drivers.

These statistics are alarming. Teen drivers are at-risk for car crashes. As drivers, they also put other people at risk. Parents underestimate the safety hazards of teenage drivers.

The study surveyed 5,500 teens in grades 9 – 11. More than 2,000 students reported driving on their own. Seventy percent of these students owned their car or were the main driver of a car. Among these teens,



25% had been involved in a crash. Only 10% of teens who shared car privileges had been in a car crash. The lower crash rate had nothing to do with less driving time.

Dr. Winston, author of the study, thinks increased parent involvement helps teens stay safe. Kids who share cars must ask parents for car keys. Parents know when and where their teens are going. They also have a chance to remind teens of safe driving rules.

Teens who had parents set driving rules and frequently ask where they were going had 50% less crashes. They also showed better driving habits. Teens who had involved parents were 71% less likely to drive while drunk. They were 30% less likely to use a cell phone while driving.

Research shows that involved parents help teens:

- Get better grades.
- Stay in school.
- Avoid drug and alcohol abuse.
- Find self-worth.
- Drive safer.

Just because teens can drive cars like adults, it does not mean they make responsible decisions. Teens are emotionally immature. They often make poor choices.

Parents should:

- Set clear rules about driving.
- Monitor when and where teens take a car. Make them ask permission to drive the car or get the car keys.
- Ask their teen to sign a safe driving contract. Ask your car insurance agent for an example.

A few rules and daily reminders will help keep your teen safe.

Brought to you by Parent Help Line and St. John's Children's Hospital



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org

