

# WE WANT TO HELP YOU KEEP YOUR TEEN DRIVER SAFE

You've probably known children in your own community who have died in motor vehicle crashes, so you know that their deaths represent not only the premature end to young lives full of potential, but also inconsolable pain and grief among the parents, family members and friends who face such loss.

The members of the Alabama Safe Teen Driving Coalition believe that educating our teen drivers about the risks they face on the streets and highways they travel is the first step in decreasing the number of children who die behind the wheel of a car. Here are some facts your teen should know:

- Nearly a half million teens are injured in crashes on American roadways every year. 3,800 die.
- Alabama ranks #5 in the nation in the number of teens killed in motor vehicle crashes every year.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for people ages 16 to 24.
- Drivers ages 16 to 19 have the highest risk.

Some of the factors that contribute to teen driver crashes are:

- Driving while using alcohol or drugs
- Not wearing a seat belt
- Distractions inside the car
- Speeding, aggressive or reckless driving
- Driving after dark
- Unlicensed and under age driving
- Unsafe vehicles

Driving distractions take the driver's eyes, ears and attention away from the road. Distractions include:

- Too many passengers in the car
- Talking on cell phones while driving
- Texting while driving
- Eating or drinking while driving
- Adjusting the radio, CD player, temperature controls, etc.
- Loud music in the car or wearing headphones

The Alabama Graduated Driver License Law places restrictions on young drivers to help ensure their safety. Parents should know the law and enforce it with their teen drivers. Your pediatrician can provide a copy of the law to you today or you can visit [www.alaap.org](http://www.alaap.org).

Driving is a complex skill that requires education and lots of practice. Parents play a crucial role in teaching their teens to drive safely.