

Safe Driving Teen Monthly Bulletin

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Teen Killed in Motorcycle Crash

A teenager was killed when his motorcycle crashed into the side of a car. The car turned in front of the motorcycle on U.S. 41 at Montgomery Avenue, according to the Florida Highway Patrol.

The motorcyclist, an 18 year-old teen, was ejected and pronounced dead at the scene.

The driver of the car suffered minor injuries.

The Florida Highway Patrol said no charges were filed pending the completion of the accident investigation.

Source: wtsp.com ♦

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For Teens and their Parents



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Teen Killed in Motorcycle Crash
- 2 Teen Killed in Crash going to Prom
- 3 Tips for Parents: The 100 Deadliest Days for Teen Drivers

Lessons Learned

As we head into nicer weather, there is an increase in ridership of motorcycles and mopeds. And with the increase in the cost of fuel, many drivers are turning to two wheels as a way to reduce expenses.

So what are some steps you can take, when sharing the road with motorcycles or mopeds? Several states are promoting the campaign "*Look twice. Save a life*". The **Florida Department of Transportation's** website, offers these tips:

- Search the traffic around you constantly and expect to see motorcycles. Check your blind spots before changing lanes or merging, especially in heavy traffic.
- Motorcycles can easily be hidden in traffic. Look for a helmet above, tires below, or a shadow alongside a vehicle that you can't see around.
- Double-check traffic at intersections before you turn or pull out.
- Make sure to always signal when changing lanes to ensure the motorcycle rider knows what action you intend to take.
- Treat motorcyclists with the same respect you give to other motorists.
- Leave at least a four-second distance



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between your car and a motorcycle in front of you. Note when a motorcycle passes a point in the road. If your vehicle passes the same point in less than four seconds, you're following too closely.

- When passing a motorcycle, give a full lane to the motorcycle. Do not share lanes!
- Keep a watchful eye at all times. Individual motorcycles may blend into a larger group and may be closer than you think.
- Stay focused on your driving. Avoid distractions such as talking on your cell phone, texting, eating, or changing radio stations.
- Remember that failing to yield right-of-way can result in the death of a motorcyclist.

Weather and road conditions present greater problems to the motorcyclist than to the driver of a motor vehicle. A puddle may hide a hole that jolts your car; the same hidden hole can throw a motorcycle out of control. When it rains, reduced traction makes it difficult for a motorcyclist to balance. It is more difficult for the motorcyclist to stay in control on slippery roads. Wet or icy roads impair a motorcyclist's ability to brake and maneuver. Wind gusts can move a motorcycle across an entire lane. Gravel roads decrease traction and may cause a rider to slow down or brake where a car would not. Allow extra space for motorcycles in all adverse conditions. Use extra care when you are following a motorcyclist that is crossing railroad tracks. Railroad tracks present a special problem for motorcyclists, because motorcycle tires can get caught in the grooves of the crossing, causing the rider to lose her or his balance.

When you are following a motorcycle that is carrying a passenger, use extra caution. Passengers change the way the motorcyclist should operate. A motorcyclist who is inexperienced in transporting a passenger may have extra difficulties with balancing and controlling the motorcycle.

May is Motorcycle awareness month. For more tips:

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/Motorcycles>

Teen Killed in Crash going to Prom

Police say four students heading to the high school in a convertible were in a car crash. The 18-year-old driver of the convertible was killed.

It's unclear who was at fault in two car crash. One person in the other vehicle, an S.U.V., was airlifted to a hospital and released.

The three students in the car were also taken to the hospital. One pedestrian was also injured when hit by debris from the crash.

The driver and a possible passenger in the S.U.V. got out after the crash and ran from the scene. Police are still looking for those people.

A Crisis Intervention Unit was sent to the high school to speak with students during its Junior/Senior Prom.

Police are still investigating and are waiting on toxicology reports to see if drugs or alcohol were involved in the crash.

Source: abc-7.com ♦

Lessons Learned

Prom and Graduation should be such happy, celebratory and memorable times. But with the excitement of the occasion, sometimes it can be easy to let your guard down. During these occasions, it is even more important to be a defensive driver and be on the look-out for other drivers' poor driving behavior and be **prepared to react** to it.

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Because these are high risk times, involve your passengers on helping to **scan the driving environment** and be on guard for other drivers who may be reckless, distracted, drowsy or under the influence. Consider **limiting your passengers** to just one. Per passenger your chance of a crash escalates.

Another defensive driving strategy is to **increase your following distance** to three or four seconds and maintain a **space cushion** around your vehicle and increase it more for poor weather. This will give you more time to react, in case of a mishap.

Keep your emotions in check, as well as the people you are with. Remind yourself and them not to sweat the small stuff and if you notice that anyone seems to be a little too ramped up, take some time out before getting into the vehicle.

Stay awake. If you are drowsy, pull over to a safe place, drink caffeine, do some quick exercise, get your mind and blood moving. Driving drowsy can be a dangerous as driving under the influence.

Speak up. If you don't like the way some one is acting or driving, tell them to cut it out. Remind them that there is extra enforcement and DUI patrols are out. Save the horsing around for the dance, party or outside of car.

Make sure everyone is belted. In many states it is a primary reason to be stopped by authorities. Safety belts are your best protection against fatality and serious injury in a crash. Before the key goes into the ignition, be sure everyone has theirs on.

Avoid regrets. With every decision, ask yourself "Is it worth the risk?"

For more 2011 Safe Prom Tips:

<http://teens.lowestpricetrafficschool.com/2011/04/prepare-for-safe-prom-communication.html>

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Tips for Parents: The 100 Deadliest Days for Teen Drivers

We made it past the rainy season and the winter weather, and as spring draws down we are now ready to celebrate summer! But did you know that Memorial Day officially kicks off the "100 Deadliest Days for Teen Drivers"?

Motor vehicle crashes are the number one killer of teens across the board. So much so, that the Centers for Disease Control have developed facts sheets, suggestions, and resources for Parents, Teens and Physicians.

http://www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/Teen_Drivers/

The National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration also developed a Parent Responsibility Tool Kit, reminding parents of the importance of continual parental oversight on teen driving, the dangers involved and that driving is a privilege that parents have the right to deny.

www.nhtsa.gov/planners/PRtoolkit09/index.htm

Parenting isn't for slackers. Just because teens look like adults, doesn't mean that their brains are fully developed. That doesn't happen until their twenty's.

You may have had the conversations on safety, risk assessment, and responsibly before. But those aren't singular conversations, and conversations aren't enough. Do you have a driving contract with your teen? Have you considered a prom contract? Are you familiar with the Graduated Driving Licensing (GDL) standards? Do you know that you can be held financially liable for their actions? Do you ever monitor their driving? Are there shared responsibilities on vehicle maintenance and upkeep? Do you limit their access to the car? Do you limit passengers in the vehicle? Do they know what to do in a driving emergency? And do they know that they can always count on you to help them if they are feeling unwell as the driver or unsafe as the passenger?

The 100 deadliest days continue until Labor Day, but parental oversight of teen driving is a year around job.