

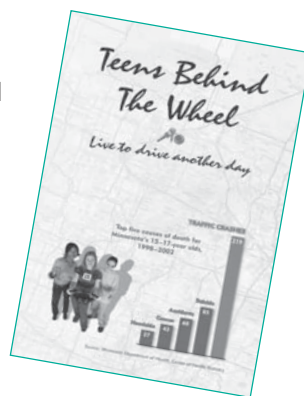
## New Resources to Help Your Young Workers Survive Behind the Wheel

You probably know that young drivers—your young workers—are the most likely to be involved in crashes. Every year, drivers under the age of 25 are involved in six million crashes that result in 14,000 deaths. In fact, traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for people between the ages of 16 and 25. A couple of brand-new programs provide tools for employers—and parents—to raise awareness and change behaviors in this high-risk group.

### **Teens Behind the Wheel**

This Minnesota-specific education program, designed for 15- to 17-year-olds, can be presented in one session. The program includes a leader's guide with detailed lesson plan, a booklet for students and a video. The tone is irreverent and laced with humor. The purpose of *Teens Behind the Wheel* is to go beyond basic driver's education and provide additional safety messages. Specifically, it's designed to help teens:

- Recognize they are more likely than any other age group to be injured or killed in a car crash.
- Identify driver distractions and risk-taking.
- Understand the consequences of being involved in a crash.
- Develop techniques and strategies to help them be safer drivers.



*“Teens Behind the Wheel”* is being distributed by the Minnesota Wireless Foundation, which produced the program in association with AAA Minnesota/Iowa; the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety; and the Minnesota Safety Council.

### **Teen Driver: A Family Guide to Teen Driver Safety**

This new publication from the National Safety Council could be an excellent resource for your employees who are parents of young drivers, as well as the drivers themselves. It's designed to help families and teens manage the experience from beginner to independent driver. The purpose of the guide is to provide specific actions that parents and teens can take to reduce risks.

### **Alive at 25 Defensive Driving Course**

This National Safety Council program debuted in 1995, but has recently been revised. It's a highly interactive four-hour program that encourages young drivers ages 16-24 to take responsibility for their driving behavior. The goals of the program include teaching young adults that:

- As a driver or passenger, they can greatly reduce their risk by taking control.
- Committing to changing their driving behavior makes personal, legal and financial sense.

For more information about any of these programs or the Minnesota NETS program as a whole, contact Lisa Kons at 651-228-7330/800-444-9150; e-mail: [kons@mnsafetycouncil.org](mailto:kons@mnsafetycouncil.org)

NOTE: The material on the next page is designed for distribution to your employees.

# Teens Behind the Wheel

Teenagers are killed more often on the road than any other age group, even though adult drivers far outnumber teen drivers. So, how is this possible? Consider what is generally known about young drivers and it makes sense why roadways often carry teenagers to their graves:

- Teenagers have limited driving experience.
- Teenagers are most likely to take extra risks behind the wheel.

## Risky Business

There are six main reasons teens get “expelled” from the road more than anyone else:

**Not buckling up.** You’ve mastered the Web, the remote control, and everything in between. Still, clicking the seat belt remains a mystery. It’s a simple concept—always buckle up, even in the back seat. Believe it or not, in the event of a crash, those riding without a seat belt turn into “human torpedoes” and slam into other passengers.

**Not paying attention.** Take your eyes off your passengers, leave the latté alone, put down the burger and hang up the cell. And oh yeah, hands off the CDs. Now—focus on driving. Remember, you’re in control of a 5,000-pound machine and responsible for the safety of yourself, your friends and other drivers.

**Driving with other teens.** “More the merrier” isn’t the case when it comes to driving. The more friends packed into your ride, the greater the chance for a crash because too many passengers can pull your attention off the road.

**Speeding.** Lead-foots putting the pedal to the metal will get shot—by radar guns. Take it easy on the gas and sloooooooooooooow down. The faster you drive, the harder you crash—just ask your physics teacher.

**Not checking for traffic.** Let’s do the math. If car A is traveling west at 60 mph and car B is traveling east at 75 mph...oh, never mind. It’s like crossing the street—look

both ways. When you come to an intersection, stop completely, observe other vehicles, and make sure it’s clear before pulling out.

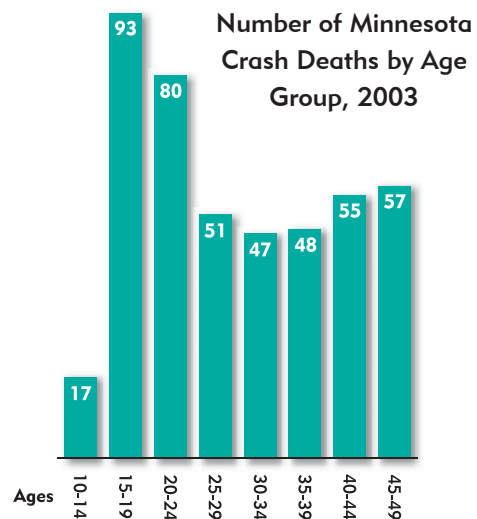
**Fatigue.** A drowsy driver is just as deadly as someone driving drunk, probably with worse breath. Hit the sack at a decent hour and don’t drive when those eyelids start getting heavy.

## All Aboard!

If your passengers get rowdy, pull over and stop the vehicle. Ignore teasing and pressure to take risks behind the wheel. When your friends see that you won’t react, they’ll most likely quit.

Finally, tell your passengers:

- “Buckle up!” That means everybody, every seat, every time.
- “Hands off!” Don’t let others interfere with your ability to drive safely.
- “No alcohol or drugs in the car.” ACTs and SATs are bad enough, so leave DWIs out of the mix.



Source: *Teens Behind the Wheel: Teen Crash Prevention Education Program*