

Promoting Parent Involvement in Teen Driving

An In-Depth Look at the
Importance and the Initiatives



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Introduction

Car crashes are the number one killer of teens claiming an average of 3,000 young lives annually (The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia [CHOP], 2013; Centers for Disease Control [CDC], 2012). Novice teen drivers, unlike their more experienced adult counterparts, are four times more likely to be involved in a fatal motor vehicle crash (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety [IIHS], 2008). There is good news, however, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration **in 2011 young driver-related fatalities declined 4.6% and crashes fell 5.5%**, continuing the gains made over the past decade (NHTSA, 2012). Researchers agree that Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws, now in place in all fifty states, have been instrumental in facilitating crash reductions ranging from 20 to 40% (Shope, 2007).

Researchers also point to the critical role parents play in helping teens survive their most dangerous driving years.¹ Children literally begin learning to drive the minute their parents bring them home from the hospital. As they travel in cars driven by their parents, children develop perceptions about driving, including what it means to share the road and respect and obey traffic laws. Numerous studies, some of which include the use of in-car cameras that monitor both teen and parent driving, find that "people drive in ways similar to their parents" (Shope, 2006).

1. This report takes into account that some teens do not have biological parents, but guardians or mentors who fill the role of birth parents. Therefore, the term parent is used to represent adults who not only address a child's basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, education, health care), but who provide guidance as well emotional and social support.



An In-Depth Look at the Importance and the Initiatives



Parents' expectations also factor into how a teen drives. Parents who set, monitor and enforce safe driving practices have teens who are less likely to crash and violate the law. Involved parents, who set high expectations as well as nurture their young drivers, will see their children more likely to drive safely at far greater rates than teens with permissive or uninvolved parents (CHOP, 2009).

Which raises the questions: Do parents recognize the critical role they play in shaping their teens' driving behavior? Do they know the risks for their teens? Are they optimizing their states' Graduated Driving Licensing program or, for that matter, know what it is and how it works? Are they fully equipped to assume the role of teacher and coach, since they're likely to be their teens' primary provider of in-car training?

Surveys of parents across the country report a mixed bag of responses to these and other questions. Clearly, parents want to do what is best for their teens, but when it comes to recognizing what they should be most concerned about, car crashes don't always factor into the equation. Additionally, many parents look at their teens' licensure as an opportunity to relinquish the long-held task of shuttling their children to activities. This new found freedom for both parent and teen does have its advantages, but it can come with a price if the parent fails to remain actively engaged throughout the teen's formative driving years. At the same time, many parents want help supporting their novice driver and look to licensing and other agencies for information and advice. The proliferation of resources, both in print and online, speaks not only to the interest in the topic, but the recognition that parents, mentors and guardians want and need assistance. But are these tools helpful or effective?

This publication follows on the heels of *Curbing Teen Driver Crashes: An In-Depth Look at State Initiatives* published October 2012 with funding from State Farm. It attempts to answer the questions and issues described above by delving deeper into parental participation in teen driving. This latest installment discusses not only what parents need to know to reduce their teens' crash risk, but the opportunities for and challenges of engaging them in the process. It also leverages the findings of a previously conducted Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) survey, along with new research, to examine the current state of the practice, identifies what elements are essential for building a good parent program, and makes recommendations for continued study that will assist states and organizations working to advance teen driver safety.

This report was compiled with the guidance of an expert panel to help state highway safety officials, advocates and others working in the teen driving arena continue to move the needle in the right direction. It is by no means all-inclusive; there are many parent programs that merit highlighting, but are not included due to space limitations. The ones chosen for discussion in this report represent new, cutting edge and/or model parent engagement programs as well as one-of-a-kind initiatives that are showing or expected to show through data analysis and/or peer reviewed research promising results. (Some of the activities were evaluated through an analysis of crash data and parent surveys, while others have been or are being evaluated through peer review.)



Key Concepts to Convey to Parents

There are essential key facts and concepts that any comprehensive program aimed at parents of teen drivers should include. Understanding the risk factors for crashing and how GDL works to reduce those risks combined with actionable tips on how to leverage GDL to help them supervise their teen safely through the first years of driving, may empower parents to be effective partners in teen driver safety.



THE UNDERLYING FACTORS:

Inexperience and Adolescence

Simply put, teen crash risk is impacted by developmental and behavioral issues coupled with inexperience. As children progress from adolescence to adulthood, their bodies undergo significant change. During the teenage years, often characterized by raging hormones and boundary pushing, teens are not only developing physically, but emotionally. Their social lives as well as sexual identity are keenly important, their sleep patterns change as they tend to stay up later at night, and their ability to learn is at an all-time high (National Institutes of Mental Health [NIMH], 2011; Shope, 2006). Plus, it is in this stage of development when the vast majority of young people are learning to drive.

These and other factors impact what happens when a teen gets behind the wheel. And, that can be problematic since the human brain isn't fully developed until the early to mid-twenties, particularly the "prefrontal cortex where impulse inhibition, decision making and judgment are centered" (Paus as cited in Shope, 2006).

Personality factors also should be considered. Teens who thrill seek, act aggressively, succumb to peer pressure, or fail to view deviant behavior as inappropriate, are more likely to be involved in motor vehicle

crashes. Ensuring that parents are fully informed about the impact of personality and brain development on crash-risk is critically important. These factors, rather than state licensing laws, should be of primary concern when assessing a teens' readiness to not only learn to drive, but drive independently and in high-risk situations (Shope, 2006).

While many teens crash because of risk-taking, most crashes occur because the novice behind the wheel doesn't have the skills or experience needed to recognize a hazard and

Parents should also bear in mind that driving is a learned activity that takes practice. No matter how intelligent, level-headed, respectful, or talented a teen may be, when it comes to driving the playing field is level.

take corrective action. Researchers point to driver error as the most prevalent reason for teen crashes with recognition (e.g., inadequate surveillance, distraction) and decision errors (e.g., following too closely, driving too fast for conditions) topping the list (Curry, Hafetz, Kallan, Winston, & Durbin, 2011).

