

# **2023-24 PowerPoint Presentation for Partners for Safe Teen Driving**

## **Voiceover script**

### **December 11, 2023**

#### Slide 1

Welcome to this presentation of Partners for Safe Teen Driving!

Your participation and evaluation of this program is important to us. If possible, parents/guardians, please complete the pre-presentation quiz by using the QR code on the slide. This is a voluntary quiz; there will also be a short evaluation and post-presentation quiz at the end of the meeting.

Parents, you are here because -- not only do you hold the keys to the car -- but you are also the KEY to keeping your teens safe. The research clearly indicates that parents have the greatest influence on teen behaviors. Parents: you must set clear expectations of driver safety for your family.

As driver education educators, we want to partner with you to lay the foundation for safe driving behaviors for your teen and provide the essential knowledge and skills needed for good decision making. As parents, you must also build a sound structure of rules and consequences that will discourage your teen from making unsafe choices. Teens: it is up to you to build trust and make sound choices.

#### **Slide 2 – Video of Tammy Guido, If You See Something, Say Something**

Here is a message from one parent to another.

#### **Slide 3:**

For parents or guardians who speak Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Pashto, Urdu, or Korean, you can follow this presentation by using the QR code on this slide.

Virginia gives parents a key role in:

- Teaching teens to drive
- Giving permission for the teen to get his or her learner's permit
- Withholding driving privileges until they feel their teens are ready and/or mature enough to drive
- Enforcing graduated licensing laws, and
- Suspending driving privileges if the teen is not being responsible.

During this presentation, we will address each of the following topics.

Slide 4: Video – Parents: You Are the Key  
[no notes]

#### Slide 5

While learning driving skills is especially important, driving skills alone do not reduce risky behaviors. Risky behaviors are bad decisions that have little to do with driving skills. Study after study has shown that parent involvement reduces risky behaviors and teen driving crashes. So, we hope that what you learn tonight will open a deeper dialogue with your teens about choices and that you will closely monitor and continuously guide your teen's driving behavior.

#### Slide 6

Let's talk about teen driving risks & the teenage brain.

#### Slide 7

What is safe driving? Is it skill? Is it good decision-making? Is it ticket-free driving? Parents and teens have different definitions of safe driving.

Parents believe a good driver is a safe driver. They believe a safe driver maintains adequate safe following distance, obeys the speed limit, and behaves like a responsible adult.

Teens believe they are good drivers if, for example, they can take a curve at a high rate of speed and not crash. Researchers believe this different perception of "safe driving" is because the part of the teenage brain that understands risk is not fully developed.

#### Slide 8

Motor vehicle crashes can happen to anyone -- even "good" teens crash. That is because ALL inexperienced drivers lack experience and are more likely to crash.

Throughout this presentation, we will be addressing these teen driving risks in more detail.

#### Slide 9

- How do teens handle nighttime driving? Teens get little exposure to driving at night with their parents, and they are also notoriously sleep-deprived.
- How does the type of vehicle affect the teen driver's behavior? If you are planning to give your teen a shiny red sports car, that may not be the best choice for your child. Your child is much less likely to race in the family van.
- How does the teenage brain handle a lack of parental guidance? The science is noticeably clear: parents' matter, and good parenting can significantly reduce teen crashes and prevent a tragedy.
- How does an immature brain handle alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs? The teenage brain has difficulty understanding consequences and risks. Unfortunately, teens may not think twice about driving while impaired.

#### Slide 10

Raise your hand if you believe this statement is true: the brain does not mature until about age 25.

#### Slide 11

That is true! The brain is about 80% developed in adolescents. The largest part of the brain, the cortex, is divided into lobes that mature from back to front. The last section to connect is the frontal lobe, responsible for cognitive processes such as reasoning, planning, and judgment. Normally, this mental merger is not completed until age 25.

The teenage brain is not an adult brain with fewer miles on it. Teens have very sharp brains, but they are not sure what to do with them.

The teen brain:

- tends to underestimate dangerous situations and
- is attracted to thrill-seeking and other experiences that create intense feelings.

Therefore, teens often speed, weave in and out of traffic, follow too closely, talk on their cell phones, or drive while fatigued or intoxicated. Consequently, parents must step in and “serve as their teens’ frontal lobes” as the teenage brain has difficulty making risk-management decisions on its own.

Slide 12

Cars do not crash; people crash them. The driver, especially the young driver, continues to be a weak link in automotive safety. It is interesting to note that the crash data shows older teenagers with more driving time have more crashes. The higher crash rate for older teens is attributed to their having more driving privileges, fewer restrictions, and less parental supervision. This higher crash rate prompted the General Assembly to revise the juvenile passenger restrictions for older teens.

