



10 DEADLY TEEN DRIVER MISTAKES....

AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

① RISK TAKING

Don't do something you'll regret for the rest of your life. Car crashes are the leading cause of injury and death for teens. And it's not just about you: Crashes affect pedestrians, passengers and other drivers, as well as their families.

② TEXTING & TALKING

Focus on driving. Texting increases crash risk by 23 times. Talking on a cell phone while driving can double reaction time. Save the texting, phone calls and other gadgets for after the driving is done.

Teen girls are twice as likely as teen boys to use cell phones and other electronic devices.

③ UN-BUCKLED

Use a safety belt and insist that all your passengers do so as well. About two-thirds of teens killed in vehicle crashes were not wearing safety belts. Wearing a seat belt reduces your chances of being hurt or killed in a crash by 45 percent.

④ MUSIC

Turn the music off while learning to drive. Adjusting the radio or cd player or searching your iPod are common distractions for teen drivers.

⑤ SPEED

Stick to the speed limit. One-third of teen fatalities involve speeding. Obeying the speed limit reduces the severity of a crash you can't avoid.

⑥ ROWDY RIDERS

Don't load up your car with friends. Adding one teen passenger to a vehicle increases a teen driver's crash risk by about 50 percent. With two or more teen passengers, the crash risk is fivefold.

Teen boys are twice as likely to turn around in their seats while driving.

⑦ DUI/DRUGS

Stay sober and drug-free. The risk of involvement in a motor vehicle crash is greater for teens under the influence of alcohol or drugs—even prescription drugs.

⑧ LATE NIGHT DRIVING

Teen crash rates at night (9 p.m. to 6 a.m.) are twice as high as daytime rates. Obey parental curfews.

⑨ PEER PRESSURE

Make good choices and don't be afraid to "speak up." Before you get in the car with a friend, ask: Is this a person you trust? Is he in the right frame of mind to drive safely? Are you prepared to speak up if he drives dangerously?

⑩ OVERCONFIDENCE

Overconfidence can lead to crashes when new drivers encounter unfamiliar or unexpected situations. Parents should supervise and monitor their teen drivers—even after they get their license.