For this reason, parents should also bear in mind that driving is a learned activity that takes practice. No matter how intelligent, level-headed, respectful, or talented a teen may be, when it comes to driving the playing field is level. To gain skills teens must drive. Researchers point to the need for novices to log at least 1,000 to 1,500 miles of driving, in a variety of conditions and on all types of roadways, to experience a significant reduction in crash risk (National Safety Council [NSC], 2009). The licensing laws in 46 states, however, require young drivers to accumulate a minimum number of supervised practice driving hours prior to licensure, rather than a

specific number of miles behind the wheel (Governors Highway Safety Association [GHSA], 2013). Parents need to know that much supervised practice, particularly during the learner's stage of licensure, is best.

Time is important. In the case of driving, it can literally take three to five years for novices to be exposed to the myriad of driving situations they'll encounter on the road. Building the muscle-memory needed to help a driver react quickly and appropriately in a variety of situations takes time. Parents, therefore, should be strongly encouraged to seek out opportunities to continue to drive with their teens even after they've secured a license. As one parent advocate aptly noted, a license doesn't a safe or experienced teen driver make, "it is up to [parents] to be an extra filter in the process..." (Hollister, 2012). Getting parents to treat the intermediate stage of licensure as an advanced learner's permit, rather than as a license, is an idea that warrants consideration and study. ●

Key Risk Factors for Crashing

Parents also must be informed about other key risk factors – alcohol, speed, fatigue, distraction/inattention, for example – that when added to the equation can make for a dangerous and sometimes lethal mix.

A review of teen driver errors leading to serious motor vehicle crashes found that inadequate surveillance, driving too fast for conditions and distracted driving collectively accounted for nearly 50% of the crashes (Curry

et al., 2011). It is not uncommon for parents, however, to point to alcohol as the leading crash causation factor. While combining alcohol (as well as drugs and other substances that impair judgment and reflexes) with vehicle operation is risky for all drivers, and particularly so for teens due to brain development issues, helping parents recognize and address the most prevalent factors tripping up their new drivers is critical (NIMH, 2011). This is not to say that parents shouldn't discuss and continually reinforce the

Key Risk Factors for Crashing

dangers of impaired driving. Parents can take some solace, however, in knowing that today's generation of teen drivers are far more likely to refrain from getting behind the wheel after drinking, than their own generation was when they were teens (Nichols, Haire, Solomon, Ellison-Potter, & Cosgrove, 2011).

Distraction, although not a new issue, has come to the forefront in the past decade due to advances in wireless technology. From texting and talking on cell phones and other hand-held devices, to relying on iPods and GPS for entertainment and driving directions, these devices pose risk (cognitive, visual, manual, and auditory) not just for teens, but all drivers. Research, however, confirms that many teens do not comprehend the danger; nearly 30% of teens surveyed about distraction did not regard taking their eyes off the road for up to ten seconds as unsafe behavior (Singh, 2010).

Besides electronic devices, parents also should be advised about how passengers and, in particular, teens and young adults, impact safety. While teens look forward to driving with their friends and parents may view it as the much anticipated end to years of carpooling, adding just one passenger increases a teen driver's crash risk by 50 percent. Put three or more passengers in the car, and that "risk is nearly four times greater" than when a teen is driving alone (NSC, 2009). Distraction for a driver is high as he engages in conversation, debates song choices or comments on what's happening inside and outside the vehicle with friends. In some cases, passengers may even physically interfere with the driver (e.g., grabbing the steering wheel) or their presence may prompt the teen driver to speed, tailgate or show off to impress his friends (Williams & Tefft, 2012).

Recognizing the complexity of driving, limiting passengers is essential.

Driving at night is also a problem. "Mile for mile, 16 and 17-year-old drivers are about three times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash at night [typically between 9 p.m. and midnight] than during the day" (NSC, 2009). As many teen-related activities happen after dark, fatigue and inexperience combine to impact novice driver safety. Add to that a tendency for teen nighttime driving to include passengers, a lack of seat belt use, alcohol, and a social atmosphere, and there's a good bet the ride involves far more joy, than purpose (Hollister, 2012; NSC, 2009).

Traveling over the posted speed limit is a factor in many teen crashes involving injury and fatality. While teens view speeding as going "more than 10 miles per hour above posted limits," what they fail to understand is the impact speeding has on stopping distance (CHOP, 2012). For example, if a vehicle traveling 40 mph in a 30 mph zone collides with another vehicle, that 10 mph difference translates into a 78% increase in collision energy. Parents must recognize the dangers associated with speeding and reinforce the importance of their new driver obeying posted limits. No doubt this is a challenge, since nearly half of teens report driving much faster than the law allows (CHOP, 2012; TRU Research, 2009). This need for speed may stem from the brain development issue addressed earlier as speeding is a way to address teen thrill seeking.

Drowsy or fatigued driving is another problem. While it's important for all drivers to be well-rested, it's critical for teens. Experts say teens need at least 8 hours a night. Early school start times coupled with athletics or other after-school activities and jobs result in many teens not getting enough sleep. One in

While teens view speeding as going "more than 10 miles per hour above posted limits," what they fail to understand is the impact speeding has on stopping distance.

seven 16 to 24-year-olds fell asleep at the wheel at least once during the past year, compared with one in 10 older drivers (Arnold & Tefft, 2012). Parents need to ensure their teens get enough sleep before allowing them to head out the door with car keys in hand as well as help them recognize the warning signs of drowsy driving (e.g., difficulty focusing, frequent blinking, heavy-feeling eyelids, unintentional swerving).

Despite many growing up with car and booster seats, today's teens aren't leading the way when it comes to buckling up. While teens have repeatedly heard the message about the lifesaving value of seat belts (and

probably reminded their parents to buckle up when they were children), observational surveys indicate that their seat belt use is lower than for any other age group, with males and their passengers having the lowest use rates (Williams, McCartt, & Geary, 2003; Williams & Shabanova, 2002). This lack of belt use is taking its toll. In 2011 fatal crashes, 58% of teens behind the wheel (drivers ages 15-19 years of age driving passenger vehicles) and 50% of their passengers were not wearing a seat belt (CHOP, 2013). ●

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL), A Tool for Parents

Materials for parents should emphasize that graduated driver licensing works because it gets to the heart of why teens crash and die on our roadways.