Slide 13

Most teen crashes are caused by a lack of experience and attitude, not poor driving skills. And teens who take more risks are setting themselves up to crash regardless of their driving skills. Teens are more likely than older drivers to underestimate or not be able to recognize dangerous situations, according to the Centers for Disease Control. They are also more likely than adults to make critical decision errors that can lead to serious crashes.

Positive and negative attitudes evolve over time. They can be changed through experience and persuasion, and parents have the most influence over their teens’ attitudes.

Slide 14 Video: Knock at the Door

No parent wants this knock on the door.

Slide 15

Be proactive! We should not change because of a tragedy. Parents should establish preventive measures that will prevent a tragedy from occurring.

Slide #16

What kind of role model are you? A study by Liberty Mutual and SADD found that parents are setting a poor example for teens by engaging in unsafe driving behaviors, such as texting and driving, and are not listening to their teens’ warnings. 41 percent of teens say their parents continue these unsafe behaviors

even after their teens ask them to stop, and 28 percent of teens say their parents justify unsafe behavior.

If you make the choice to speed or talk on the phone, remember, your student is watching and learning. Being an “experienced driver” does not excuse bad habits. Parent choices help kids form opinions on acceptable and unacceptable behaviors.

We also know from research into underage drinking and driving those parents who exhibit DUI behavior may promote youth drinking and DUI behaviors. Parental permissiveness is consistently associated with negative drinking consequences such as youth transition to college or adulthood.

Parents should always model safe driving behaviors as teens learn from the choices that adults make.

#### Slide 17

Parents: to keep your teen safe, you must be proactive and communicate that you are in control! Their lives depend on it.

And teens you will learn, if you have not already, that trust is something that is earned and, through responsible actions and decisions, can be sustained.

#### Slide 18

Let us talk now about getting a Learner’s Permit and teaching your teen to drive.

#### Slide 19

For a teen to obtain a learner’s permit in Virginia, the teen must: have parent permission; be at least 15 years and 6 months old; provide proof of identity, residency, and legal presence, which means be a U.S. citizen or legally authorized to be in the U.S.; and pass a sign and knowledge test. Go to the DMV web site at [dmv.virginia.gov](http://dmv.virginia.gov) to find the closest Customer Service Center and hours.

During the learner’s permit phase, you should not have to add your child to your family’s automobile insurance policy, although it is always a good idea to check with your insurance company.

#### Slide 20

Unfortunately, approximately 50% of the teens who take the learner’s permit test do not pass it on their first attempt. If your teen fails the learner’s permit test three times, your teen must provide DMV with evidence that they have completed a classroom driver education course after the 3rd failure or have taken the 8-hour re-examination course before they will be able to take the learner’s permit test a 4th time. Teens should be encouraged to take the learner’s permit test PRIOR to completing classroom driver education. If your teen passes a classroom driver education course after failing the learner’s permit test three times, your teen can take the permit test for the 4th time. Hopefully, your teen will study and pass the test on the first attempt!

#### Slide 21

So now your teen has their learner's permit and is ready to get behind the wheel. And parents: Are you ready? You will need to certify that your child has driven at least 45 hours, with 15 of those hours being after sunset before your teen can get their license. Practice driving should be more than just accumulating time to satisfy the requirements of the law. Practice driving should include meaningful, planned guided practice sessions that include all driving skills and environments. Teens do not easily adapt to new driving situations. They need a parent mentor who follows the lessons in the 45-hour guide so that the new driver learns to navigate unfamiliar territory safely and practices driving skills CORRECTLY.

#### Slide 22

Most parents are not trained to be driving educators, but they need to know how to expose their student gradually and safely to a variety of driving situations to learn skills and identify and correct driving errors. The 45-Hour Parent-Teen Driving Guide provides suggested lessons that are sequential; meaningful learning goals; and strategies and coaching tips. These lessons progress from: low to higher risk driving environments; from a parking lot to neighborhood roads, to light traffic, to rural highways, to expressways, and then to city driving. Using the Parent-Teen Driving Guide, parents can plan driving lessons and practice often to hopefully accumulate more than 45 hours of guided practice over the 9-month period that your teen must hold a learner's permit. Parents should complete the driving log at the end of each practice session. Let us go through some things that will help you teach your teen to drive.

