



Simsbury Police Department



"In Partnership With Our Community"

Chief Peter N. Ingvertsen

Parents: Set the Rules Before They Hit the Road Talk to Your Teen Drivers About the "5 to Drive"

Learning to drive is very exciting for teens and a driver's license is a giant step toward independence. But when a teen driver is getting ready to hit the road, a parent's job isn't done. In fact, talking to your kids about the dangers of driving is one of the best things you can do to keep them safe. Tragically, many parents just assume their teens get this information elsewhere, so they don't have the conversation. October 19-25 is Teen Driver Safety Week and it's a great time for parents to talk to their teen drivers about the risks they face.

Motor vehicle crashes are the **leading cause of death** for teens 14-18 in America. In 2012 alone, 2,055 teen drivers were involved in fatal crashes and 859 died.

Every parent should talk to their teens about the rules of safe driving, but a recent survey shows that only 25 percent of parents have done so. It can be difficult to talk to teens about anything, let alone a serious topic like safe driving. Many parents don't know what to say, or give up if they feel like they're not being heard. In order to provide parents with the tools, resources, and words they need to keep their teens safe, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has teamed up with state and local highway safety and law enforcement organizations on the teen driver safety campaign "5 to Drive". The education and awareness campaign identifies the five most important rules all teen drivers need to follow.

Talk to your teen about the "5 to Drive," and *Set the Rules Before They Hit the Road*.

1. No Drinking and Driving. Compared with other age groups, teen drivers are at a greater risk of death in alcohol-related crashes, even though they're too young to legally buy or possess alcohol. Nationally in 2012, 28 percent of the young drivers (15 to 20 years old) killed in crashes had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .01 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher.

2. Buckle Up. Every Trip. Every Time. Front Seat and Back. In 2012, of all the young (15- to 20-year-old) passenger vehicle drivers killed in crashes, more than half (55%) of those killed were not wearing seat belts.

3. Put It Down. One Text or Call Could Wreck It All. In 2012, among drivers 15 to 19 years old who were distracted in fatal crashes, nearly 1 in 5 were distracted by their phones. This age group had the highest percentage of drivers distracted by phone use.

4. Stop Speeding Before It Stops You. In 2012, speeding was a factor in almost half (48%) of the crashes that killed 15- to 20-year-old drivers. By comparison, 30 percent of all fatal crashes that year involved speeding.

5. No More Than One Passenger at a Time. Extra passengers for a teen driver can lead to disastrous results. Research shows that the risk of a fatal crash goes up in direct relation to the number of teens in a car. The likelihood of teen drivers engaging in risky behavior triples when traveling with multiple passengers.

Please talk to your kids—this week and every week—about how to be smart and safe behind the wheel.

For more information about Teen Driver Safety Week and the “5 to Drive” campaign, please visit www.safercar.gov/parents or call Patrolman First Class Lauren Devin at (860) 658-3131.