It would be easy for parents to throw up their hands and cry uncle after hearing about the risk for their teen drivers. But there is a proven tool in place in all 50 states that is responsible for 20 to 40% reductions in teen crashes (Shope as cited in Williams, 2011). First implemented in the U.S. in the mid-1990s (even earlier in many other modernized countries), Graduated Driver Licensing or GDL is a three-stage licensing system that includes a learner or supervised practice driving phase, an intermediate stage that allows for unsupervised driving but includes restrictions that address risk, and a full licensure stage where all provisions are lifted. Ask a room full of parents with teen drivers if they've ever heard the term GDL and you're likely to get a few nods of

agreement as well as blank stares.

While Graduated Driver Licensing is codified in state laws, few parents understand its purpose and effectiveness at reducing crash risk.

Before parents can leverage the proven principles of GDL, they need a primer that clearly and succinctly addresses the three stages of licensure corresponding to time and age (e.g., minimum 6 months of supervised practice driving starting no earlier than age 15). Once they've got the basics, helping them understand the various provisions or restrictions (no driving between midnight and 5 a.m., no passengers for the first six months of unsupervised driving, no texting) included in their states' GDL



Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)

1

Key Concepts to Convey to Parents

program should come next. Finally, facilitating a discussion about how these restrictions correspond to the risks outlined previously, where the dots between restriction (e.g., no driving after 11 p.m.) and risk (e.g., crash risk goes up at night for teens) are literally connected, will help parents begin to understand the how and why.

States looking to develop and/or revise teen driving and GDL educational materials for parents should emphasize that graduated driver licensing works because it gets to the heart of why teens crash and die on our roadways. At the very least, parents need to know that GDL may:

- **delay full licensure (a good thing because of the developmental and behavioral issues detailed earlier);**
- **restrict or limit passengers and ban texting and/or the use of electronic devices (key sources of teen distraction);**
- **keep teens off the road late at night (when they're likely to be fatigued and/or joyriding); and**
- **require seat belt use (critical due to teens' elevated crash risk and the lifesaving benefit of proper restraint).**

All states also spell out the penalties (e.g., fines, fees, license suspension, additional training) for failing to comply with these and other provisions. Again parents should know what these are since they're likely to impact teens' license status, mobility and insurance rates. Coupling that information with a reminder that driving is a privilege, not a right, is also a key message parents need to hear and convey repeatedly to their teens.

Parents must understand that not all state GDL programs are created equal.

Parental support for GDL programs is strong, particularly once they make the linkage between the risk and the various provisions' impact on improving their teens' safety and subsequently put them into practice (NSC, 2009). A recent national survey of parents found general support for even stronger licensing laws for teens that have later permit and licensing ages, more practice hours, and longer timeframes for nighttime driving and passenger restrictions (Williams, Braitman, & McCartt, 2011). That's good news. But parents must understand that not all state GDL programs are created equal. A NHTSA evaluation of GDL programs found that the most effective for reducing fatalities contained at least five of the following components (Compton & Ellison-Porter, 2008):

- Minimum age of 15 1/2 for obtaining a learner's permit
- Minimum waiting period after obtaining a learner's permit of at least three months before applying for an intermediate license
- Minimum of 30 hours of supervised practice driving
- Minimum age of 16 1/2 for obtaining an intermediate license
- Nighttime driving restriction during intermediate stage
- Passenger restriction during intermediate stage
- Minimum age of 17 for full licensure

Most parents rely on their teen's birthday, rather than their better judgment and instinct to determine if their teen is ready [to drive].

No GDL program is perfect, that's why traffic safety and teen driving safety advocates should make parents aware of their laws' shortcomings so that parents can make fully informed decisions about when their children should start the learners and independent driving stages. That starts with the age requirements for obtaining a driver license, which are not based on science, but are minimum or bright line standards (established for clarity and objectivity). While these standards dictate the earliest age at which a teen may begin each stage of the GDL program, they don't address the bigger issue – readiness to drive. Factors parents should assess include: teens' ability to understand the risks, handle the stress, and control the vehicle, along with their willingness – some teens are simply too afraid to drive (Hollister, 2012). Most parents rely on their teen's birthday, rather than their better judgment and instinct to determine if their teen truly is ready.

Besides addressing age, parents also need to recognize that many GDL provisions are insufficient when it comes to addressing teen crash risk. The vast majority of states, for example, require teens to be off the road by 11 p.m. or 12 a.m. Research clearly shows, however, that a 9 or 10 p.m. nighttime driving restriction is more appropriate for reducing teen crash risk. Communicating to parents that they should be supplementing their states' teen driving laws with more stringent requirements, rather than just complying with them is critical. In addition, if a state's GDL program is strengthened, all parents should be notified about what changed and why via a simple, succinct statement that explains how the change will positively impact their teens' safety. ●



Parenting Style Matters

Teens who have authoritative parents are half as likely to crash, 71% less likely to drive intoxicated, and 30% less likely to use a cell phone when driving.

Young driver behavior experts agree that parents are pivotal to the success of Graduated Driver Licensing. Once parents know and embrace it, they can become effective GDL champions as well as chief enforcers of the provisions of the system. And this is important, since **parents, not police, offer the first line of support when it comes to encouraging compliance with teen driving laws and adopting safety practices.**

CHOP research has found that compared to teens who perceive their parents as uninvolved, teens who perceive their parents as authoritative are half as likely to crash, 71% less likely to drive intoxicated, and 30%

less likely to use a cell phone when driving. These same teens are 50% more likely to buckle up and recognize why doing so is important (CHOP, 2009). Authoritative parents provide a warm supportive environment with clear boundaries giving them enough structured support to allow them to make good choices. ●

DRIVER EDUCATION

STUDENT DRIVER



Key Concepts to Convey to Parents

Supervising Their Teens' Driver Education

Parents may rely on high school and/or commercial driver education and training programs to help their teens become good and/or safe drivers. They should know their state driver education and training requirements (e.g., classroom theory, behind the wheel instruction, practice hours) and learn what is and isn't addressed in the classroom and the car. Most importantly, they should be advised that **completion of these requirements and instruction are just the beginning of the learning process.**

Since most programs only cover the basics parents need to step in and help their teens learn higher order skills. (Behind the wheel training in driver education, for instance, may not come close to adding up to the number of hours required to meet their state's supervised practice driving requirements.) The endgame should be to help novice drivers recognize potentially dangerous situations and react in a manner that demonstrates an understanding of key safe driving behaviors and principles (Goodwin, Margolis, Foss, & Waller, 2010).