#### Slide 23

First, plan for this to be an enjoyable time together. This is a great "bonding" opportunity. Focus on the driving task and leave family issues at home. But don't wait until you have an emergency to learn how to control the vehicle from the passenger seat. In a parking lot with your teen in the driver's seat, practice steering and controlling the car with your left hand from the passenger seat.

#### Slide 24

You can also control the speed of a vehicle from the passenger seat. If you have a car with a parking brake between the seats, practice stopping the car by pressing the release button and raising the parking brake. If your student panics and accelerates too much, practice shifting the transmission from Drive to Neutral from the passenger seat.

#### Slide 25

Talk with your teen in advance about how you plan to communicate during the practice sessions. Encourage commentary driving! This is the most valuable tool you have for checking how your teen is processing the driving environment. Ask your teen to "read the traffic picture aloud" describing anything that may affect your path of travel. For example, when your teen changes speed, they may say: "red light, check mirror, release foot off the accelerator and begin braking." You should hear "check mirror and ease off accelerator" a lot!

Reinforce that a green light means search the intersection before proceeding and to be on the lookout for drivers running a red light.

Encourage your teen not to panic when approached by an emergency vehicle, and to focus on looking for a safe area to pull over. Discuss the rules for passing a stopped school bus with flashing lights.

Encourage your teen to plan their route to avoid making a difficult left turn. Teach them to look at the car's tires in contact with the road, not at the body of the car, to calculate gaps in traffic, and the speed of the approaching vehicle.

There is a lot to learn in each lesson in the 45-hour guide, so allow adequate time for your teen to attain proficiency at each level before moving on to the next lesson. If possible, try to integrate night driving into each area of instruction.

#### Slide 26

Parents: you should monitor traffic behind the vehicle by adjusting the passenger side-view mirror or using the mirror on the sun visor as a rearview mirror.

Check mirrors and the space to the sides and ahead of the vehicle before giving directions. Keep instructions simple and concise. First direct where to go, and then state the action to take for example, "At the next intersection, turn right.") While your teen is performing a maneuver, your feedback should be precise and immediate. If a mistake is made, repeat the maneuver taking your teen step-by-step through the process, and then provide opportunities for additional practice without any assistance. Can you explain the critical element of a right turn? If not, you can review these critical elements in the 45-hour parent/teen guide.

#### Slide 27

Talk to your teen about what they should do before they even start the car. Let us start with seat belts and a quick test.

Please raise your hand if you think this statement is true: Everyone sitting in the front seat must wear a seat belt.

#### Slide 28

This is true! Virginia law requires everyone in the front seat to wear a seat belt, and anyone less than 18 years of age must wear a seat belt regardless of where they are sitting in the vehicle. Wearing a seat belt is the simplest and most effective way to prevent car crash injuries and deaths!

#### Slide 29 – Video: Buckle Up!

Sometimes you have to be annoying!

#### Slide 30

Unfortunately, teen drivers and teen passengers use safety belts less than any other age group. Safety belts keep you in the car and prevent you from hitting objects and passengers inside the vehicle if there is a crash. Parents should always require safety belt use. Buckling up is an effortless way to prevent

injuries and deaths. This simple task can reduce your teen's risk of dying or being severely injured in a crash by about half.

#### Slide 31

Parents play a critical role in whether their children wear seat belts. Parents should not only model wearing a seat belt, but they should also enforce a strict family seat belt rule and have zero tolerance for non-usage.

Wearing a seat belt has become a habit over a brief period and buckling up is an exceptionally good habit to have!

Slide 32 Video: Don't Be a Cantaloupe! BUCKLE UP!  
[NO NOTES]

#### Slide 33

Another thing you should review with your teen BEFORE they start the car is the mirror adjustments. The Blind-spot Glare Elimination mirror setting (also known as BGE) is now recommended. The BGE mirror setting reduces the blind zones around your car and the glare of the headlights from vehicles behind you. When you use the BGE mirror setting, you will see more of the lane next to your car and not the side of your vehicle. This allows you to monitor vehicles in the adjacent lanes.

#### Slide 34 – VIDEO: Proper Mirror Placement

If you use the BGE mirror setting, do you still need to do a "head check?" Yes, you need to make a quick check over your shoulder in the area just outside of your peripheral vision.

#### Slide 35

Once you and your teen have your seat belts on and have adjusted the mirrors, you are ready to start driving. Let us go over some additional information about driving.

Please raise your hand if you believe this statement is true.

The safest position to place your hands on the steering wheel for most driving situations is 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock.

