

Preventing Teen Driving Deaths

(NAPSA)—A recent survey conducted by The Allstate Foundation found some intriguing data about how parents protect their teens.

While parents know the No. 1 killer of teens is car crashes caused by teen drivers, the majority don't understand the main causes of these crashes or the current Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws.

The survey also found that many parents still delay safe-driving conversations with their teens until shortly before licensure, think their teens are immune to the risk of car crashes, allow their teens to drive or ride in dangerous conditions, and model unsafe behavior behind the wheel.

For ideas on protecting your child as a driver or passenger, consider these tips from parenting expert Dr. Laurence Steinberg:

Talk with your child early and often.

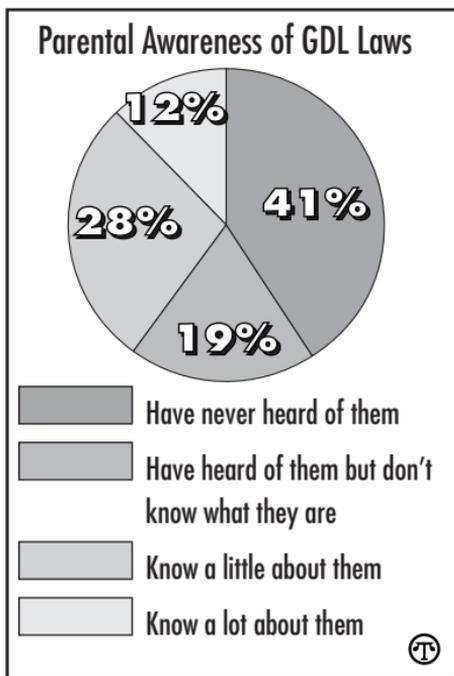
The survey showed that 54 percent of parents first talked about safe driving with their children at the ages of 14 and 15—a year or less before receiving a permit. Remember, car crashes are more deadly than drugs and suicide among teens, so it's critical to discuss safe driving early and often.

Shake the “not my teen” syndrome.

Two-thirds of parents think teens are bad drivers, but 88 percent trust their own teens to drive safely. As a constant reminder that no teen is immune, create a parent-teen driving agreement.

Restrict dangerous driving situations.

Ninety percent of parents permit their teens to drive after dark, 77 percent allow driving with friends and 70 percent allow driving in bad weather within the first few months of licensure. To reduce your teen's risk of a crash,



A new survey suggests parents unknowingly fuel the problem of teen driving disasters.

enforce rules about driving in these dangerous situations.

Practice what you preach.

The survey showed that many parents have talked on a cell phone (71 percent); operated a radio or electronic device (62 percent); or broken the law (25 percent) while driving with their teen. Modeling good driving behavior as a parent is a major rule of the road.

Exert positive adult peer pressure.

Almost half of the parents surveyed said other, more lenient parents make it difficult to control their own teens' driving privileges. To protect all teens, parents should encourage their peers and school administrators to create a culture of safe driving in the community.

For state-by-state GDL laws and more information, visit www.ProtectTeenDrivers.com.