



Helping teenagers become safer drivers

FACTS:

- 1** Road crashes are one of the leading causes of death among young people.
- 2** Speeding and drink driving are the main causes of motor vehicle crashes.
- 3** A zero blood alcohol limit applies to all Learner and Provisional P1 and P2 licence holders. **This means NO ALCOHOL before driving.**
- 4** Speed limits for young drivers are also restricted with a maximum speed of 80km/h for a Learner, 90km/h for the Provisional P1 licence and 100km/h for the Provisional P2 licence.

Other factors associated with young driver road crashes:

Driver inexperience: Often young drivers don't realise that it takes time and lots of practice to develop safe driving skills.

Overconfidence and risk taking: Young drivers can be over confident about their driving ability and underestimate dangers on the road.

Not wearing a seatbelt: Drivers and passengers who do not wear seatbelts are more likely to be killed or seriously injured in a crash.

Driver fatigue: Work, sport and study often mean busy lifestyles for young people, which may cause them to drive when tired – especially late at night. Driving tired significantly impairs driving, even if the driver does not feel sleepy.

Having friends as passengers: Young drivers may be distracted by passengers or may feel pressured to take risks, such as speeding.

Driving affected by drugs: Drugs put a driver at greater risk of crashing as drugs affect a driver's skill, mood and, most importantly, behaviour. Safe driving requires clear judgement, concentration and ability to react to what's happening on the road.

Introduced on 1 July 2000, the **NSW Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS)** aims to help young drivers gain more experience. All learners must have at least 50 hours of supervised on-road driving experience prior to their test to progress to the Provisional (P1) licence, which they hold for a minimum of 12 months. After a hazard perception test, drivers progress to the Provisional (P2) licence for a minimum of 24 months. For more information about the Graduated Licensing Scheme and road rules, contact the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) on 13 22 13 or www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

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When your teenager is a Learner Driver (L)

NSW GLS requires a minimum of 50 hours supervised driving during the learner phase, but aim for over 100 hours. Additional hours of supervised driving in different conditions, such as night time or wet weather, helps your teenager become a safer driver.

Real on-road driving experience is more beneficial than "advanced" or "defensive" off-road driver training.

Tips for supervising your teenager driver

- Be positive and quickly acknowledge when your teenager does well.
- Don't criticise.
- Make instructions short and clear and allow the young driver to concentrate on the task at hand.
- Shorter drives can be useful early on.
- Watch the road and point out potential hazards.
- At the end of the practice drive, recap in one or two sentences the young driver's achievements and indicate areas for further development.
- When you are driving, be a positive influence and drive as safely as your young driver should.

When your teenager becomes a Provisional Driver (P1 + P2)

Remember, your teenager is still very new to driving. Continue to encourage safe driving including:

- Gradually increasing the number of passengers in the car – for young drivers, every extra passenger increases the chance of crashing.
- Slowly increasing the amount of independent night driving – this is a time when young drivers are more likely to crash.

Before your teenager goes out

Before your teenager goes out, particularly when partying, spend some time discussing options for getting home safely. Some ideas for teenagers to consider:

- Leave the car at home.
- Catch a train or bus - check timetables to avoid waiting at stations or bus stops.
- Organise to be picked up by someone who is not drinking.
- Stay overnight with a friend.

Also discuss:

- Dealing with pressure from friends to drive unsafely.
- Being a responsible passenger.

Remember parents can help teenagers plan safe outings – offer to drop them off and pick them up.

For additional copies of this fact sheet or further information about youth injury prevention contact Youthsafe on 02 9809 4615 or check the website www.youthsafe.org



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