

# TEEN TOPICS

## Making It A Safer Summer For Teen Drivers

(NAPSA)—The reason many teens have serious driving accidents can be summed up in one word—inexperience. Whether they are on their way to surf, swim or start a summer job, teens may find themselves in driving situations they are not yet equipped to handle.

Parents can keep teens safer this summer, say officials at GEICO, by helping young drivers develop more experience and limiting certain driving situations for teens until they are better prepared to handle them. Parents can:

- Limit night driving. Many teen car crashes take place between 9 p.m. and midnight.
- Restrict passengers. More passengers in the car increases the chance of greater risk-taking and leads to greater distractions.
- Keep it slow and safe for starters. Teens need to stay away from fast-moving, high volumes of traffic until they feel comfortable in such situations.
- Be firm about safety belt use. Require that your teenagers wear safety belts at all times.
- Discuss realistic consequences of drug and alcohol use and how they are unacceptable while driving.

Parents can also help by:

1. Providing training for bad weather situations. Limit your teen's driving during periods of bad weather until the teen demonstrates a high level of competence and confidence.
2. Supervising as much practice as possible. Take an active role in the teenager's driving practice. Make a firm schedule to supervise the future driver and stick to it.



**Parents can make summer a safer season by giving teen drivers as much supervised driving experience as possible.**

3. Restricting cell phones to emergency use only. Provide your young teen with a cell phone in the car for emergency use only.

4. Choosing safe vehicles for your children. Proper attention to the vehicle a teen drives is as important as his or her actual driving. Avoid small cars, trucks and sports utility vehicles.

Look for automobiles with high safety ratings. Go to [hwysafety.org](http://hwysafety.org) for vehicle safety ratings.

5. Serving as a responsible role model. New drivers learn a lot by example, so practice safe driving. Teens with poor driving records often reflect the behavior of parents with poor driving records.

For a free copy of GEICO's "Can I Borrow the Car?" brochure and other teen safe driving materials, visit [www.geico.com](http://www.geico.com) and open the link to the GEICO Information Center.