

Teen Drivers

Fact Sheet

Statistically, teen drivers are the most dangerous drivers on the road. Nationwide, they only make seven percent of the total driving population, yet they account for more than 15 % of all crashes. Teen drivers should be great drivers because of their quick reflexes; however, their inexperience and immaturity outweigh this advantage. Teen drivers are more likely to be involved in a fatal crash if other young passengers are in the car. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of youthful alcohol related injury crashes in Cuyahoga County. This is in contrast to the steady decline in alcohol-related injury crashes among all drivers in the county. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that teenage boys are riskier drivers than teenage girls, but this gap is closing because young girls are driving more.

Nationwide Teen Driver Facts:

- Based on estimated miles traveled annually, teen drivers age 16 -19 have a fatality rate four times the rate of drivers age 25-69. (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2001)
- Sixteen-year-old drivers have a crash rate three times higher than 17-year-olds and five times greater than 18-year-olds. (NHTSA, 2001)
- Sixteen-year-old drivers have almost ten times the crash risk of drivers age 30-59. (William, A.F., 1996)
- Sixty-three percent of teenage passenger deaths take place when another teen is driving the vehicle. (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, 2001)
- Twenty-one percent of teenage drivers killed in a fatal crash had a BAC > .10 (NHTSA, 2001)
- Forty-one percent (41%) of fatal crashes involving teenagers occur at night between 9 pm and 6 am. (IIHS, 2001)
- Researchers at John Hopkins found that 16-year-old drivers increase their chance of dying in a fatal crash when they have one young passenger. This increases to 86% with two passengers and 182% with three or more. 17-year-old drivers triple their chance of dying with three or more passengers.

Ohio and local facts:

- Young people age 16 - 20 represent less than 7.3% of the total driving population in Ohio, but they are involved in 16.7% of all crashes and 14.8% of fatal crashes. (Ohio Insurance Institution, 2002)
- There were more fatalities among males and females age 16-20 than any other age group in Ohio. (ODPS, 2001)
- In 2000, 17.1% of alcohol related fatalities statewide involved a 16-20 year old driver. (Ohio Department of Public Safety)
- The total number of injury crashes from alcohol has declined steadily in Cuyahoga County in recent years for all age groups except 16-20 year olds. In 1996 and 1997 there were 114 such crashes. In 1998 this number jumped to 256, and in 1999 to 295 crashes. (ODPS, 2001)
- In Ohio during 2001, 60 people were killed in alcohol crashes involving an at-fault 16-20 year-old driver. 33 of these victims (or 55%) were passengers or others. By comparison, when the at-fault drunk driver was 26 or older, only 54 of 211 fatalities were not the drivers themselves. This means 16-20 year old drivers are much more likely to kill their passengers or others in an alcohol crash than older age groups in Ohio (ODPS, 2001)