

Young Driver Safety

In 2009-2011 fatal crashes young drivers, age 16-25, constituted 40% of speeding drivers, 30% of impaired drivers, and 27% of distracted drivers. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death among young drivers. They represent about 15% of licensed drivers, yet account for over 35% of fatal and serious injury crashes in the state. From 2007-2011, 35% of traffic fatalities involved a young driver age 16-25. Also during those years, young drivers were involved in 38% of all serious injury crashes.

Factors leading to young driver crashes are: driving inexperience, distractibility, inattention, risk taking, speeding, and use of alcohol or other drugs. These can lead to poor decision making and driving errors, which increases risk for death and injury to all roadway users

Key Messages to Help Reduce Risks

- ◆ The risk of motor vehicle-related deaths and injuries among youth can be decreased.
- ◆ To reduce these risks:
 - Buckle up correctly every time you drive, and be sure everyone in the vehicle is buckled correctly.
 - During a crash, unbuckled people become missiles inside the vehicle causing injury to themselves and others. Everyone needs to buckle-up correctly.
 - Realize - no matter how good a driver you are, some people on the road are not good; they take risks, drive impaired, and can cause a deadly crash in an instant. Innocent people are killed and disabled every day on Washington roadways.
 - Youth and parents need to get and study The Washington Parent Guide to Teen Driving, Washington State Department of Licensing: www.dol.wa.gov
 - New drivers and their parents need to understand and follow the Washington State Intermediate Driver License (IDL) law. It is also known as Graduated Driver License (GDL).
 - By progressive practice and increased skills by new drivers, the IDL helps reduce the number of crashes, deaths, and injuries.

Intermediate Driver License Requirements

- ◆ Get the consent of a parent or guardian to get an instruction permit.
- ◆ Hold an instruction permit for at least six months.
- ◆ Complete a Driver Training School course.
- ◆ Complete 50 hours of supervised driving, 10 of which are at night.
- ◆ Commit no violations within six months of application.
- ◆ Pass a knowledge test and driving test.
- ◆ During the first six months of licensure, carry no passengers under 20 years old except members of the driver's immediate family.

- ◆ During the second six months of licensure, carry no more than three passengers under 20 years old except members of the driver's immediate family.
- ◆ Refrain from driving between 1:00 am and 5:00 am unless with a parent, a guardian, or a licensed driver who is at least 25 years old.
- ◆ Refrain from using wireless devices while driving, even hands-free. This includes talking on cell phones and sending or receiving text messages. Wireless devices may only be used to report an emergency.

Information and Resources

American Automobile Association (AAA) Foundation www.aaafoundation.org

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) www.chop.edu/youngdrivers

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) www.iihs.org

National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) www.nhtsa.gov

Safe Kids Worldwide www.safekids.org

WA Injury and Violence Prevention Guide, January 2013

[Motor Vehicle-Related Injuries \(PDF\)](#)

Washington State Department of Licensing www.dol.wa.gov

Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) www.wtsc.wa.gov

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