

## Beginning Drivers' Crashes Differ

Written by Administrator  
Saturday, 25 June 2011 10:18 -

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Teen drivers have the highest crash risk of any age group. Per mile traveled, they have the highest inv

**Percentage of fatal crashes by characteristic, 2004**

**Driver Age:**

**16**

**17-19**

**20-49**

**Driver error**

**78**

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69

55

Speeding

39

33

23

Single vehicle

52

45

39

3+ occupants

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29

24

18

Drivers killed with .08+ BAC

13

25

44

Sources - FARS, NHTSA 2004

**Driver error:** Compared with crashes of older drivers, those of 16-year-olds more often involve driver error.

**Speeding:** 16-year-old drivers have a higher rate of crashes in which excessive speed is a factor.

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**Single-vehicle crashes:** More of 16-year-olds' fatal crashes involve only the teen's vehicle. Typically these are high-speed crashes in which the driver lost control.

**Passengers:** 16-year-olds' fatal crashes are more likely to occur when other teenagers are in the car. The risk increases with every additional passenger.

**Alcohol:** Although this is a problem among drivers of all ages, it's actually less of a problem for 16-year-olds. Typically, less than 15 percent of fatally injured 16-year-old drivers have blood alcohol concentrations of .08 grams per deciliter or greater. However, alcohol quickly becomes a problem in the later teen years.

**Night driving:** This is a high-risk activity for beginners. Per mile driven, the nighttime fatal crash rate for 16-year-olds is about twice as high as during the day.

**Low belt use:** Teenagers generally are less likely than adults to use safety belts.

## Graduated Licensing Can Help

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Teenagers perceive a driver's license as a ticket to freedom. It's momentous for parents, too. Though t

An effective way to reduce this toll is to enact graduated licensing, under which driving privileges are p

Graduated systems that are well designed restrict night driving, limit teen passengers, set zero alcohol

### What Parents of Teenagers Can Do

With or without a graduated licensing law, parents can establish rules based on the graduated model.  
In particular:

**Don't rely solely on driver education.** Driver education may be the most convenient way to learn skills, b

**Know the law.** Become familiar with [www.ohs.org/parent-factsheet-laws](http://www.ohs.org/parent-factsheet-laws) the rules. To lea

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**Restrict night driving.** Most young drivers' nighttime fatal crashes occur from 9 p.m. to midnight, so

**Restrict passengers.** Teen passengers in a vehicle can distract a beginning driver and/or lead to gr

**Supervise practice driving.** Take an active role in helping your teenager learn how to drive. Plan a series of

**Remember that you're a role model.** Teens learn a lot by example, so practice safe driving. Teens with crashes

**Require safety belt use.** Don't assume that belt use when you're in the car with your 16-year-old means

**Prohibit drinking.** Make it clear that it's illegal and highly dangerous for a teenager to drink alcohol

**Choose vehicles for safety, not image.** Teens should drive vehicles that reduce their chances of a crash and offer

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Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety

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