Just like athletes and musicians work to perfect a sport or instrument through repeated practice, driving requires lots of practice to be competent. Taking advantage of routine trips to school and the grocery store is a great way to help teens practice. But parents should also look for opportunities to expose their teens to varied driving conditions

such as unfamiliar routes, busier roadways and inclement weather. The most appropriate time for a teen to experience a new driving situation such as driving in snow or rush hour traffic is when a parent or more experienced motorist is in the car and can offer help and guidance – not when the teen is driving alone.

Because the first two years of driving are the most dangerous for teens, parents should continue to practice different drives with their teens even after licensure (NSC, 2009). In fact, closely monitoring independent driving as well as seeking out opportunities to continue supervised driving during the first 30-90 days of independent driving, when crash risk is especially high, are critical (Mayhew, Simpson, & Pak, 2003; McCartt, Shabanova, & Leaf, 2003). ●

Because the first two years of driving are the most dangerous for teens, parents should practice with their teens even after licensure.

Promoting the Use of a Parent/Teen Driving Agreement

What is most important about the process is that the parent/teen driving agreement has prompted a discussion and an ongoing dialogue about safety.

Researchers at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other safety and health-related organizations **strongly recommend parents use an agreement that clearly outlines the rules of the road with their new drivers** (2013). Examples of parent/teen driving agreements (PTDA) are available online and most cover the key risk factors for teens including driving at night, passengers, cell phones and texting, seat belts, and the use of alcohol.

Parents must recognize that what is in the agreement should involve a cooperative rather than dictatorial process. As parents and teens work together on the development of the document, they'll likely make compromises. But what is most important about the process is that the agreement prompts a discussion and ongoing dialogue about safety (Hollister, 2012).

Common Elements of a PTDA

Why the agreement is important

Car crashes are the number one killer of teens and novice teen drivers are four times more likely to be involved in a fatal motor vehicle crash. Completing driver training and passing a test doesn't mean a teen is a safe driver. Failure to comply with state laws and to recognize the responsibility of licensure could result in property damage, injury or death to a teen or others. These rules outline limits to keep a teen driver safe.

The language clearly and succinctly addresses the risk for the teen driver with a focus on keeping him safe.

Promoting the Use of a Parent/Teen Driving Agreement

Outlines, at minimum, the provisions in a state's GDL and other motor vehicles laws.

Rules addressing the leading hazards for teens drivers

Passengers: I will transport only ___ passenger(s) for the first ___ months of licensure.

Nighttime driving: I may not drive between ___ p.m. and ___ a.m.

Seat belts: I'll always wear my seatbelt and make sure all passengers do, too.

Distraction: I won't use any electronic devices, hand-held or hands-free, while driving.

Drowsy driving: I won't get behind the wheel if I'm tired or haven't had sufficient sleep.

Reckless driving: I'll obey all speed limits, traffic signals and rules of the road, refrain from tailgating and carefully scan the road.

Impaired driving: I'll never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Road Conditions: I won't drive in inclement weather or on unfamiliar roads.

Consequences for violating the rules

If I violate any of these rules my driving privileges will be suspended for ___ days in addition to any suspensions or postponements outlined in state laws. If I violate the suspension, I'll lose my license for ___ additional days or indefinitely.

Financial and other responsibilities

I'll contribute ___ per month to help insure the car, fill the tank when it's below ___ and keep it clean inside and out.

Special circumstances

If I'm involved in a crash that is determined not to be my fault, I won't lose my driving privileges.

Safe ride clause

At anytime and for any reason, I may call for a ride if I'm concerned about my safety and it will not be a violation of this agreement.

Ask for the keys

I will always ask permission to use a car, even if it's my own, and advise a parent where I'm going, who I'm going with, what route I'll be taking, and when I'll be home.

Teen and parent(s) signatures

We acknowledge the importance of what is agreed to above and will not waiver from our commitment to safe driving.

Teen Driver

Date

Parent

Date

Parent

Date

Consequences should always be tied to driving and not involve things like grades, allowance or chores.

The teen's share of insurance, gas and/or maintenance are outlined here.

Teen can call a parent, no questions asked, for a ride if he is ever concerned about getting into a car as a driver or passenger.

Teens who share a car with other family members are 50% less likely to be involved in a crash compared to teens with primary access.

Both the teen and his parents should sign the agreement to confirm that they're all on the same page.

Overcoming the Challenges of Engaging Parents

Few parents would argue that it's not their responsibility to ensure their children's health and wellbeing. But when it comes to teens obtaining a driver license, safety sometimes takes a back seat as families get caught up in this new and exciting milestone. States and teen safe driving safety advocates face five difficult, but not insurmountable, challenges in engaging parents.



THE CHALLENGE:

