

Safe Driving Teen Monthly Bulletin

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Teen Drivers Continue To Make the Same Mistakes

Thus far, for the month of March, at least 39 teens have been killed in motor vehicle collisions and 26 have been injured.

Source: <http://www.google.com> ♦

Lessons Learned

A Google News search of teens killed in March revealed that at least thirty nine teens died in motor vehicle collisions during the month. This Google search of news reports is not a scientific survey and it doesn't

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For Teens and their Parents



turn up all of the news articles nor does it reflect the official statistics by state safety agencies. It is safe to assume that many more teens were killed than were reported in this search. This search didn't include teen passengers killed while an adult was at the wheel or teens that were killed in multiple car crashes where an adult was deemed to be at fault for causing the collision. It only included fatal crashes in which the teen driver was alleged to have been at fault.

The article search shows that teens are making the same poor driving decisions and it supports the figures from scientific surveys in regard to teen crashes. In the 38 reported fatal crashes:

- 24 teen drivers were killed
- 17 teen passengers were killed
- 10 teen drivers were injured
- 17 additional passengers were injured in fatal collisions
- 4 people in other vehicles were killed as the result of the teen's mistake.

- 10 people in other vehicles were injured
- 68% of the crashes were single vehicle crashes
- Seat belts were not used in 47% of the crashes
- High speed was identified as the contributing factor in 32% of the crashes
- 82% of the crashes involved loss of control of the vehicle by the teen driver (Loss of control is generally caused by a driver distraction in which the driver leaves the road and tries to over-correct, or when the driver is driving too fast for conditions and fails to negotiate a curve or turn, or a combination of high speed and a driver distraction.)
- 1 fatal crash involved running from the police.
- Alcohol use was considered to be the contributing factor in 5 of the crashes.
- In 8 of the crashes, the vehicle was carrying 3 or more occupants.
- Arizona led the other states with 5 teen deaths, all from one crash, followed by Ohio with 4.

This unscientific article search shows that the statistics on teen driving hold up. Most teen driving crashes are single vehicle crashes and the main causes for teen driving deaths are speeding, driver distraction, lack of seat belt use, and use of alcohol or other drugs.

Graduated Licensing Laws (GDL) are designed to limit the number of passengers a teen driver can carry and to try to limit distractions by prohibiting use of cell phones. Violating traffic laws can result in suspension of a teen driver's license. Both parents and teens should know and understand their state's Graduated Licensing Laws and parents should enforce them.

Drunk Teens Are Dangerous In Any Type Of Vehicle

Four Amish teens arrested after crashing buggy into patrol car.

Source: [http:// http://www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com) ♦

Lessons Learned

Four Amish teens in western New York were arrested in March after attending a party where alcohol was consumed and then hitting the road in their horse drawn buggies.

The teens were all taking part in a rite of passage practiced in some Amish communities known as "rumspringa" in which Amish youth, beginning at the age of 16, experience the temptations of the outside world. Rumspringa ends when the youth decides to be baptized into the Amish community or chooses to leave and live in the outside world.

The driver of one of the buggies made a sudden lane change and had the misfortune of running into a police car. The buggy overturned and one the occupants was slightly injured. They, along with the occupants of another buggy, were

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arrested and could face DUI charges. The same laws apply to horse drawn vehicles as well as motor vehicles. The drivers of several other buggies fled the scene.

This story has made its way around the web as a humorous oddity, but it could have had tragic results had the police officer been driving faster or the buggy been fully out into the next lane.

In a related and not so humorous story, a Michigan teen hit a patrol car that was parked on the side of the highway with its emergency lights flashing. Luckily, the deputy was not in the car at the time and was not injured but the patrol car was damaged too badly to drive. The teenage girl was caught a short time later and breathalyzer results showed her intoxication level to be more than three times the legal limit. She blew a 0.24; the legal limit is 0.08. She will be charged under Michigan's "super drunk" law which mandates more jail time and heavier fines.

The month of March saw at least five alcohol related collisions that led to the deaths of 7 teens and one pedestrian.

Tips for Parents: Parents Keep Making the Same Mistakes

A teenager driving on a restricted license and her mother both face charges in a fatal crash that killed a Fulton County teacher and injured two others.

Source: [http:// http://www.ajc.com](http://http://www.ajc.com) ♦

Police are now saying they believe the juvenile was backing the car out of the driveway and struck the 73 year-old woman with an open door. They also believe the juvenile accidentally hit the gas, instead of the brake.

Source: [http:// http://www.wsbt.com](http://http://www.wsbt.com) ♦

These are two tragic cases in which an unlicensed teen was driving, unsupervised.

In the case of the teen who caused a crash that killed a teacher and severely injured two others, the teen's mother had gone with her daughter to pick up a second vehicle. She allowed her teen daughter, who had a learner's permit, to drive one car while she drove the other. Driving on a busy, major highway during rush hour in Atlanta, the teen struck another vehicle carrying the victims, driving them into the path of an oncoming tractor-trailer.

The teen and her mother were charged in the crash and the mother could face vehicular homicide charges.

In the other event, a 13 year old was attempting to back a vehicle out of a driveway and struck his 73 year old grandmother with the open door. The teen panicked and didn't know how to stop the car. His grandmother received a severe head injury.

Teens should never be allowed to drive until they have a learner's permit and then, only under supervision of a licensed adult over the age of 21 in the passenger seat next to them. A learner's permit does not permit a teen to drive alone under any circumstances. Teens on a learner's permit need that adult to guide them through the driving situation until they have learned enough and are old enough to pass the tests for an operator's license.



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The advertisement features a woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue and white striped shirt and denim overalls, sitting on a couch and smiling while looking at a laptop. The background is a warm, brownish-orange color.