



The Facts About Teens, Driving And Alcohol

Use these facts on morning announcements, as an email/text to students, as Twitter updates, and to include in your local newspaper and/or school newsletter - the possibilities are endless.

Share the "How Parents Can Help Keep Teens Safe" information with parents.

Encourage Teens to Celebrate Responsibly, Drive Safely, and Buckle Up!

National Statistics

- Each year, approximately 4,350 young people under age 21 die due to underage drinking.
- About 1,580 (36%) of these deaths are from alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes.
- Youth who begin drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who wait until age 21.

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

- Young drivers (ages 16-20) are 17 times more likely to die in a crash when they have a blood alcohol concentration of .08% than when they have not been drinking.
(* It is illegal for adults 21 and over to drive with a BAC of .08% or higher. It is illegal for anyone under age 21 to drive after drinking any alcohol in all US states.)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

2017 Virginia Statistics:

- 56 teens were killed in motor vehicle crashes
- Alcohol was a factor in 19% (15) of the fatal crashes involving teen drivers ages 15-20
- 15 teenagers, age 15-20, *were killed* in alcohol-related crashes
- 102 teenagers, age 15-20, *were seriously injured* in alcohol-related crashes
- 409 teenagers, age 15-20, *were injured* in alcohol-related crashes

Virginia DMV Highway Safety Office

Virginia's Zero Tolerance Law

Virginia's Zero Tolerance law makes consuming alcohol or driving under the influence of any amount of alcohol a serious criminal offense for teens under the age of 21. (Va. Code 18.2-266.1)

Teens convicted under the law with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of between 0.02 and 0.08 will lose their license for one year from the date of conviction and pay a minimum fine of \$500 or complete at least 50 hours of community service.

Teens who use alcohol or drive impaired will receive plenty of unwanted and costly “gifts” this holiday season if convicted under the Zero Tolerance Law with a BAC of .02 or higher:

- \$ Attorney fees and court costs
- \$ Car repairs
- \$ High insurance rates
- \$ Loss of driver’s license for 1 year
- \$ A \$500 fine or 50 hours of community service
- \$ Grounded by your parents
- \$ Teens who are caught and convicted of driving with a BAC of .08 or higher are subject to the same penalties as an adult for first time offense.
 - Minimum \$250 fine
 - Loss of driver’s license for one year
 - Ignition interlock installed on vehicle

Teens who purchase, possess and/or consume alcohol face:

- A fine ranging from \$500 to \$2,500
- Up to 12 months in jail
- Mandatory suspension of driver’s license for at least 6 months but not more than 1 year

How Parents Can Help Keep Teens Safe:

- Lock up and keep track of all alcohol in the home
- Have a discussion with your teen about Virginia’s Zero Tolerance Law and the consequences of breaking the law
- Talk to your teens about how to resist peer pressure to drink alcohol and/or use drugs
- Make sure your teen knows he/she can call you to be picked up if the person he/she is riding with has used drugs and/or alcohol or if the teen makes a poor decision to use an illegal substance. Getting your teen home safely is the most important thing you can do for your teen.
- Set rules, enforce teen curfew laws, enforce teen passenger restriction laws and make sure your teen always buckles up!
- Make a teen safe driving and passenger safety contract signed by both parents and the teen. Review the rules and consequences with your teen. Always strictly enforce the consequences to make sure your teen understands the importance of being safe and responsible in a vehicle. For sample contracts, go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/parentsarethekey/agreement/>

https://www.cdc.gov/MotorVehicleSafety/pdf/Driving_Contract-a.pdf