Parents Don't Recognize the Risks

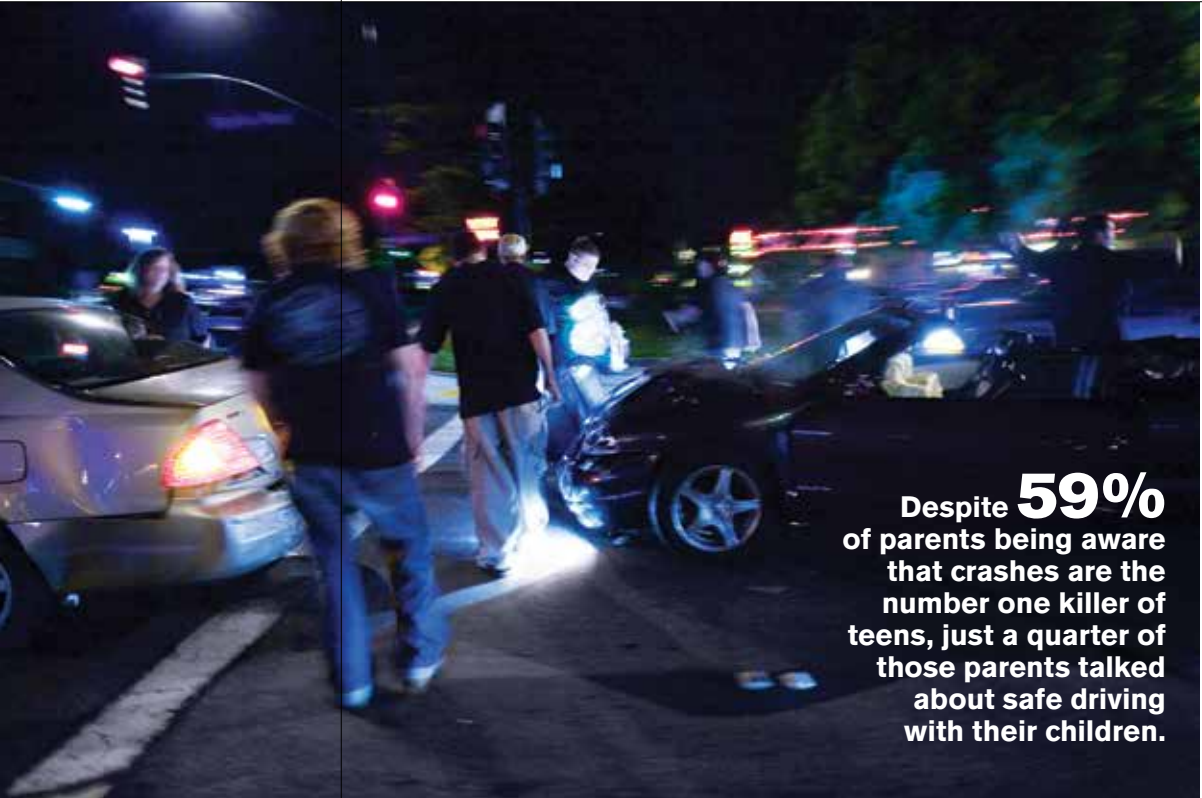
Despite 59% of parents being aware that crashes are the number one killer of teens, just a quarter of those parents talked about safe driving with their children (TRU Research, 2007). Instead, parents fixate on kidnappings, school snipers, terrorists, dangerous strangers, and drugs. This is usually precipitated by media coverage of sensational events, prompting parents to focus on rare dangers, rather than car crashes, which happen more frequently and garner less attention (Voss, 2010). In addition to overall risk, a majority of parents also fail to recognize specific risk factors for novice teen drivers – driving at night, with friends and in unsafe conditions (TRU Research, 2007).

Educating parents about what they should focus on is the key to overcoming this challenge. Research points to mass media, with a strong emphasis on television news and advertising, as an effective way to get parents to talk about and seek out teen driving information. Parents agree, indicating that widespread and frequent focus in the media means an issue is important (Sprout Strategy, 2011). However, most state and local agencies don't have the funds to mount and sustain extensive or long-term marketing efforts.

In lieu of this, many state highway safety offices and licensing agencies have developed brochures and/or guides to help parents understand the risks for their new teen drivers. Websites are another tool for disseminating this critical information. In addition to states, insurance companies, traffic safety entities

and public health organizations such as the CDC not only have websites, but brochures, guides, posters, fact sheets, and training programs available for download by parents and community-based organizations (a list of free parent-targeted teen driving programs is provided as Appendix A in this report). While these tools, according to the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators' (AAMVA) *GDL Best Practices* report, are helpful for reaching parents, parent orientation and training programs are preferred (2009).

Only four states – Massachusetts, Connecticut, Montana, Virginia – require some form of parent education as part of their novice driver education and/or licensing process. (Read more about Massachusetts' program in GHSA's *Curbing Teen Driver Crashes* report; the three other state programs are described in the *Promising Parent*



Despite **59%** of parents being aware that crashes are the number one killer of teens, just a quarter of those parents talked about safe driving with their children.

States reluctant to push for a parent education mandate for fear of a backlash, may be misguided. In Connecticut, 87% of the parents who attend the mandatory orientation course agree that participation should be required

Programs section of this report starting on page 34). States reluctant to push for a parent education mandate for fear of a backlash, may be misguided. In Connecticut, 87% of the parents who attend the mandatory orientation course agree that participation should be required (The DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving, 2012).

A parent program instructor in Massachusetts, meanwhile, says, "The dialogue that goes on after we've ended the formal training program tells me that parents are walking out with far more knowledge than when they walked in." In New Jersey, where a state highway safety office (SHSO) developed voluntary program has been conducted since 2010, facilitators repeatedly hear participants say, "All parents should have to attend this."

Besides parent programs, some states are enlisting the help of

physicians to deliver the crash risk message. Working in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics, researchers, public health officials, and states are studying the impact of pediatricians delivering a brief intervention to parents and teens during office visits. Early feedback is promising (read more starting on pages 40 and 64). ●

THE CHALLENGE:

Parents Aren't Familiar with GDL and View it as a Guideline or Maximum Standard

Today's parents didn't grow up with a multi-stage licensing system and many held their permits for just a few weeks before being granted a driver license. So when it comes to understanding how a state's GDL program works, nearly three quarter of parents are in the dark (IIHS, 2010). This lack of knowledge leads to a variety of parental objections ranging from it discriminates against teens and is inconvenient or unnecessary, to car crashes are a part of growing up and I survived. **Additionally, many parents view their state's teen driving law as a guideline or the maximum to shoot for rather than a minimum standard to exceed (Sprout Strategy, 2011).**

There's plenty of information readily available explaining what GDL is and how it works. Some resources provide general information about GDL programs, while others cover specific state initiatives (some link to state law databases on websites such as GHSA). GDL is complicated, particularly in states with numerous provisions that are often dictated by age and time. Ensuring that what's provided is both accurate and easily understandable is essential. States, therefore, should enlist the help of parents to review all materials before they're finalized and distributed. State licensing and highway safety

offices and other organizations that produce GDL materials should also remember that while parents are likely to carry home government-supplied guides, there is no guarantee they'll review them. Facilitated parent programs are the optimal way to clear up the confusion about how and why GDL programs work. Parents who receive materials in conjunction with facilitated guidance (at a parent-teen orientation program, for instance) are more likely to recall receiving them and, more importantly, use them (Zakrajsek, Shope, Ouimet, Wang, & Simons-Morton, 2009). Additionally, these programs provide an opportunity



Parents who receive materials in conjunction with facilitated guidance are more likely to recall receiving them and, more importantly, use them

to help parents make the linkage (as described on page 8) between the restrictions and the risks. Once they've got that, GDL is more likely to be viewed as a supportive program rather than a government dictate.

