

# Safe Driving Teen Monthly Bulletin

Volume 143, Issue 107

November 2013

## September Teen Death Rate Declines - Slightly

Source: <http://www.google.com> ♦

### Lessons Learned

A Google News search of teen fatal collisions in September revealed that at least 76 teens died in motor 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's safe to assume that 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.

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Published by the National Safety Commission  
For Teens and their Parents



In the 85 reported fatal crashes reported in September:

- 48 teen drivers were killed.
- 27 teen passengers were killed.
- 26 teen drivers were injured.
- 50 additional passengers were injured in fatal collisions.
- 18 occupants of other vehicles or pedestrians were killed.
- 34 people in other vehicles or pedestrians were injured.
- 65% of the crashes were single vehicle crashes.
- Seat belts weren't used in 27% of the fatal crashes.
- High speed was identified as the contributing factor in 22% of the crashes.
- 78% 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.)



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- Alcohol use was considered to be the contributing factor in 11% of the crashes.
- In 20 of the crashes (24%), the vehicle was carrying 3 or more occupants.
- 54 of the deaths (58%) occurred on weekends.
- 1 of the deaths was on an All Terrain Vehicle (ATV).
- 2 of the deaths were on motorcycles.
- At least 16 teens were charged with serious crimes including manslaughter or vehicular homicide.
- North Carolina and New York led the nation with 8 deaths each.
- In Massachusetts, no teen drivers or passengers died; however, teens were responsible for the deaths of 4 pedestrians or occupants of other vehicles.

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 GDL 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.

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## Teens Choose Not To Drink

Colerain Township Police Chief Daniel P. Meloy said the Audi 6 was "traveling at an accelerated rate of speed" when Stein lost control of the vehicle. After going off the road the car struck a parked Ford Titanium.

Investigators believe alcohol and/or drugs also may have played a role in the crash, which remains under investigation.

**Source:** <http://www.wcpo.com> ♦

## Lessons Learned

The teen driver in this crash survived but will spend the rest of his life living with the burden that he was responsible for the death of two of his friends.

If alcohol or drugs were indeed found to have been a factor in this crash, the teen driver could also be facing charges of Aggravated Vehicular Homicide which, in Ohio, carries a prison term of up to 15 years.

If and when this teen ever receives the privilege to drive again, under Ohio law, his vehicle must carry a special DUI license plate.

Teens need to learn that alcohol use is not as popular among teens as they might believe. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) recently posted an infographic based on a nationwide survey of teens conducted by State Farm Insurance that shows that almost 75% or three out of four teens do not drink or have given up drinking.

The top five reasons teens choose not to drink are:

- It's illegal
- Effects on health
- Effect on grades
- Parents don't approve
- Don't want to be like others who drink

Interestingly, more than 50% say they are less likely to be friends with someone who drinks and almost 65% say they wouldn't date someone who drinks.

You can learn more by visiting the MADD website at:

<http://www.madd.org/underage-drinking/>

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## Tips For Parents: Teen/Parent Disconnect

In June State Farm Insurance surveyed 500 parents of teen drivers to determine their views on Graduated Driving Laws (GDL) for teen drivers. They also surveyed an independent group of 500 teen drivers to see how well the parents' perceptions matched up to those of the teens. The survey shows quite a difference between the parents' beliefs that their teens were obeying the GDL laws compared to the actual rate of obedience by the teens themselves.

The parents' belief that their teens always obeyed the GDL laws was compared with how often the teens said that they always obeyed the laws on:

Nighttime driving:	Parents	66%
	Teens	32%
Texting:	Parents	70%
	Teens	51%
Talking on phone:	Parents	62%
	Teens	41%
Passenger limits:	Parents	65%
	Teens	27%

When asked the most likely reason for not following the driving laws:

Peer pressure:	Parents	34%
	Teens	32%
Police won't catch:	Parents	18%
	Teens	32%
Parents won't catch	Parents	16%
	Teens	8%
Think laws too strict:	Parents	9%
	Teens	18%
Not concerned with punishment by either parents or law:	Parents	5%
	Teens	9%
Other:	Parents	18%
	Teens	10%

When asked why they actually did obey the law:

Parents monitor:	Parents	87%
	Teens	56%
It is safer:	Parents	96%
	Teens	89%
Avoid tickets	Parents	95%
	Teens	96%
Avoid auto insurance increases:	Parents	89%
	Teens	87%

When asked why they felt they should obey the laws:

It is safer:	Parents	89%
	Teens	51%
Don't want a ticket:	Parents	4%
	Teens	33%
My parents enforce them:	Parents	3%
	Teens	9%
Don't want an insurance rate increase:	Parents	3%
	Teens	7%

Apparently peer pressure among teens isn't as powerful as one might think. However, the natural teen's feeling of invincibility and the feeling that "it'll never happen to me" does play a role in the decisions that teens make behind-the-wheel. The study also shows that teens respect their parents' enforcement of the rules more than the parents realize.

<http://goo.gl/y8z3TE>

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