

# START SMART...

The keys to safe teen driving



## 2 Always Use Seat Belts!

### Why is driving without wearing seat belts so dangerous?

- In crashes, seat belts help keep you and your passengers inside the vehicle where you are the safest.
- In crashes, seat belts keep you from hitting objects or other passengers inside the vehicle.
- Even if your car is equipped with airbags, seat belts are still needed to prevent serious injury in crashes.
- Drivers under age 21 are the least likely to wear seat belts and the most likely to crash.

### Parents' comments on seat belt use...

"There are some issues you take for granted when your son starts driving, because you assume he already knows the right thing to do. Use of seat belts falls into that category." —Joanne M.

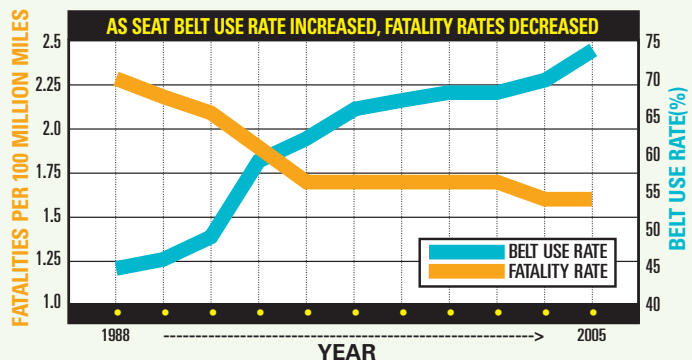
"Wearing a seat belt is just common sense. It has always been a rule in our house." —Arthur K.

"It is a good idea to have a rule about passengers buckling up because if someone gets injured in your car, you are liable. Seat belts will prevent serious injuries." —Al D.

**Make it a rule for yourself and your passengers to always wear seat belts!**

### DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ Nationwide, 63% of youth aged 16-20 who die in motor vehicle crashes were not buckled up.
- ✓ In fatal crashes, only 1% of belted occupants are ejected from their vehicle; 22% of unbelted occupants are ejected, and 3/4<sup>ths</sup> of them are killed.
- ✓ Lap and shoulder belts, when worn correctly, reduce the chance of serious injury by as much as 50%.
- ✓ Safety belts save over 14,000 lives each year.
- ✓ Research has shown that lap/shoulder belts, when used properly, reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passengers by 45% and the risk of moderate to critical injury by 50%.



## AAA StartSmart recommends...

Parents and teens should talk about using seat belts and set rules and consequences related to seat belt use *before* teens get a driver's license.

Establish a Seat Belt Policy. This policy should apply to all situations, including buckling up as a driver or passenger, and having all passengers buckle up. It is important that seat belt use becomes so much a habit that it is automatic.



### SET RULES RELATED TO SEAT BELT USE AND DRIVING!

As a Family, You Can Help Reduce Teen Driving Risk by Doing the Following:

**1** Talk about the dangers related to driving without wearing seat belts  
(see front page).

**2** Decide the following:

- There will be a Seat Belt Policy that applies to the driver and all passengers. Any violation will result in the loss of driving privileges.

**3** Set the following rules:

- Obey all traffic laws, including always wear your seat belt while driving.
- Always wear your seat belt as a passenger.
- Always have every passenger in a car you are driving wear a seat belt.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**4** Set possible consequences for breaking driving rules, for example:

- Teen drove without a seat belt.
  - Lose driving privileges for \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks/months
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Teen did not make passengers wear seat belts.
  - Lose driving privileges for \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks/months
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_