Who delivers this message is important, too. In addition to pediatricians (discussed in the previous challenge), driver education instructors are also viewed as an effective and appropriate source for educating parents about the proven principles of GDL (the results of a study confirming this are detailed on pages 38-39). This presents precedence for states that mandate

driver education and training to include a parent component in their curriculum standards and provide instructional materials and facilitator training for educators. ●

THE CHALLENGE:

Parents Don't Have Time

Today's families are busy. In two parent households both mom and dad typically work and some hold multiple jobs. Lack of time may be even greater in single-parent homes, particularly those with multiple children. Making time to find and review teen safe driving information, participate in a program or drive with a teen during the learner's phase can be difficult. Asking parents to practice after a teen is licensed may be viewed as not only unnecessary, but impossible.

Parents are more likely to be reactive than proactive when it comes to obtaining teen driving information because their time often isn't their own. While that doesn't mean they're not interested, parents typically rely on others – driver education teachers and instructors, licensing agencies, insurance companies, and schools – to introduce the topic (Sprout Strategy, 2011). States should partner with these entities to provide clear, concise, and succinct information that can easily be disseminated to parents through face-to-face, facilitated interaction.

States that rely on websites to convey teen driving information to busy parents should not assume that parents will visit or, for that matter, even know about these resources. Highway safety offices and others looking to generate greater parental awareness of parent visits to online portals should consider the findings of a study assessing the best way to drive parents to the Michigan *Checkpoints*[™] website. Researchers used a three-phase

promotional strategy that included placing a link to the website on partner sites (e.g., DMV, SHSO, high schools, PTA, law enforcement); asking partners to distribute promotional materials, air public service announcements, and distribute press releases; and using paid radio spots, interactive website banner ads and Facebook advertisements to determine what tactic generated the best return on investment. While traffic to the website increased incrementally from each phase to the next and Facebook advertisements generated the largest spike in traffic (2,515 visits over 3-months), the average visit from Facebook lasted only 15 seconds. Visits generated by press releases resulted in a more modest spike in traffic (379 visits over 2-weeks), but the average visit was 1:49 minutes (Bingham, Shope, Zakrajsek, Esdale, & Scarpetta, 2012).

There is strong parental (70%) and teen (60%) support for facilitated orientation and education programs, but attendance is often low (Williams & Tefft, 2012).

When it comes to learning to drive parents should be informed that professional driver education and training are just the beginning of a lifelong learning process.

Despite families being busy, there are ways, in addition to state mandates, to bolster attendance. In some states, high schools link participation at a teen driving program to parking privilege and/or prom attendance (see the *Share the Keys* program on page 44). Others host teen driving information nights where driving lessons and auto club memberships are raffled off and/or students who attend with a parent receive extra credit in driver education or another subject area.

These carrots, along with monetary incentives (see the *Steer Clear* program on page 74), are proven to bring them in. But states also should take the time to identify other potential roadblocks – language and cultural barriers, for instance – that in addition to time, could be hampering parents from participating.

When it comes to learning to drive, whether conveyed in print, online or via a facilitated program, parents should be informed that professional driver education and training are just the beginning, not the end of the learning process. Driver education teachers and driving school instructors should be enlisted to help parents understand this as well as identify what is most likely to trip up their teens and offer guidance and communication tips. The latter is important since novice drivers often think their parents are yelling at them when they attempt to convey information from the passenger seat.

At the same time, helping parents recognize that teens learn to drive by driving is essential. Taking advantage of every opportunity to get their teens behind the wheel to practice should be paramount for parents. But lack of time impacts the type of driving – typically short trips on familiar roads – many teens are exposed to in the permit phase. That's a good start, but planning and commitment are needed to ensure

that teens are exposed to progressively more challenging scenarios (e.g., longer trips on unfamiliar routes).

States should look to build and/or identify programs (see the *Road Trips* program on page 74) that provide guidance and strategies to help parents advance their teens from the basics to more complex, higher-order driving skills during the time element built into a state's GDL. While 93% of parents believe they're prepared to take on this task, research using in-car cameras clearly shows they're not. Vehicle control, rather than a focus on developing skills that help teens become safe drivers, dominates the supervised practice driving sessions (Goodwin et al., 2010; TRU Research, 2007). Additionally, states should actively promote continued parent-teen driving sessions during the next phase by encouraging parents to put their intermediate license holder in the driver's seat on family trips. ●

THE CHALLENGE:

Parents Believe Their Teen is a Good, Safe Driver

Parents generally recognize that teens aren't good drivers, but often exempt their own children. **“Eighty-eight percent trust their teen to drive safely, while 55% believe that if their teen got into a crash, it would be someone else's fault”** (TRU Research, 2007). At the same time, while there's general support among parents for restrictions addressed via GDL laws, “when it comes to their own children, some parents don't want to apply those same restrictions that they'd support for teenagers in general” (IIHS, 2010).

All teens start the licensing process as beginners with an inordinately high-crash risk. Parents who recognize this will be better equipped to help their novice drivers.

All teens start the licensing process as beginners with an inordinately high-crash risk. Parents who recognize this as fact and not as a personal shortcoming will be better equipped to help their novice driver overcome that risk and more positively embrace the proven principles of GDL. Research conducted with focus groups, found that using “dramatic, real [teen driving] stories and statistics” is an effective way to “motivate parents to want to take action and be more involved” (Sprout Strategy, 2011). In addition, “realistic, tangible, honest,” and simple stories that are “dramatic, not soft” not only get parents' attention, but engage them emotionally and bring the “threat closer to home” (Sprout Strategy, 2011).

Holding firm on the rules isn't easy when a parent's adult peers don't have similar practices. Nearly half of parents say they're influenced by more lenient parents, while 38% often

disagree with their spouse about driving ground rules for their teens, and a quarter admit to allowing their teen, against their better judgment, to drive. For this reason, states should leverage empathy from peers to convey information about teen driving and recognize that moms, due to their “innate protective instinct,” are the target audience (TRU Research, 2007).