#### Slide 36

False! Placing your hands on the lower half of the steering wheel at 8 and 4 is the safest hand position for most driving situations.

#### Slide 37

Running off the road is very hazardous, especially to novice drivers. Most run-off-the-road crashes are caused by driver error. These include: "Overcompensation" – such as not using the 8 & 4 hand positions, "poor directional control", meaning not looking where you want the vehicle to go, "driving too fast for curves" because inertia will pull the vehicle in a straight line, "too fast for conditions", such as severe

weather, “incorrect evasion” for things like animals or other obstacles in the path of travel, “distractions” inside and out of the vehicle, and driving while drowsy.

- Rumble strips alert the driver when they are running off the road. Practice riding on the rumble strip to “desensitize” your teen to overcome panicking and/or over-reacting.
- With practice, safe off-road recovery is not a difficult skill to learn.

Slide 38: Video – Proper Steering Wheel Hand Placement  
[NO NOTES]

Slide 39

You should always wear your seat belt and sit at least 10 inches from the airbag. If you can adjust the angle of the steering wheel, make sure the airbag is pointed at your chest and not at your face. Placing your hands at the 8 and 4 positions also takes your arms out of the path of the airbag, reducing hand, arm, and face injuries if the bag deploys. Holding the steering wheel at the bottom also reduces the tendency to move the steering wheel too much, which may result in loss of control, or running off the road.

Everyone please sit up and assume a driving position with your hands holding the top of the steering wheel at 10 and 2. Keep holding this position, and nod your heads if you think your arms and shoulders will become fatigued? Now move your hands from 10 & 2 down to the 8 and 4 positions. This more relaxed position reduces muscle tension and unnecessary wheel movement caused by the weight of the arms.

Slide40: Video: Overcorrecting  
[NO NOTES]

Slide 41

Your vehicle is controlled by the four small patches of tire in contact with the ground. The word traction refers, in general, to your car's ability to maintain adhesive friction between the vehicle (specifically, your tires) and the pavement. Vehicle control and performance are affected by the traction between the tire patches and the road surface. Without traction you have no control.

Slide 42

The single most important factor affecting the potential for a car to skid is the condition of the roadway. Is it asphalt or concrete? Rough or smooth? Think of sandpaper. It has different grades of roughness. The coarser the sandpaper, the more friction it presents to the surface being sanded.

Road conditions are not the same thing as road surface. Different road conditions present varying friction opportunities to the tires. A coarse roadway in the rain will hold less firmly than that same highway that is bone dry; likewise, snow-covered pavement will present even fewer friction possibilities to the tires.

Speed and direction of the vehicle is also important. The faster you go, the more energy the vehicle must dissipate before it comes to a stop. And if the road is heading east and your car is going north, you have a problem.

#### Slide 43

Parents, if you do not want your teen to crash, teach them how to manage space – especially the space located in front of the vehicle. This is the easiest and most important space that a driver can control. If you have adequate space between your vehicle and the vehicle in front, you can brake or steer out of trouble and avoid a crash.

The chart provides the recommended following distance in seconds on dry surfaces for various speeds.

#### Slide 44

When your teen has: held his or her learner's permit for 9 months; has completed at least 45 hours of driving with parent or guardian guidance; is 16 years and 3 months old, and successfully completed classroom driver education and a behind-the-wheel, in-car course with a road test, then your teen is ready to earn their provisional driver's license.

#### Slide 45

To obtain a driver's license in Virginia for anyone under 18, your student must: be at least 16 years and 3 months old; practice driving with a learner's permit for at least 9 months; complete 45 hours of guided practice with a parent or guardian; and successfully completed a state-approved classroom and behind-the-wheel, in-car driver education program.

#### Slide 46

Driving is the #1 health risk for teens, and that is why most classroom driver education courses are offered as part of the 10th-grade health education. Classroom driver education is a comprehensive course that covers a variety of traffic safety and driver-related information such as the basic rules of the road, licensing procedures, vehicle dynamics, management of time and space, sharing the roadway (motorcycles and tractor-trailers), purchasing, and ensuring a vehicle, reading a map, using GPS, the dangers of alcohol and other drugs and driving, texting, and driving, and drowsy driving.

Upon successful completion of a classroom driver education course, your child will receive a Classroom Driver Education Certificate of Completion, also referred to as a DEC card. Your child needs this card to be eligible to take in-car instruction.

