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Driving Scholarship  
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Winning entry

### Dangerous teen driving

Many teenagers could not wait to reach 16 years old to obtain their own drivers license. We also forget along with getting our licenses means freedom, and more responsibility which goes hand and hand with safety. Many teenagers do not have safety in mind. We are more interested in parties, our appearances, who's dating, and friends. As stated in Myteen, "16 year olds have higher crash ratings than any other age" (Myteen). To stay safe while driving not only means buckling up, paying attention to the road at all times, but also means no DRUNK DRIVING...

Alcohol is bad for the body it affects every organ, especially your brain which then affects your motive abilities. "Alcohol is metabolized in the liver by enzymes; leaving excess alcohol to circulate throughout the body" (disease control). Teenagers can hurt themselves as well as others very badly, if they get in a car accident. As stated in Myteen, "25% of teenagers killed in 2003 had a high blood alcohol level" (Myteen).

One way to avoid getting into an accident, and staying safe is by paying attention and concentration. As stated in Myteen, "Talking with other passengers 81%, playing with radio or CD 68%, eating or drinking 49% and using a cell phone 25%" (Myteen). Another way to avoid getting into car accidents is to limit transporting friends around until the driver is comfortable enough, and the concentration level will not decrease. A good tip is always avoiding stressful conversations while driving, it will take the focus off the road.

A seat belt can save many lives if worn properly and is secure. The seat belt is always worn at the waist and between the shoulder blade and the neck, and it should not be twisted. The impact of a car that hits another can be enough to send the passengers forward. If a seat belt is not worn, the passengers could fly through the windshield either damaging their head for life, or could even cause death. "Data show that unbuckled passengers in cars driven by 16 and 17 year-olds numbered 118 of which 48 or nearly half were not wearing a seatbelt" (ECM).

A big safety tip is road awareness. A drivers thought process must be one step ahead, thinking about oncoming turns and what the drivers near is doing. "Sometimes the driver has to think for other drivers" (Demetrius Armstrong). A teen driver should learn how to drive both day and night so there will not be any surprises once behind the wheel, and to better prepare them for the future. It is always recommended to keep good maintenance up on the vehicle. The tires should be inflated at the correct pressure; the headlights should all work, brakes working properly, and engine running smoothly. It would be terrible for the driver's car to break down in the middle of the highway, and the driver's cell phone is dead.

When driving in bad weather drive carefully and slowly. Bad weather could be snow or rain but always keep a consistent speed while driving. No risk taking or showing off while driving, especially when the teenage driver has no experience. When the snow is pretty deep it is good to use the tracks that is in front of one's car to try to avoid sliding on fresh snow. The curves can be a really tricky maneuver when driving. Be careful not to press the brakes hard, use mild pressure. "Found that 24% of all crashes occur during adverse weather conditions, including ice, snow, and rain" (IEEE).

Learning how to drive can be very difficult, but is an easier way of transportation. It can also be very dangerous, if the laws are not obeyed. The parents of the teenagers want their children safe, so why not take the time to teach us how to drive and hopefully prevent future accidents and maybe even save a life. The first beginning stages around 6 to 12 months while learning how to drive is the most important. These are the times where the foundation is laid and the rules of the road are established. "58% of the teens out there causes crashes to happen." (teendriving.com). There are only 42% teenage drivers who do not crash. We need that number to increase by 58%. Help the percentage increase by granting teenagers like myself to be a part of that 58%, to make the world a safer environment.

WORK SITED

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