



# Parents:

## Speak Early, Speak Often about Teen Driving Safety

Car crashes are a leading cause of teen deaths in New York State. An involved parent can help cut a teen's risk in half. See the reverse side and take these steps to talk with your teen about driving safety.



# **As a parent, you have the greatest influence over your teen's driving. Take these steps to talk with your teen about driving safety.**

## **Speak Early about Driving Safety**

Speak about safe driving before your teen can drive. When your teen is riding with you, strike up a conversation about why it's important to wear a seat belt, be courteous to other drivers and follow the rules of the road.

## **Be a Role Model**

Set a good example by driving safely and following the rules of the road. Teens learn about driving by watching the way you drive. If you talk on the phone, text, speed or drive without buckling up, your teen is likely to do the same.

## **Talk about the Laws**

Know and speak with your teen about the New York State Graduated Drivers Licensing Laws (NYS GDL) and other laws for drivers. The GDL has a proven track record of saving the lives of teen drivers. It is a system that helps new drivers gain skills under low risk conditions. Use the NYS GDL to set driving limits for your teen driver. For GDL information, go to [www.dmv.ny.gov/youngerdriver](http://www.dmv.ny.gov/youngerdriver).

## **Set and Enforce Driving Rules**

Use a parent/teen driving agreement to set and enforce driving rules during the first year of unsupervised driving. Gradually introduce new driving privileges as your teen proves to be a responsible driver. For samples of agreements, go to [www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury\\_prevention/teens.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/teens.htm), [www.dmv.ny.gov/youngerdriver](http://www.dmv.ny.gov/youngerdriver) or contact your car insurance company.

## **Tips to Speak So Your Teen Listens**

The way you speak to your teen matters. Consider setting these ground rules when talking with your teen.

### **We agree to:**

- Speak to each other with respect.
- Take turns speaking and listening.
- Give each other our full attention when speaking (no watching television, talking on a cell phone, etc.).
- Take a break if one or both of us gets too upset to listen or talk calmly.

### **We agree NOT to:**

- Tell others things shared in confidence.
- Yell at each other, or exchange "putdowns" or name calling, even if we are angry or frustrated.

## **More Information**

New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committees

[www.safeny.ny.gov/SRO-toolkit](http://www.safeny.ny.gov/SRO-toolkit)

New York State Department of Health

[www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury\\_prevention](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/ParentsAreTheKey/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/ParentsAreTheKey/parents)

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute

[www.teendriversource.org](http://www.teendriversource.org)