#### Slide 47

Once teens have their permit and have completed classroom driver education, they can register for a behind-the-wheel program. In-car instruction is available before or after school during the school year and offered during the summer at your student's school. In behind-the-wheel, your student will drive for 7 periods and observe for 7 periods and take a road test at the end of the course, for a total of 14 periods of instruction. If your teen has held their permit for 9 months, passes the road test, and meets all the other juvenile licensing requirements (including the 45-hour driving log requirement), the in-car teacher will issue your student a 6-month provisional driver's license. When it comes to education and safety, a good driver education program might be among the most vital decisions a parent can make. Fortunately, finding a good driver's education program is easy, provided you know what to look for. It is a lot easier to let your teen behind the wheel if you know that they have learned valuable skills from a

good driver education teacher and experienced 45 hours or more of driving with parent or guardian guided practice.

#### Slide 48

It is good to remember that parents are responsible for consenting to licensure. Parents must sign the DMV learner's permit application, the parent permission form to take driver education, the 45-hour driving log, and the student's 6-month temporary driver's license. Once your student driver has successfully completed classroom and in-car instruction and has met all the licensing requirements, with parent permission, the in-car teacher can issue a 6-month temporary provisional driver's license to your student driver. The behind-the-wheel driving school will give a copy of your student's 6-month license to you and send another copy to DMV.

#### Slide 49

The DMV will process the 6-month license and send a license valid for 8 years for your student to the juvenile and domestic relations court that serves your family's zip code. Consequently, it is very important that DMV has the correct address to send the hard copy to the court.

Within 6 months of earning the temporary driver license, the student and parent/guardian may receive an invitation to attend a juvenile license ceremony to obtain the permanent hard copy of the license or it will be mailed directly to the parent/guardian. Courts may now hold ceremonies in person, hold ceremonies in an alternate manner, or waive them.

#### Slide 50

Once your teen has their license, can they just hop in the car and drive? NO! They have a PROVISIONAL driver's license. Virginia has graduated licensing laws for those under 18.

Virginia law allows a driver under 18 years old with a provisional license to have no more than ONE non-family passenger under the age of 21 in the car until they have held their license for one year. Please remember that even one passenger is a distraction, and there is a direct correlation between the number of passengers and crash probability.

We are hoping that your family's rule is no passengers!

#### Slide 51

True or False: Virginia law allows 3 non-family teenage passengers to ride in a car driven by a driver who has just turned 17 years old.

#### Slide 52

That is false! Your student must be at least 17 years and 3 months old to have more than one passenger AND have held their license for a full year. After the first year of driving, Virginia law allows the young driver to have THREE non-family passengers less than 21-years-of age under the following circumstances:

- when driving to and from a school activity,
- when a licensed driver 21 years and older is in the front passenger seat, and

- in cases of an emergency.

That is Virginia's passenger law, but it may not be the best practice. We hope that you will consider adopting a "no passenger" rule for your family!

#### Slide 53

Why are there passenger restrictions? We are all highly influenced by our peers. Everyone wants to feel like they are accepted and part of a group. Peer opinions and relationships are highly valued by teens and may influence your student's decision-making in a positive or negative way. For example, if members of your teen's peer group wear seatbelts, they will all wear seatbelts. If their peer group is into street racing, your child may also be at risk and engage in this behavior.

#### Slide 54 - Video: Teen driving Restrictions: Passengers

[NO NOTES]

#### Slide 55

Compared to driving with no passengers, a 16- or 17-year-old driver's risk of death per mile driven:

--Increases 44% when carrying 1 passenger younger than 21

--Doubles when carrying two passengers younger than 21

--Quadruples when carrying three or more passengers younger than 21 and

--Decreases 62% when a passenger aged 35 or older is in the vehicle.

The good news is parents can keep their teens safe by instituting a no passenger policy for their teen drivers.

#### Slide 56

Please raise your hand if you think this statement is true:

In Virginia, the curfew for drivers under the age of 18 is from midnight until 4 a.m.

#### Slide 57

This is true! Under most circumstances, Virginia law does NOT allow drivers under the age of 18, with a LEARNER'S PERMIT or DRIVER'S LICENSE, to drive from midnight to 4 a.m. In fact, statistics show that it is dangerous for teenagers to drive after 7 p.m.

Curfew laws can vary by county.

#### Slide 58

For drivers of all ages, fatal crashes are more likely to occur at night, but the risk is highest for teens. Low visibility and fatigue contribute to these crashes. Parents need to make sure their child receives adequate guided practice in these low visibility driving environments. Parents also need to closely monitor after school and weekend activities and place restrictions on driving at night.

