

# YOUTH OF VIRGINIA SPEAK OUT ABOUT TRAFFIC SAFETY



## Holiday Safe Driving Resources

Activity ideas, teen driving data, and social media messaging to promote safe and responsible driving throughout the high-risk holiday season.

**Buckle Up and Celebrate Responsibly**





### High School Ideas to Promote Safe Driving & Passenger Safety during the Holidays

- ☐ Host a school-wide Jingle Contest where students submit their jingles to your club or group! At the conclusion of your contest, pick a winning jingle to submit to YOVASO's overall contest!
- ☐ Make holiday safe driving and passenger safety announcements. Remind students the goal is to see everyone safely back at school after the holidays.
- ☐ Organize a pledge-signing event or design a pledge wall to encourage friends and loved ones to buckle up and drive safely.
- ☐ On a cold day, remove ice from a friend's car and leave a tip card on his/her windshield.
- ☐ Make a yard sign using the campaign message and post it in your yard.
- ☐ Host an ugly sweater contest with safe driving messages on the sweaters.
- ☐ Organize a White Out (a day when everyone wears white) during a home sports game, to encourage support for buckling up and celebrating without drugs/alcohol during the holidays.
- ☐ Make winter driving tip cards and hand them out in the school parking lot as the students leave for the holidays. Attach a candy cane or other candy to show that being safe is sweet.
- ☐ Make posters to place on cars in the parking lot as a reminder for students to drive safely and responsibly during the holidays.
- ☐ Organize a holiday locker design contest using the campaign theme. Ask businesses to donate prizes for the winners and give each participant a snowman ornament.
- ☐ Dress up in a holiday or traffic safety themed costume and give a school-wide presentation on
  - ✓ Discuss celebrating safely without alcohol and/or drugs and making good decisions.
  - ✓ Discuss the winter driving tips for driving safely in snow and ice.
- ☐ Have a holiday safe driving and passenger safety poster contest or T-shirt contest.
- ☐ Decorate the school bulletin board with holiday safe driving and passenger safety messages.
- ☐ Put a new holiday safe celebration or safe driving tip on the school marquee daily (you can also ask local businesses to do this on their marquee boards!).
- ☐ Participate in the local holiday parade. Use the campaign theme for your floats, signs, banners, etc.
- ☐ Emphasize to students they can celebrate substance free and still have fun. Remember, Virginia has a Zero Tolerance Law. If you drink and you are under the age of 21 – You lose!
- ☐ Remember to thank students for driving responsibly and buckling up when they return from winter break!



### **Middle School Ideas to Promote Passenger Safety during the Holidays**

- ☐ Host a school-wide Jingle Contest where students submit their jingles to your club or group! At the conclusion of your contest, pick a winning jingle to submit to YOVASO's overall contest!
- ☐ Decorate ornaments with passenger safety messages to hang on a tree in your school!
- ☐ Decorate your school's bulletin board with a holiday/winter theme and a buckle up message!
- ☐ Pass out candy to the students at your school with a holiday safety message attached!
- ☐ Hold a door decorating contest between classrooms to see who can come up with the most creative passenger safety message!
- ☐ Read safety announcements or statistics over the intercom at the beginning of the school day.
- ☐ Recruit club members to participate in a local holiday parade where you can pass out candy and reminders to be safe throughout the holiday season!
- ☐ Host a Holiday Dance or 'W' rap contest with a safe driving theme to provide students a safe place to celebrate and have fun.
- ☐ Organize a pledge-signing event or a pledge wall to remind friends and loved ones that "There's SNOW place like home" and to always buckle up!
- ☐ Post holiday safe driving messages on the school marquee daily (you can also ask local businesses to do this on their marquee boards!).
- ☐ Organize a holiday locker design contest using the campaign theme. Ask businesses to donate prizes for the winners and give each participant a snowman safety ornament!
- ☐ Host an ugly sweater contest with the message "Prevent the Holidays from Turning Ugly - Remember to Buckle Up and Make Good Choices." Announce the winner at a school assembly!
- ☐ Make a yard sign to remind your neighbors: "There's SNOW place like home – Buckle Up & Drive Safely" and post it in your yard.
- ☐ Remember to thank students for buckling up, making good choices, and being safe when they return from winter break!



The holidays are here and YOVASO wants to keep our teen drivers and passengers safe during this high-risk season. **Sadly, three teens were killed on Virginia's roadways in December 2021.** Please help us make this holiday season the safest yet by incorporating these statistics from the past three years into your campaign activities and events. **It's important we share this information with young drivers and passengers, as well as their parents, to let them know that December is a high-risk month for young drivers and their passengers.** Help us save lives this holiday season by reminding our youth to drive safely and celebrate responsibly because *there's SNOW place like home.*

### December Statistics 2019 - 2021

#### Teens Aged 15-19 Killed and Injured in Crashes During the Month of December in Virginia

# Crashes Involving a Teen			# Teens Killed			# Teens Injured		
2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
1,653	1,316	1,499	5	6	3	475	382	411

#### Teen (Aged 15-19) DRIVER-RELATED Crashes, Fatal Crashes, and Injury Crashes During the Month of December

Teen Driver Crashes			Teen Driver Fatal Crashes			Teen Driver Injury Crashes		
2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
1,556	1,264	1,433	4	6	5	437	363	427

For more information or additional statistics:  
Contact Casey Taylor at [casey.taylor@vsp.virginia.gov](mailto:casey.taylor@vsp.virginia.gov).