Enlist parents, particularly moms, who have had success in using authoritative parenting (described earlier on page 11) as well as particular tactics and/or approaches with their own teens or younger adults to help deliver the message (see the *PRIDE* program on page 70). They'll not only be better able to relate to the audience, but will add relevancy and reality by sharing stories that are likely to strike a chord with parents. In the case of non-English speaking and/or culturally

States...should recommend that parents not get lulled into a false sense of safety when it comes to their teens' driving and ease up on or tailor the time elements or restrictions [of GDL].

diverse audiences, seek out facilitators who speak the language as well as understand the community dynamics.

These parents should also be tapped to dispel their peers' beliefs about what teens are doing behind the wheel. For example, recent distracted driving research confirms that parents are grossly underestimating how much their teens text and drive. Teens are reading or sending text messages 26 times more often than parents think (University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute/Toyota Motor Sales, USA, [UMTRI/TMS], 2012). While parents often cite this unsafe behavior as a concern, regularly reinforcing this statistic through peers as well the media is necessary to move parents from supporters to active enforcers of a cell phone/texting restriction. States should encourage parents to monitor their teens cell phone use as well as driving records (see several examples on pages 80-81) to get a true picture of teen driving behaviors.

Parents are more likely to be aware of the dangers of cell phones and texting due to heightened media coverage. But states, in partnership with the media and other key influencers such as pediatricians and driver education professionals, should actively promote parents holding the line on teens driving at night and be even more emphatic when it comes to limiting passengers. According to research conducted on behalf of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, "among fatal crashes involving 16 and 17-year-old drivers... speeding, alcohol use, late-night driving, lack of a valid driver's license, seatbelt non-use, and responsibility for the crash were more prevalent when teenage passengers were present than when the driver was alone, and the prevalence of these factors...increased as the number of passengers increased" (Williams et al, 2012).

Advising parents about the benefits of sticking with restrictions on early independent driving should be a key tenet of outreach efforts. New NHTSA-funded research investigating the impact of parent engagement programs on teen driver safety found that there are currently no interventions that adequately address this issue. States, at the very least, should recommend that parents not get lulled into a false sense of safety when it comes to their teens' driving and ease up on or tailor the time elements or restrictions. Instead, they should guide parents to complete every phase and adhere to every restriction of the GDL program and explain why (Scopatz, Hilger, Vecchi, Vanlaar, Mayhew, & Pezoldt, 2012). ●

THE CHALLENGE:

Parents Aren't Necessarily the Best Role Models, But They Don't Want to Be Told How to Parent

Telling teens to refrain from a restricted or unsafe behavior while driving may go in one ear and out the other if the teen sees a parent engaged in the prohibited activity. The same holds true for GDL. If parents scoff at graduated driver licensing, teens most likely will, too. Parents, however, don't want to be told how to parent and view GDL as doing just that.

What parents do behind the wheel significantly impacts how their teens will behave when they're in the driver seat.

What parents do behind the wheel, particularly when it comes to risky behaviors, significantly impacts how their teens will behave when they're in the driver seat (UMTRI/TMS, 2012). Parent programs should include specifics on how to lead by example and refrain from unsafe behaviors – talking on a cell phone, texting, speeding, driving unbelted, and driving after drinking. Inviting teens to rate their parents' driving or identify an unsafe behavior their parent engages in when behind the wheel, is one technique used to foster discussion about parental influence in a facilitated setting (see the *PRIDE* program on page 70). Providers should tread carefully. The goal isn't

to alienate parents, but to help them recognize that their teens (and their other children) are watching. The exercise should convey to parents the importance of “always be[ing] the driver you want your teen to be” (UMTRI/TMS, 2012).

Rather than telling parents how to do their job, states and advocates should focus instead on a positive call to action. For instance, suggesting that they control the keys, by requiring teens to ask for them, will cut their teens' crash risk. Inviting a parent and teen to participate in a role playing exercise where the latter asks the former for permission to take the car, is an effective way to make this point.



Parent programs should include specifics on how to lead by example and refrain from unsafe behaviors – talking on a cell phone, texting, speeding, driving unbelted, and driving after drinking.

Convey to parents the importance of always being the driver you want your teen to be.

The ensuing dialogue provides parents the opportunity to get comfortable reinforcing the rules, while allowing teens the freedom they desire. The *Share the Keys* program (described on page 44) includes this exercise as well as several others to help parents.

If parents approach practicing GDL in the home “with the attitude of working [with your teen] to make safety the top priority,” the odds are it will be a positive experience for both parties (Hollister, 2012). At the same time, parents have to be prepared for push back not only from their teens, but their spouses (it’s not uncommon for moms and dads to have different parenting styles), their teens’ friends parents, and others in the community. The benefits associated with holding firm, however, far outweigh the negatives. Hosting teen driving education nights for parents in schools or other community-based settings ensures that they get the facts about teen driving, learn how to leverage their states’

GDL program and take on the role of champion and chief enforcer. Hearing about this collectively not only ensures consistency in message, but can help prompt ongoing discussion and parent buy-in. ●

Building a Good Parent Program



Helping parents help their teens become safe drivers so they don't crash is the underlying goal of most education programs directed at parents. But what constitutes a good parent program? States currently offering or thinking about developing a teen driving program aimed at parents should consider incorporating the following elements or they run the risk of implementing an initiative that is not only a poor use of resources, but one that may do more harm than good:

Elements of a Good Parent Program

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement
- ✓ Employs a theory-based program model that includes ongoing evaluation
- ✓ Delivered by trained, educated facilitators
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

Risks, GDL and a Parent's Role

A parent program should, at minimum, include a discussion about why teens crash, how and why state graduated driver license programs work, and the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting and managing their new drivers (detailed in the first section of this report). The recently adopted Novice Teen Driver Education and Training Administrative Standards, developed and endorsed by NHTSA, AAA, Driver Education Training Association, Driving School Association of the Americas, American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association, ,



A parent program should, at minimum, include a discussion about why teens crash, how and why state graduated driver license programs work, and the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting and managing their new drivers.

