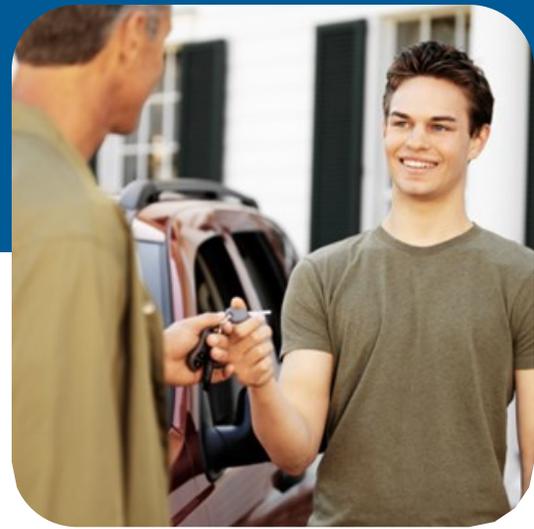


Parents Hold the Key to Safe Driving



Getting a driver's license can be one of the most exciting milestones in a young person's life. Tragically, car crashes are the leading cause of death for teens. The good news is that as a parent you have a powerful role in preventing these needless deaths. In fact, teens say their parents have the strongest influence on their driving and are their leading source of information – even greater than their peers.

What you can do:

- **Communicate** – Start talking with your teen about being a safe driver and passenger well before they reach driving age. Provide a positive environment where your teen feels comfortable and safe to talk with you. Encourage your teen to call you if it is not safe for them to drive or ride as a passenger. Be available to drive them or arrange for a safe ride. Give positive feedback when your teen uses good judgment, gains driving experience, follows restrictions, and improves their driving skills.
- **Be a Positive Role Model** – Lead by example. Even though it may not seem like it, your teens are watching you all the time and they mimic the risks you take. If you talk on the phone, text, speed or drive without your seatbelt, so might your teen. Start modelling good driving behaviours when children are young.
- **Be in the Know** – Parental knowledge is the key predictor of teen risk-taking behaviours. Know about your teen's behaviours, whereabouts, and peers. You play a critical role in making sure your teen knows and follows the rules of the two-step [Graduated Licensing System](#) and traffic laws. Ensure your teen gets lots of supervised driving in a variety of conditions – weather, type of road, time of day and traffic volume.
- **Commit to a Common Set of Rules** – Teens need and want to know what is expected of them, why, and the consequences of their actions. Together, calmly talk and set clear driving and passenger rules. Expect resistance, but be firm and follow through on consequences. Review rules and be prepared to change them as your teen has earned or lost driving privileges. Consider developing a [Parent-Teen Driving Contract](#). Share the contract with other adults who may be involved in your teen's driving such as grandparents and older siblings.

For more information call 613-966-5500 or visit http://yndrc.tirf.ca/parent_resources/index.php