## The Facts about Teens, Driving and Alcohol

Use these facts:

- On morning or school television announcements
  - As an email or text to students
  - As Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook posts
- To include in your local newspaper and/or school newsletter
  - The possibilities are endless!

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

### **National Statistics**

- Each year, approximately 5,000 young people under age 21 die due to underage drinking.
- About 1,900 (38%) 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 consume alcohol in all US states.)*

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*

### **2021 Virginia Statistics:**

- 60 teens were killed in motor vehicle crashes
- Alcohol was a factor in 19% (17) of the fatal crashes involving teen drivers ages 15-19
  - 16 teenagers, age 15-19, were killed in alcohol-related crashes
  - 85 teenagers, age 15-19, were seriously injured in alcohol-related crashes
  - 290 teenagers, age 15-19, were injured in alcohol-related crashes

*Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles*

## **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 1 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](https://www.cdc.gov/MotorVehicleSafety/pdf/Driving_Contract-a.pdf)





### **Test Your Knowledge - Winter Weather Driving**

- 1. If moisture or frost clouds the inside of windows while driving, what should you do?**

*Stop in a safe area and remove it. Turn on air conditioning to keep insides of windows clear and dry.*
- 2. Should you over inflate or under inflate your tires during cold winter months?**

*Neither. Tires should always be maintained at the level recommended by the manufacturer.*
- 3. When heading down a snowy or icy hill, what should you do?**

*Shift into a lower gear before making your descent and maintain a slow steady speed.*
- 4. What should be included in an emergency winter driving kit?**

*Small snow shovel, small bag of rock salt, sand or clay cat litter to generate traction, a windshield scraper and brush, flashlight and extra batteries, jumper cables, blankets, tool kit, brightly colored cloth to use as a flag, and a first aid kit.*
- 5. Is it safe to drive with cruise control on when it is raining or snowing?**

*No. On wet roads, cruise control set at too fast a speed could cause the vehicle to hydroplane when it encounters standing water. On very low-traction surfaces such as ice and snow, cruise control operation can result in a skid or spin.*
- 6. If caught in a snow storm and you have to walk in the street, should you walk in the same direction as the traffic or facing oncoming traffic?**

*Always walk facing the oncoming traffic.*
- 7. If your car is equipped with anti-lock brakes and you are braking on snow or ice, what should you do?**

*Apply firm and continuous pressure. If your car does not have anti-lock brakes, you can mimic that effect by pumping the brakes.*
- 8. When approaching a snowy or icy hill, what should you do?**

*Approach it at a slow speed and maintain that slow speed at a steady rate.*
- 9. When sliding into a skid, it is best to do what?**

*Turn in the direction of the skid.*



# Holiday Social Media Messaging Sheet

Share these messages on your social media accounts to remind your peers to buckle up and drive safely this holiday season!

## November Tweets

Jingle Your Way to a Safe Holiday and join YOVASO in pledging to drive responsibly & to always buckle up! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Increased travel during the holidays means increased risk for crashes. Always buckle up & drive alcohol/drug free! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Don't be a turkey this Thanksgiving! [#BuckleUp](#) and make sure all of your passengers do too! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Nov.24 | Happy Thanksgiving! Keep the party alive, by celebrating safely and buckling up for every ride! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Whether you are out shopping, picking up a Christmas tree, or visiting family, make sure you drive safely! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

In 2021 in VA, distractions were a factor in 16% (14) of the fatal crashes involving teen drivers ages 15-19. [#PhoneDown](#) [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Stay Safe by routinely checking your vehicle for maintenance problems during the holiday season! [##SafeHoliday22](#)

In 2021 in VA, alcohol was a factor in 19% (17) of the fatal crashes involving teen drivers ages 15-19. [#DriveResponsibly](#) & always buckle up! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Hey friends & family! Be sure to [#BuckleUp](#) & [#DriveSafely](#) this holiday season. [#SafeHoliday22](#)

## December Tweets

If Santa watched you drive, would you make the naughty or nice list? Be sure to drive responsibly this holiday season! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Remember to slow down and pay attention during cold weather driving! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

It's a great day to remind your friends and family to [make good choices and arrive safely in 2023!](#) Re-tweet this and let them know you love them!

Don't get distracted by the holiday spirit when you are behind the wheel! Steer into the New Year responsibly & safely! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Dec. 24 | It's Christmas Eve! If you're traveling today, be sure to leave early and give yourself plenty of time to arrive! [#SlowDown](#) [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Dec. 25 | Merry Christmas! Enjoy the holiday by being a safe driver, buckling up, & celebrating responsibly! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Remember to [#DriveResponsibly](#) by staying focused while driving! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Dec. 31 | Make it into the New Year safe & sound by driving safely & celebrating responsibly tonight and everyday this year! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

## January Tweets

Jan 1. | Thank you for Steering Safely into 2023! Let's continue to drive safely & responsibly & be safe passengers this year. [#SafeHoliday22](#)

Continue keeping your celebrations alive by making good choices in 2022! [#SafeHoliday22](#)

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