#### Slide 59

Let us talk about a few other things parents and teens should consider as teens begin gaining experience driving.

Slide 60

Raise your hand if you slept at least 8 hours last night. Did you know that teens need about 9 hours of sleep per night, but on average only get about 7? Young drivers are at the highest risk of drowsy driving, which causes thousands of crashes every year. Teens are most tired and at-risk when driving in the early morning or late at night. Be sure your student is fully rested before getting behind the wheel. Teen drivers only comprise 14% of all drivers but are involved in 50% of crashes caused by drowsy driving.

Slide 61

Drowsiness makes drivers less attentive, slows reaction time, and affects a driver's ability to make decisions. Driving while fatigued has been compared to driving while intoxicated. Being awake for 24 hours causes the brain to function at the same level as a brain that is legally intoxicated.

Unfortunately, teens have schedules that cause them to be sleep deprived. To put it in perspective: a typical high school student gets up for school at 6:00 a.m.; goes to school and attends after-school activities; comes home, eats dinner, heads to a friend's house at 9 p.m.; and then arrives home at midnight. This student has been up for 18 hours; and if this student drives, the student is an impaired driver.

Slide 62

Distracted driving is a major contributor to crashes. Anything that takes your attention off the task of driving is a distraction. If you are a distracted driver, your crash risk will increase four to eight times more than a non-distracted driver.

Students: In the next 10 seconds, list five driving distractions. Did you include swatting at a fly? Changing the radio? Talking to passengers?

Slide 63

Please raise your hand if you think this statement is true: Teen drivers under 18 may use a cell phone but cannot text message while driving a vehicle.

Slide 64

That is false! It is now illegal for anyone to hold a cell phone or text while driving in Virginia. If you are under 18, you may not even use a hands-free wireless device. If a teen driver violates Virginia's cell phone law, they will be assessed 3 demerit points and pay a fine. A second conviction will result in a court suspension of the teen's driving privileges for six months. In addition, drivers under age 20 who receive a demerit point conviction are required to attend a driver improvement clinic and cannot take an online driver improvement course.

It is \$125 for the first offense and \$250 for repeat offenses for cell phone violations.

Thumbs up if you think a teen driver cell phone violation will affect your family's car insurance?

Slide 65

Text messaging has increased the risk of a crash or near-crash by two times and results in drivers taking their eyes off the road for an average of 23 seconds total. Activities performed when completing a phone call, such as reaching for a phone, looking up a contact and dialing the number, increase crash risk by three times.

Slide 66

Can you talk on the phone and type an email at the same time? Not well, because your brain will divide attention between the tasks, focusing on one task and then the other.

If you think you are good at doing several things at once, think again. Multitasking is a myth. Your brain cannot do it. When you switch from one task to another, you are dividing your attention between multiple tasks. You cannot simultaneously talk on the phone and type a coherent email.

Slide 67

Parents: please have a zero-tolerance policy on texting and driving. Tell your teen to turn off their phone while driving or check out the "do not disturb" feature.

Slide 68

Did you know that the most frequent comment drivers make immediately after a crash is: "I didn't see you." The reason they did not see you is they were probably driving while distracted!

In a Centers for Disease Control Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 39% of teens surveyed ADMIT that they text while driving, and texting while driving, unfortunately, increases with age. This is a truly frightening statistic for all drivers! As a parent, this may be THE most important family rule that you enforce.

Slide 69

Parental influence on teen cell phone behaviors is stronger and longer lasting than all other influences, and teens learn from watching adults. So, parents: please encourage safe driving behaviors by modeling them.

Slide 70 Video: Dangers of Texting and Driving  
[NO NOTES]

Slide 71

Parents: you should be concerned about underage drinking. The research indicates alcohol damages young, developing brain cells and the teen brain is more susceptible than their adult counterparts to alcohol-induced toxicity. An experiment in which rat brain cells were exposed to alcohol showed alcohol blocks certain synaptic activity. When the alcohol was removed, the adult cells recovered while the adolescent cells remained "disabled."

#### Slide 72

Please raise your hand if you believe this statement is true: A friend who has only “one drink” is a safe choice for a designated driver.

#### Slide 73

Alcohol slows reaction time and impairs judgment and coordination, which are all skills needed to drive a car safely. The more alcohol consumed, the greater the impairment. Legal limits do not define a level below which it is safe to operate a vehicle or engage in some other activity. Impairment due to alcohol use begins to occur at levels well below the legal limit. In Virginia, the legal limit for young people under 21 is a blood alcohol content of .02. This is the average blood alcohol level that occurs normally in a body, so the legal drinking limit for drivers under the age of 21 in Virginia is zero alcoholic drinks.

