

# START SMART...

*the keys to safe  
teen driving*



## 5 Aggressive Driving

### ***What is “aggressive driving”?***

It is the operation of a motor vehicle in an unsafe and/or hostile manner without regard for others. Some examples include speeding, tailgating, weaving through traffic, cutting other cars off, and going through red lights and stop signs.

### ***When does aggressive driving happen?***

For some, aggressive driving is a habit. For others, it often happens when a driver is frustrated, impatient, or irritable. If impeded or challenged, aggressive drivers sometimes escalate their behavior into road rage. This makes it all the more important to *avoid aggressive driving and aggressive drivers*.

### ***How do you avoid becoming an aggressive driver?***

Develop an attitude of patience. Allow plenty of time to reach your destination on schedule. Alter your schedule to avoid driving when roads are most congested. If you're running late, call ahead so you can relax. Don't drive if you are angry, upset, or overly tired. When driving, relax, sit properly in your seat, ease your grip on the steering wheel, and don't clench your teeth. Give others the benefit of the doubt. Be polite, courteous, and forgiving.

### ***What should you do if confronted by an aggressive driver?***

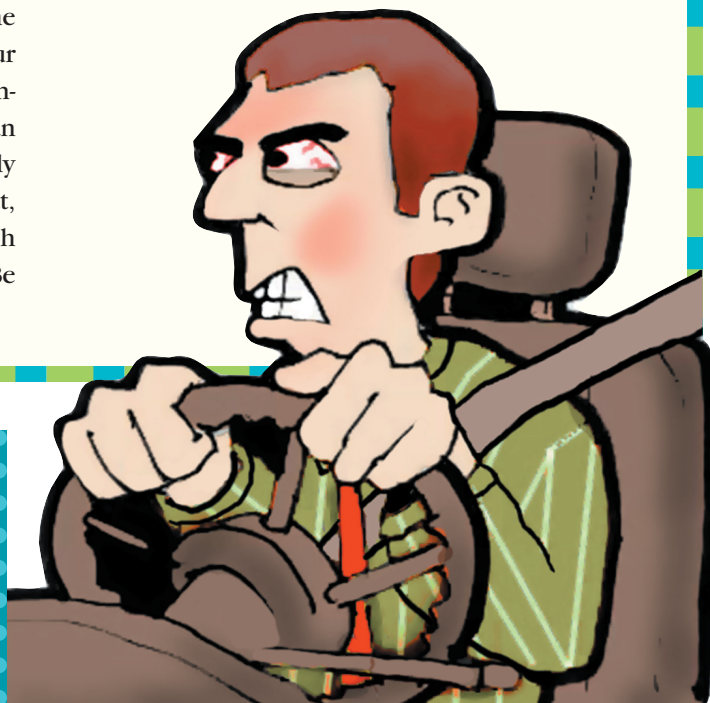
If you come across an aggressive driver, stay calm and relaxed. Make every attempt to get out of the way. *Don't escalate the situation.* Do not make eye contact or respond with grimaces, words, or gestures. Ignore any harassing gestures. You can report aggressive drivers to authorities by providing a vehicle and driver description, license plate number, location, and direction of travel. You can call 911 on your cell phone (pull over first!) to report directly to law enforcement.

### ***What can parents do?***

Talk to your teen about aggressive driving and road rage and the need for a calm and patient driving attitude. Set clear expectations and rules about safe driving, and be a good example.

### ***Parents agree!***

Talking to your teen about the dangers of aggressive driving and aggressive drivers helps to protect your teen from unnecessary risk.





## AAA StartSmart Experiences

*"I was driving the speed limit in the left lane when a guy came up behind me and flashed his lights. When I didn't move over 'fast enough,' he went around me screaming and yelling and honking. I should have been in the middle lane, but he should have been patient. He scared me. I just looked straight ahead until he was gone."*—**Christina, a 16-year-old sophomore**

*"Last Saturday, my daughter and I were running late. She wanted to get home because she had a date. She was driving faster and faster and yelled as a car pulled in front of her. I told her to slow down and calm down; driving isn't a video game."*—**Martha Mobley, mother of 16-year-old Jennifer**

*"Chuck can become over-anxious, especially in traffic. That's why I frequently talk to him about being calm and under control when driving."*—**Harold Kindry, father of 17-year-old Chuck**



## StartSmart comments...

Aggressive driving is dangerous, whether you are doing it yourself or someone else is. It is also risky driving; it causes crashes—or worse! Teens and parents need to understand why it's important to drive in a calm, relaxed way. Teens and parents should also know how to respond to an aggressive driver.

### BOTTOM LINE

- ✓ *Talk to your teen about driving attitudes, aggressive driving, and road rage.*
- ✓ *Set clear expectations and rules about safe driving.*

***Avoid  
aggressive driving  
and aggressive  
drivers!***

