



The Facts About Teen Driving Risks

1. Drowsy Driving Facts

- Drowsy driving can be as dangerous as driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Teen drivers are four times more likely to have a sleep-related crash than drivers over the age of 30.
- Teen drivers are at a high risk for sleep related crashes because they tend to stay up late doing homework, working part-time jobs, or staying out late with their friends.

The message should increase awareness of the dangers of driving when tired.

2. Safety Belt Use Facts

- Teens are least likely to use safety belts when riding in the back seat and when other teens are in the car. Most teens killed in crashes were not wearing safety belts.
- Teen drivers and passengers are less likely to buckle up when under the influence of alcohol.
- Safety belts prevent you from being thrown out of a car (ejected) in a crash. You are 25 times more likely to die in a crash if ejected.
- Unbuckled rear passengers can be "back seat bullets" and kill or seriously injure front seat passengers, even when they are buckled up.

The message should strongly encourage safety belt use by drivers and all passengers.

3. Speeding Facts

- Speeding is the major cause of crashes among teen drivers in New York State.
- Speeding also includes unsafe speeds for road and weather conditions.
- New drivers convicted of speeding will lose their license.

The message should discourage speeding by increasing awareness of the dangers and consequences of speeding.

4. Distracted Driving Facts

- Teen drivers are four times more likely to be involved in a distraction-related crash than any other age group.
- Crash risk for teen drivers increases as the number of teen passengers increases.
- Using cell phones while driving is dangerous. Other examples of distractions include **text messaging**, teen passengers, loud music, adjusting the stereo settings, eating, etc.

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The message should increase awareness of the risks of driving when distracted.

5. Impaired Driving Facts

- At all levels of blood alcohol concentration (BAC), the risk of involvement in a motor vehicle crash is greater for teens than for older drivers. Teens metabolize alcohol more slowly than adults.
- Mixing alcohol with certain other drugs can increase driving impairment.
- Many prescription or over-the-counter drugs (including cough medications) can impair the ability to drive.
- Marijuana affects the skills needed to drive safely which include alertness, the ability to react quickly and coordination.

The message should increase awareness of the risks associated with alcohol/drug use and driving and discourage its use. The message should also discourage riding with someone who has been drinking alcohol or using drugs.

Useful Websites

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration - www.nhtsa.dot.gov
- National Safety Council - www.nsc.org
- New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee - www.safeny.com
- New York State Department of Motor Vehicles - www.nysdmv.com
- New York State Association of Traffic Safety Boards - www.nysatsb.com
- AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety www.aaafoundation.org