

Safe Driving Teen Monthly Bulletin

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Lots of June graduates die shortly before or after graduation.

According to news reports this far, June's death rate for teen drivers was about the same as May's. At least 43 teens were killed in motor vehicle collisions

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

Lessons Learned

A Google News search of teens killed this far in June revealed that at least forty three teens died in motor

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vehicle collisions during the month. This Google search of news reports is not a scientific survey and it doesn't 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.

In the 41 reported fatal crashes:

- 27 teen drivers were killed.
- 16 teen passengers were killed.
- 14 teen drivers were injured.
- 42 additional passengers were injured in fatal collisions.
- 5 occupants of other vehicles were killed
- 9 people in other vehicles were injured.
- 63% of the crashes were single vehicle crashes.

- Seat belts were not used in 22% of the crashes.
- High speed was identified as the contributing factor in 29% of the crashes.
- 71% 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.)
- At least 7 teens, 4 a single crash, were killed just hours before or after their graduation.
- 3 teen girls died at railroad crossings: 2 stalled on the track while playing a game, looking for a “ghost train” and 1 who became trapped between the crossing gates.
- 2 teens died in motorcycle crashes.
- 3 teens died in ATV crashes
- Alcohol use was considered to be the contributing factor in 7% of the crashes.
- In 15 of the crashes (39%), the vehicle was carrying 3 or more occupants.
- Florida led the nation with at least 6 deaths.

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.

4 teens killed in crash hours before graduation

A Cleveland-area town is in mourning after three teens were killed in a car wreck Sunday, hours before their high school's graduation ceremony.

A fourth teen died from his injuries Monday, his family said, while a fifth was at a hospital. Her condition was not known.

The five Brunswick High students were riding in a 2001 Chevy Cavalier sometime after midnight when driver Jeffrey Chaya, 18, lost control after speeding over some railroad tracks, authorities told the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The car went airborne, landed hard and swerved back and forth before crashing into a tree and flipping over, police said.

Source: <http://www.nydailynews.com> ♦



Lessons Learned

This tragic crash brings home the points that we have stressed again and again. This was a typical teen crash in that it was a single vehicle crash, the car was fully loaded with other teens, it occurred after midnight on Sunday morning, and speeding was involved. Each element is dangerous in itself but combined, they are a recipe for tragedy.

Look at the statistics for teen driving deaths:

- Fifty-nine percent of teenage passenger deaths in 2010 occurred in vehicles driven by another teenager.
- Among fatally injured 16-19 year-old occupants, belt use among passengers (29 percent) was considerably lower than among drivers (44 percent).
- Fifty-five percent of motor vehicle crash deaths among teenagers in 2010 occurred on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.
- Thirty-two percent of all fatal crashes for teens happen between the hours of 9 PM and 3 AM.
- Most crashes occur on rural two-lane highways.
- Speed is responsible for approximately one-third of all fatal crashes in the US.
- Almost half of all fatal crashes involving teen drivers are single vehicle crashes.

The information above is why many states have adopted Graduated Driving License (GDL) laws for teens to prevent them from the distractions of carrying too many teen passengers and prohibiting driving during the late night/early morning hours until the teen can gain more experience.

Parents don't have to wait for their state to pass GDL laws. They can impose those rules on their teen and prevent their teen from being a passenger in a vehicle driven by another teen.

For more information on GDL laws, visit:

<http://www.iihs.org/laws/graduatedLicenseIntro.aspx>

Tips for Parents: Emotions and Driving

With all of the stress on distracted driving, one major distraction seems to get left out of the conversation. We tend to think of driver distractions in physical terms; things such as cell phones, radios, food, and other passengers but driver emotion and stress can be just as distracting and do, in fact, play a major role in driver crashes.

With so many teens killed on prom night and within 24 hours of their graduation, we need to look at the emotional state of those teens and the impact those emotions can have on their driving.

Good stress is still stress! Senior prom and graduation should be one of the happiest moments of a teen's life and with all the expectations and preparations, the teen's mind is preoccupied with matters other than safe driving.

The teen is on the top of the world and contemplating a life altering or life ending car crash is at the bottom of their list when celebrating such a major achievement.

Parent of teens preparing to celebrate such an event should consider renting a limo so that the teens can truly celebrate while a trained, professional driver takes over the chore of getting the teens from one place to another. It is safer for all and adds a bit of class to the teen's special night.

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