#### Slide 74

It is not just the driver who is at risk from drinking. In this national survey, one in four high school students reported having ridden in a car in the last month that was driven by someone who had been drinking.

In Virginia, one-third of teenagers aged 15-19 who died in car crashes were passengers, so if you are riding with a driver who has been drinking or doing drugs, you are putting your life in grave danger. These survey results are a reminder that parents need to always know who your teens are with. Establish a relationship with your children so that in the event your teen must choose between riding with an impaired driver and calling home for a ride, they will choose to call you. It is also imperative that parents uphold their end of the bargain and recognize and compliment teens when they use good judgment and make mature decisions.

#### Slide 75

It is against the law in Virginia for teens to drink alcohol.

Teens: alcohol and drugs are illegal, slow your reaction-time, and distort reality. Paradoxically, while impairing you, alcohol may make you think you are an awesome driver. Avoid this bad combination. Do not drink and drive.

Parents: do you know where these teens are getting alcohol? Well, in addition to friends and older siblings, studies show that parents in the community are the primary suppliers of alcohol to underage youth. Please think carefully about the potential consequences for your teens and for you and have necessary conversations about expectations with other parents in the community. Studies have shown that adult supervised settings for alcohol use, intended to minimize harm, result in higher levels of harmful alcohol consequences for young people!

#### Slide 76

Virginia has a zero tolerance laws for those under age 21 who drink and drive, meaning that if you are convicted of driving after illegally consuming alcohol, the penalty includes losing your driving privilege for a year and a minimum mandatory fine of \$500, or 50 hours of community service. Most states have zero tolerance laws to prevent crashes and protect the young, developing brain.

If your teen makes a mistake and attends a party where there is alcohol, the judge will impose a \$500 fine or community service and suspend your child's license or the ability to get a license for one year. This suspension will also have an impact on your family's car insurance.

Additional violation of underage drinking and driving laws can result in more substantial financial penalties, jail time, probation, and counseling requirements, as well as impact college admissions, scholarships, financial aid, and employment opportunities.

#### Slide 77

Driving after taking certain medications, marijuana, and all illegal drugs is risky and can cause traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities. Like driving after consuming alcohol, drivers cannot judge their own level of impairment after smoking marijuana or taking other illegal drugs, so any amount of consumption puts them and others at risk. Also, like driving under the influence of alcohol, those who drive high on drugs could get a DUI.

Law enforcement officers across Virginia are specially trained to recognize drugged drivers. According to a recent roadside study by the National Highway Traffic Administration, one in four drivers on America's roads tested positive for at least one drug that impacts safety.

#### Slide 78

It is a fact that parents are the key to good decision making related to drinking and driving. Research has shown that young people are less likely to drink when parents are involved in their lives and have close relationships with them. Adolescents are less likely to have alcohol-related problems when their parents:

- set clear rules and expectations about drinking,
- have good parent-child communication, and
- discipline consistently.

Parents' drinking behaviors and favorable attitudes about not drinking and not using drugs influence adolescents to abstain, and parents who exhibit DUI behavior promote youth DUI behaviors.

Furthermore, parental permissiveness is positively and consistently associated with negative drinking consequences such as youth transition to college or adulthood.

Have a Conversation with Your Teen About Drinking and Drugged Driving. Dialogue with teens is essential to afford them the resources and skills to make good decisions about drinking and driving. MADD will send you a list of conversation starters so you can talk with your teen.

Parents may feel uncomfortable talking to their teens about underage drinking because they drank as teens. MADD offers a sample dialogue in response to teens' questions about a parent's adolescent drinking. Parents could say: "I did have a drink when I was younger. However, we did not know as much as we know now about the risks of alcohol. If I had known then, I would have done things differently. This is why I am talking to you about it. I want you to be safe, healthy, and happy."

#### Slide 79

Speeding is another risk for teen drivers. Why are more males killed in crashes? Because they tend to drive at higher speeds and take more risks, and safety belt use is lower among males.

#### Slide 80

Speed increases the distance a vehicle travels from the time a driver detects an emergency to the time the driver reacts, and it also increases the distance needed to stop a vehicle once the driver starts to brake. Speed also increases crash energy. The higher the speed, the greater the likelihood that seat belts, air bags, and roadway protections may not keep drivers and passengers safe.

