

START SMART...

*The keys to safe
teen driving*



15 Going the Distance: **EXPECT SAFE DRIVING**

What are “risky driving” behaviors?

They are behaviors that put a driver at increased risk for crash or injury. These include speeding, tailgating, and using alcohol or other drugs and driving. Teenage drivers are more likely than older drivers to perform risky driving behaviors, which puts them at higher risk for crashes.

What are the most common risky driving behaviors?

Teenagers regularly report engaging in the following risky driving behaviors:

- ✓ *Running a red light.*
- ✓ *Disobeying a stop sign..*
- ✓ *Speeding 10-19 miles per hour over the speed limit in residential or school zones.*
- ✓ *Weaving through slower traffic.*
- ✓ *Changing lanes without signaling.*
- ✓ *Pulling out into traffic without enough space between cars.*
- ✓ *Eating, talking on phone, horsing around with passengers, etc.*
- ✓ *Playing the radio so loud that they can not hear car horns or sirens.*

Why do teenagers perform so many risky driving behaviors?

There are many reasons:

- ✓ *They are inexperienced drivers.*
- ✓ *They do not fully understand the risks.*
- ✓ *They like to experience the car’s “full potential.”*
- ✓ *They do not pay attention.*
- ✓ *They want to impress others.*
- ✓ *Sometimes they still “just act like kids.”*

What can parents do?

You can’t be in the car with your teen all the time. However, with the AAA StartSmart Parent-Teen Driving Agreement, you can set up clear expectations about safe driving. Tell your teen that you expect her/him to follow all traffic laws and signs and not doing so will cost her/him driving privileges or some other consequence.



Parents agree!

Set up rules for safe driving and consequences for unsafe driving. Clearly and repeatedly emphasize your expectations for safe driving. This will help your teen understand the importance of safe driving while protecting her/him from unnecessary risk.



AAA StartSmart Experiences

“When Paul got a speeding ticket, he acted like it wasn’t a big deal. He kept saying, ‘But, everybody speeds on that road.’ We told him that he wasn’t ‘everybody’ and that he wouldn’t be able to drive for two weeks, just like we said in our AAA StartSmart Parent-Teen Driving Agreement.”—Paul Arnold, Sr., father of 16-year-old Paul, Jr.

“My neighbor said she saw Samantha drive backwards all the way down the street. When I asked Sam about it, she said that she had forgotten something in the house. I was not pleased—kids play on our street.”—Shirley Richards, mother of 17-year-old Samantha

**Make
your expectations
for safe driving clear
and back them up with
consequences!**



StartSmart comments...

Safe driving results from practice and maturity. Teenagers are more likely to engage in risky driving behaviors. You can help make your teen a safe driver by making sure your expectations are clear. Set up rules for safe driving and consequences for unsafe driving from the beginning. In this way, your teen will KNOW what you expect and what will happen if s/he does not follow the rules.

BOTTOM LINE

- ✓ ***Talk about the risks involved in unsafe driving.***
- ✓ ***Set up rules for safe driving and consequences for breaking them. Repeatedly remind your teen about these.***
- ✓ ***Follow through with consequences for unsafe driving.***