

START SMART...

The keys to safe teen driving



4 Teen Passengers

Why is driving with teen passengers so dangerous?

- Driving is a “new skill” for teens, and they need to pay close attention. Teen passengers can be a major distraction.
- Teen passengers may unintentionally encourage teen drivers to speed, show off, play loud music, or not pay enough attention to driving.
- Teen passengers may persuade or challenge teen drivers to do risky things, including running red lights or racing other vehicles.
- Teen passengers may directly interfere with driving.
- The likelihood of risk-taking behaviors such as speeding, tailgating, or weaving in and out of traffic is increased.

Parents' comments on teen passengers...

“I worry about my daughter having friends in the car, with loud music playing, and everybody talking at once. With all that going on, I know she can't pay enough attention to her driving.”—Cathy M.

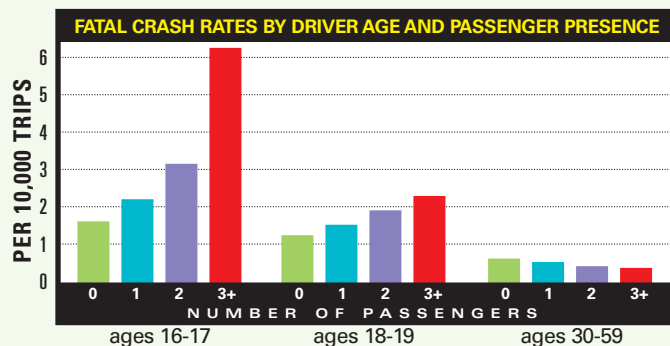
“When other teens are in the car, my main concern is Brian trying to do all kinds of daring things. That's why I limited his driving with friends during the first months after he got his license.”—Robert F.

“I just read about a study that proved teen drivers have more crashes when there are other teens in the vehicle. That doesn't surprise me, and it is one of the things I worry about.”—Janet R.

Before driving with teen passengers, teens should have several months of experience of driving alone and with an adult passenger.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ Teen crash rates are lowest with no teen passengers, increase with one teen passenger, and increase even more with two teen passengers.
- ✓ Fatal crash rates for 16- to 19-year-olds are 5 to 6 times higher when 2 or more teen passengers are present than when teens drive alone.
- ✓ For teens, crashes are 11 times more likely when driving at night with passengers than driving during the daytime without any passengers.



AAA recommends increasing privileges in steps, or “Checkpoints”

UNSUPERVISED DRIVING PRIVILEGES				
TEEN PASSENGERS	CHECKPOINT 1	CHECKPOINT 2	CHECKPOINT 3	CHECKPOINT 4
Daytime	None	1, sometimes	1	2, sometimes
Nighttime		None	1, sometimes	1
RECOMMENDED TIME IN EFFECT	FIRST 1-3 MONTHS AFTER LICENSURE	NEXT 1-3 MONTHS	NEXT 3-6 MONTHS	NEXT 3-6 MONTHS

When teens are first licensed, parents and teens should continue practice driving together and set strict limits on unsupervised driving with teen passengers. Then, as teens gain experience and demonstrate greater competence and responsibility, gradually increase privileges. It makes the limits on unsupervised driving easier for everybody to understand and manage when you review performance and adjust limits in regular steps, or “Checkpoints.”



SET PRIVILEGES AND RULES FOR TEEN PASSENGERS!

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

1 Talk about the dangers related to unsupervised driving with teen passengers (see front page).

2 Decide the following for unsupervised teen driving when first licensed:

- Teen passenger privilege (recommended: none, unless there is an adult present): _____

- Exceptions (recommended: school or work only): _____

- Length of time this driving privilege will be in effect (recommended: 1-3 months): _____

3 Set the following rules related to unsupervised driving with teen passengers:

- Check in with a parent every time you drive. Tell parent where you are going, who will be the passengers, and when you will return.
- Obey all traffic laws and signs, including speed limits.
- Never drive aggressively, including tailgating or cutting others off.
- Always require every passenger to wear a seatbelt.
- Do not take unnecessary risks while driving—such as playing around with passengers, adjusting the radio, or talking on the phone.
- Other: _____

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

- Teen took passengers in the vehicle without permission.
 - Lose driving privileges for _____ days/weeks/months.
 - Other: _____

5 When the first “Checkpoint” period is up, plan to increase the unsupervised teen passenger driving privilege if teen:

- Follows driving rules and privileges related to teen passengers.
- Advances in driving skills and judgment.
- Rarely loses driving privileges.