Higher speed limits are associated with an increased likelihood of deaths and incapacitating injuries. Increasing a speed limit from 55 to 65 mph results in about a 3% increase in the total number of crashes and a 28% increase in the likelihood that a vehicle occupant will be fatally injured.

#### Slide 81

It should go without saying that you should NEVER drive without being licensed. There are serious consequences for that.

Also, we all have a responsibility to say something if we see something seriously wrong. There's an anonymous tip line at [If You See Something Say Something.org](http://IfYouSeeSomethingSaySomething.org). You can report concerns about unsafe driving or other things like illegal activities, bullying, and more.

#### Slide 82

Give a thumbs up if you believe the statement is true or thumbs down if you believe this statement is false: "The family car is the safest car for your teen to drive."

#### Slide 83

This is true! The family car is by far the safest car!

#### Slide 84

Parents who have a car waiting in the driveway for their new driver should be mindful that the research shows that their child will be more likely to be in a crash. By having a "family car," the teen will have to ask to borrow it. This provides the parents with the opportunity to review family rules and restrictions and control access to the vehicle, which will make their teen driver much safer.

#### Slide 85

Law enforcement plays a critical role in traffic safety. When traffic laws are actively enforced, our roads are safer.

#### Slide 86

If you are stopped by a police officer, remain calm, move your vehicle out of the flow of traffic onto the right shoulder of the roadway, and position your vehicle as far away from traffic as possible. Turn on your flashers and turn off your engine.

#### Slide 87

Lower your window, keep your safety belt on, and your hands in plain view on the steering wheel. Do not get out of the car unless directed to so by the officer. Passengers should also remain in their seats with their safety belts fastened.

Slide 88

Answer all the officer's questions calmly and clearly and follow all directions and instructions.

Slide 89

The Move Over law previously applied only to emergency vehicles but now it includes all stationary vehicles displaying: red, blue or amber lights; hazard warning lights; caution signs; or lit flares or torches.

Slide 90

Let us review the role of parents.

Slide 91

Please raise your hand if you believe this statement is true: Peers have the greatest influence on teen driving behaviors.

Slide 92

That is false! Nine out of 10 teen drivers identified their parents as having the greatest influence on their driving behaviors. The next most influential groups, in order, are law enforcement, peers, and driver education teachers.

Slide 93

Although the General Assembly allows your child to get a license at 16 years and 3 months of age, the parents, not the state, are in the best position to determine whether their teen is ready to drive alone at that age. When parents determine their children are ready to drive, parents can help their children become safe drivers if they:

- are a good role model! "Do as I say, not as I do" just does not work. Allowing your teen to get a license does not mean your child no longer needs your supervision and guidance. By placing restrictions on high-risk driving, such as driving at night or with passengers, you will make your teen much safer.
- Parents may suspend their child's driving privileges if their child is not demonstrating safe and responsible behaviors. Virginia law puts parents in the driver's seat to monitor teen driving behaviors.

Slide 94

Let us talk about a parent/teen driving contract.

Slide 95

Parents: you must establish "family laws" that place limits on when, where, and with whom your teen may drive. Do not assume that state laws will keep your teen safe.

#### Slide 96

State laws represent the minimum restrictions placed on new drivers. Family laws, on the other hand, crafted the parent, the person who knows the teen the best, will make the teen much, much safer. Your family laws should include protections such as no cell phones, no text messaging, no passengers, no night driving, and zero tolerance for tickets.

#### Slide 97

Teens who have written contracts that outline family rules and set limits on initial driving privileges, such as no driving at night and no passengers, and have clear consequences for breaking the rules, are much less likely to engage in risky driving, have crashes, or get a ticket.

#### Slide 98

Throughout this program, we have stressed the importance of parent involvement and teen driver safety. Parents and teens should have a written driving contract, and agree upon:

- Rules and consequences
- Driving limits
- Where and when the teen can drive
- Financial responsibilities
- How privileges can be increased and
- No Drinking or Drugged Driving

#### Slide 99 Video – Teen Driving: Working Together [NO NOTES]

#### Slide 100

A Parent-Teen Driving Agreement is available in the 45-Hour Parent/Teen Driving guide, and this QR code will also take you to a parent/guardian and teen contract on the Partners for Safe Teen Driving webpage. We hope that you invest the time to complete the contract together.

#### Slide 101

Parents/guardians and students: please take a few minutes to complete the online evaluation using these QR codes.

Thank you for attending this 90-minute Parent/Teen Driving Presentation. Parents: we hope the information shared today will help you help your teen become a safer driver.

#### Slide 102

[NO NOTES]