

When Driving, One Should Be- Driving

The driving process these days is so defined and trimmed down that it is almost impossible for someone not to have a driver's license. Aside from the major costs of each part of the process, obtaining a state driver's license is really no trouble at all. For a teen to get his or her license, the process is broken down into three separate parts: the temporary permit test, drivers' education classes, and the final driving test. Completing these three stages is mandatory and provides what the state feels to be adequate information on everything a teenager needs to be a safe driver. They supply facts, statistics and solutions to seemingly real-life scenarios. However, the state does not apply these teachings to the individual lives of the teenagers in the classes. They do not provide them with the simple helpful ideas to better ensure the safety of teen drivers and all the other drivers on the road. When it comes to teen driving, small choices make big differences.

The first opportunity to avoid a problem is the automobile itself. Good car care is a huge priority when it comes to being a safe driver. Teens seem to forget that a car needs maintenance, just as they need to see a doctor on a regular basis. Before teenagers may be licensed to drive a car, they should have an understanding of how their car runs. Some simple things a teen should know how or when to do to a car include: filling the gas tank, putting air in the tires, changing a flat tire, changing the oil, adding antifreeze or brake fluid, and most importantly recognizing a problem. Not all teenagers have to know how to change their own oil but they should be aware of where they need to go and what they need to do in order to keep their car running. Most importantly, any problem with a car should be fixed. If a car is not fixed right away, more problems will arise.

Another tip to help keep teen drivers safe is the number of passengers in the car. The state says that a driver is permitted to have as many passengers in the car as seatbelts. Teenagers seem to think that it is amusing to shove 12 people into a car that seats four, but being uncomfortable is not funny. When more passengers enter the vehicle, more people fight for the driver's attention. Also, with more passengers come more distractions. More people shouting their opinions on the song, radio station, where to eat, or just gossip. When a teen driver adds more people to the car, the risk of an accident is raised significantly. The more people in the car, the more likely it will crash.

A third idea to help keep drivers safe is obviously how drivers drive their cars. This includes one very important factor, speed. When it comes to speed limits, signs are posted every mile or so, notifying the driver of the state suggested speed they should be driving. Many drivers, especially teenagers, choose to ignore these signs and continue to drive at speeds up to nearly 40 miles over the legal limit. Speed limits are there for a reason. They are there to make drivers aware of their surroundings, such as pedestrians. Also, in bad or severe weather conditions, drivers should reevaluate their driving speed to better fit driving conditions. Drivers should always remember that they are not the only ones on the road and that a defensive driving tactic will always serve best.

Lastly, when teenagers drive cars, they seem to think that it is an excuse to do something else. Since the creation of text messages, accident rates have skyrocketed. According to a survey conducted by Liberty Mutual Insurance Group of 900 student members of Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), 37% of teenagers admit that text messaging is the biggest distraction while driving. Along with text messaging, teenagers choose to answer their phones and adjust their radios, Ipods or CD players. Because of the other activities teens participate in while they drive, their senses become dulled. When this happens, a driver's reaction time becomes extended which will then cause the risk of an accident to increase. They can wait to answer their cell phones. When teenagers are behind the wheel, they should be driving. Teenagers must realize that they are in the car to get to the party, not to have a party.

Having a driver's license is a privilege, not a right. Teens should realize that being allowed to drive is a skill that they must learn and perfect. Bad or distracted driving has serious repercussions. To abuse the privilege of driving by distracting the driver or driving erratically will affect the lives of everyone on the road and inevitably cause deaths.