



Safe Driving Tips

Teen Drivers and Passengers

Eliminate Distraction

Did you know that 59% of teenage passenger deaths occur in vehicles driven by another teenager? Additionally, almost half of all teenage crashes involve vehicles carrying one or more teen passengers. The likelihood of fatal crashes involving young drivers significantly rises when other teenagers are present in the vehicle, and this risk escalates with an increasing number of teenage passengers.

Why? Other teen passengers are distractions to the driver and cause a loss of focus on driving. In addition, peer pressure from the passengers can cause teen drivers to take actions they wouldn't take if they were driving alone or with adults. Teenagers drive faster and take more risks when carrying peers than when carrying adults especially if the peers are young men. Given that behaving unconventionally can be a way to establish credibility with peers, the requirement for drivers to exhibit safe driving behavior can create significant social pressure on a teen driver. For example, everyone else can act silly or crazy in the vehicle, but the driver can't. Even more worrisome are acts of disruption that directly interfere with driving, such as a passenger grabbing the steering wheel or nudging a driver.

Illinois law imposes restrictions on the number of passengers that teen drivers are allowed to have in the vehicle.

While holding a permit: Number of passengers limited to one in the front seat and the number of safety belts in the back seat. During the Initial Licensing Phase (age 16-17): For the first year of licensing, or until the driver is age 18, whichever occurs first, the number of passengers is limited to one person under age 20, unless the additional passenger(s) is a sibling, stepsibling, child, or stepchild of the driver. After this period, the number of passengers is limited to one in the front seat and the number of safety belts in the back seat.

Ohio law imposes restrictions on the number of passengers that teen drivers are allowed to have in the vehicle.

Teen drivers under the age of 17 may not carry more than one passenger that is not an immediate family member unless they are accompanied by their parent or legal guardian.

What can you do as a parent? It's crucial for both you and your teen to be well-informed about the law. Define the repercussions of violating the law in your Parent-Teen Driving Contract. Encourage your teen to be a responsible passenger, especially when riding with another teen driver, and to act as a supportive "co-pilot" if the driver's attention starts to waver.

Drive Safely!

