

Drinking, Distractinos Fuel Teen Driver Crashes

Motor vehicle crashes remain the leading cause of death for teens in the United States. In 2016 alone, more than 3,500 teens lost their lives in car crashes according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). About a quarter of the teen drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking and thanks to a study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, we also know that almost 60% of teen crashes are caused by distraction.

AAA encourages parents, educators and teens themselves to discuss the dangers of driving impaired and distracted. Here are some tips for parents and guardians responsible for young drivers:

- Have conversations early and often about the dangers of underage drinking, impaired driving and driving distracted
- Make a parent-teen driving agreement that sets family rules against these dangerous behaviors
- Stay engaged as teens learn to drive and monitor their activity to ensure safety
- Teach by example and put safety first by not participating in these activities yourself

“When we help teens drive safely, everyone on the road wins,” said Amy Stracke, Managing Director of Traffic Safety Advocacy for AAA – The Auto Club Group. “*National Teen Driver Safety Week* gives us a great opportunity to focus on this particularly vulnerable group and do what we can to help them succeed behind the wheel.”

TeenDriving.AAA.com has a variety of tools to help prepare parents and teens for the learning-to-drive process. The online AAA [StartSmart](#) program also offers great resources for parents on how to become effective in-vehicle coaches as well as advice on how to manage their teen’s overall driving privileges. Teens preparing for the responsibility of driving should enroll in a driver education program that teaches how to avoid driver distraction and other safety skills. AAA also offers membership discounts for new teen drivers to help keep them safe on the road in case of an emergency.

