



Title: **Ideas offered to protect teen drivers**  
 Author:  
 Size: 15.03 square inch  
 Kankakee, IL Circulation: 15733



## Ideas offered to protect teen drivers

National Teen Driver Safety Week is Oct. 18-24. Beginning drivers make behind-the-wheel mistakes. Some are easily corrected. Others result in property damage, injury, even death. The Illinois Insurance Association, a property-casualty trade organization, encourages parents, families and communities to get behind teen driver safety initiatives.

Some ideas:

- Support graduated driver license laws and adopt house rules to protect teen motorists. Illinois' GDL gives teens more supervised time behind the wheel, bans hand-held mobile devices while driving, limits passengers, restricts night driving and more. However, these measures are only part of the answer. Candid, and ongoing family discussions about driving safety, expectations, and responsibilities are equally important.
- Model and reinforce good driving habits. Obey traffic laws; never drink and drive; always wear a seatbelt; adjust to unexpected situations. Avoid distractions that take eyes, hands or focus away from the task at hand. Cellphones are one example. Music settings, temperature controls, food, passengers, even scenery are others.
- Choose the right vehicle for your teen driver. A bigger, heavier car, truck, or SUV equipped with safety features is best. Avoid those with high horsepower engines, and always check NHTSA safety ratings.

Fatal teen crashes are devastating. Family members, friends, and entire communities are forever affected. We can help young motorists reach destinations intact and improve roadway safety for everyone by talking to teens about safe driving practices.

**Kevin J. Martin**

Executive Director, Illinois Insurance Association