

Safe Driving Teen Monthly Bulletin

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Veteran's Day Weekend Deadly For Teen Drivers

Source: <http://www.google.com> ♦

Lessons Learned

A Google News search of teen fatal collisions in November revealed that at least 69 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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For Teens and their Parents



In the 71 reported fatal crashes reported in November:

- 43 teen drivers were killed.
- 26 teen passengers were killed.
- 23 teen drivers were injured.
- 44 additional passengers were injured in fatal collisions.
- 7 occupants of other vehicles or pedestrians were killed.
- 24 people in other vehicles or pedestrians were injured.
- 68% of the crashes were single vehicle crashes.
- Seat belts weren't used in 41% of the fatal crashes.
- High speed was identified as the contributing factor in 24% 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.)



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- Alcohol use was suspected to be the contributing factor in 3% of the crashes.
- In 19 of the crashes (27%), the vehicle was carrying 3 or more occupants.
- 42 of the deaths (55%) occurred on weekends.
- Veteran’s Day weekend was the deadliest weekend of the month with 19 deaths.
- 2 of the deaths were on All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs).
- 4 of the deaths were on motorcycles/mopeds.
- At least 6 teens were charged with serious crimes including manslaughter or vehicular homicide.
- Texas led the nation with 8 deaths.
- At least one teen died while “car surfing.”
- At least two teens were killed with their sibling at the wheel.

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.

Teen Dies In Crash With Train

A Bonner County teen was killed Wednesday after the sport utility vehicle she was driving was hit by a northbound BNSF Railway train.

Idaho State Police said Kayle Porter, 19, was northbound on U.S. Highway 95 and entered the turn lane to head east on Elmira Road. After turning onto the road, she failed to stop at an uncontrolled at-grade railroad

crossing, state police said.

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

Lessons Learned

Over the last three months, at least one teen per month has been killed in crashes with trains. The greater tragedy is that these deaths could have easily been prevented.

Our society seems to always be in a hurry and drivers are often too impatient to wait for a train at a railroad crossing – much to their regret.

According to [Operation Lifesaver](#), a web site dedicated to promoting safe practices at railroad crossings, there were 1,967 car/train collisions at railroad crossings in 2012 resulting in 273 deaths and 946 injuries. That means there are more than five crashes per day at railroad crossings across the US.

The laws of physics prevent all of the weight and momentum of a train from being brought to a quick stop. Once the brakes are applied, it takes a fully loaded freight train from one to two miles before it can be brought to a complete stop. If the engineer sees a car trying to cross the tracks ahead, all he or she can do is blow the horn and brace for the blow.

Large vehicles such as trucks, buses, and trains are usually traveling much faster than they appear. On the open track, passenger trains are normally traveling at 80 mph and freight trains are traveling at 60 mph.

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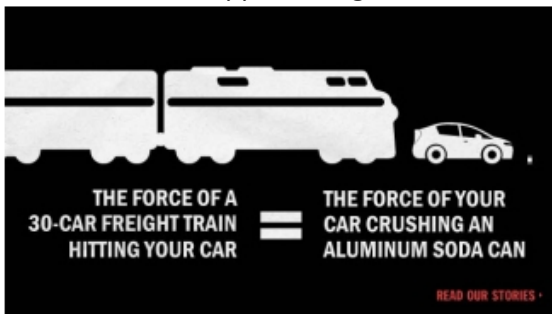
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Once the lights start to flash and the gates lower at a railroad crossing, the train will usually appear within 20 seconds. That doesn't give a driver trying to snake around the gates much time to clear the tracks.

At crossings without lights or gates, drivers should never cross unless they are absolutely sure that a train isn't coming. Don't rely on the sound of a horn; visually check all the tracks in both directions to ensure that no train is coming. Don't get complacent because you rarely see a train on the tracks; there could be one when you least expect it.

At crossings with more than one track, don't assume that the train that has just passed is the only train on the tracks; there could be another train approaching from the other direction that is hidden by the train that just passed.

Never cross a railroad track unless you are positive that your car will completely clear the tracks on the other side. If you are in heavy traffic, stopping behind the car ahead while your vehicle is on the tracks could put you in a position where you are trapped with no escape route from an approaching train.



<http://oli.org/about-us/news/collisions-casulties>

Tips For Parents: Fast and Furious Star Dies In Crash

“Actor Paul Walker, who shot to fame as star of the high-octane street racing franchise "Fast & Furious," died in a fiery car crash in Southern California on Saturday. He was 40.”

Source: <http://www.cnn.com> ♦

Lessons Learned

The tragic death of the movie star Paul Walker in a high speed car crash can be a focal point to open up a dialogue with your teen about the dangers of high speed and the message teens receive from movies such as *Fast and Furious*.

The *Fast and Furious* franchise glorifies street racing and is primarily aimed at an audience of young men and teens. The problem with movies such as these is that what the drivers appear to do in the movie is vastly different from what they are actually doing in real life. In fact, without the aid of movie special effects, some of the stunts in these movies defy the laws of physics and are therefore impossible.

If you view some of the “Behind the Scenes” videos on Youtube.com, you will see that the drivers are actually traveling much slower than they appear in the movies. Cars are driven by highly trained stunt drivers, wearing helmets; and scenes involving multiple cars are done on closed highways or streets and are carefully choreographed, much like a ballet, to ensure the safety of all the drivers. Some interior scenes are filmed in front of green screens to give the illusion of action behind.

What all this means is that, in real life, drivers can't recreate these stunts or scenes without tragic results. If your teen wants to drive this way, he or she should go to stunt driving school and get a job in the movie industry and then he or she will see just how carefully these scenes are played out.

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