GHSA, Transportation Research Board, and AAMVA, call on states to require parents to attend either a stand-alone seminar or a session provided at the start of a teen's driver education program that outlines "known best practices of GDL and parental involvement" that include: (NHTSA, 2009):

- managing all phases of the learning to drive process from permit to full licensure so that a parent can determine not only whether the teen is ready to begin driving but to advance from one stage to the next;
- supervising practice driving for at least 6 months that provides, at minimum, weekly opportunities to accumulate at least 50 hours of practice under increasingly challenging circumstances;
- supervising an extended intermediate license phase that restricts high risk driving (e.g., passengers and at night) until the GDL minimum time requirements have been met and parents deem the teen is ready to take on high risk driving alone; and
- negotiating and adopting a parent/teen driving agreement that clearly spells out the expectations, restrictions and consequences that "will serve as the basis for the teen to earn and for the parent to grant progressively broader driving privileges."

States are not required to adopt or adhere to these standards. To date Maryland, Oregon, Vermont, Delaware, and Kansas have participated in driver education assessments, coordinated by NHTSA in partnership with SHSOs, which compare the state's current program standards to the novice driver standards. While none of these states require parents to attend a teen driving program, Oregon and Maryland call for parent meetings or nights and several Delaware high schools offer a parent seminar or pre-course during an open house. Oregon is the only one that provides teaching materials as part of its *Risk Prevention Curriculum* to assist facilitators in addressing best practices with parents (Lewis, Prudhomme, Robinson, Saint, Simmons, & Wigand, 2010).

Programs Guided by Behavior Change Theory

States seeking parent program guidance beyond the National Standards would do well to borrow from *Checkpoints* (described in-depth beginning on page 36), which is grounded in program theory. The intervention, which is specifically designed to complement graduated driver licensing, encourages parents to establish stricter limits than their state's GDL provisions as their teens prepare to move from supervised to independent driving. The cornerstone of the program is a parent/teen driving agreement that focuses on nighttime driving, passengers, high-speed roads, and weather conditions. The program uses Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) and persuasive communication techniques to encourage parents and teens to work together to establish four, three-month *Checkpoints*[™] over a one-year period that gradually increases driving privileges as teens gain experience and skill (Zakrajsek, Shope, Greenspan, Wang, Bingham, & Simons-Morton, in press).

An understanding of PMT is critical for explaining the program's success. In a nutshell, the theory focuses on identifying a potential threat (teen car crashes)

Having parents and teens work together to complete one section of the agreement in a facilitated setting allows parents to test drive this tool.

Building a Good Parent Program

and the behavioral options (e.g., limit night time driving, passengers) available to help diminish that threat. It also addresses the seriousness of the threat (teens are four times more likely to crash than any other age group) and focuses on helping the person determine how to cope with or address that threat (try out a parent/teen driving agreement). This last point is critical since people often have concerns about their ability to successfully carry out a particular recommendation. Having parents and teens work together to complete one section of the agreement in a facilitated setting allows parents to test drive this tool. This is important because the agreement is proven not only to spark parental engagement, but prompt behavior by teens that reduces their crash risk.

Utilizing a Program Theory

The Young Driver Research team at the Center for Injury Research and Prevention at CHOP employ a program theory for much of their work including parent-targeted interventions. This is not to be confused with behavior change theories described above. Instead, a program theory guides how a particular intervention is designed, developed, delivered, and evaluated rather than guiding how a person's or community's behavior will be changed by an intervention. Program theory captures the path of influence through which the intervention is intended to work, making the links between the behavior change model and the associated intervention components. This allows you to evaluate and refine the effectiveness of individual components. Six steps (see Appendix B for a more detailed overview of these steps) are useful to follow in executing a program theory:

- set a key health outcome (a clearly defined and measurable long-term **vision**);
- identify **behavioral objectives** linked to the key health outcomes;
- identify the **target constructs** that influence adoption of the behavioral objectives;
- design and develop **intervention content** that address the constructs;
- **evaluate** the effectiveness of the interventions; and
- **refine** the interventions and behavior change model, as needed.

Many groups have benefitted from an outside expert's guidance in applying program theory to their parent-targeted initiatives and have found successful outcomes. States and safety advocates inexperienced with program theory and interested in utilizing one, may want to seek assistance from such an individual or organization.

Ongoing Evaluation

Evaluation is an essential component of a good parent program. Evaluation should be ongoing and assess whether a program is achieving the desired outcomes so that it can be tweaked or retooled as needed. Many programs fall short when it comes to this critical component because evaluation isn't considered on the front end.

A change in knowledge, beliefs and intentions is a helpful metric, but not a guarantee of the desired behavior change.

States should ask themselves what they want to evaluate before building a program. For example, if the program's intent is to increase parental knowledge of teen driving risks and how GDL works to address that risk, then this should be addressed in the intervention as well as incorporated into the evaluation.

A common measurement approach is a pre-survey or test that gauges a participant's current knowledge or practices prior to the start of program and then a post-test at the conclusion to determine if their understanding has increased and/or their intentions have changed. This can be a simple, low-cost way to assess if the information provided is resonating with the participants and possibly prompting future action. It's important to note that a change in knowledge, beliefs and intentions is a helpful metric, but not a guarantee of the desired behavior change (learn more about the pitfalls of pre – and post-test measures in Appendix C). Conducting an experimental study with follow-up surveys three and/or six months after the intervention to help confirm if it was lasting is a better way to gauge program outcome and impact.

In addition to assessing changes in knowledge and/or behavior, researchers also suggest evaluating the process to determine if the program is being delivered as expected. Evaluation would address attendance, quality of delivery and materials, and environmental factors. Questions could include:

- How many were in the audience?
- Did they stay the entire time as well as actively participate in the discussion?
- Did they receive and take home the materials?
- What is the education level of the staffer and was s/he sufficiently trained to facilitate the program? What facilitation methods were used and did they resonate with participants?
- Do the materials (e.g., hand-outs, videos) support what is presented during the program?
- Are the materials easy to use, understand and of value to the participants?
- Was the lighting sufficient?
- Was the room too hot, too cold?
- Did the audio-visual equipment work properly?
- Could the facilitator and participants be heard?

Some providers attempt to make the linkage between participation in a particular program and reductions in crashes and violations. Providers need to keep in mind that crashes and violations can be affected by a number of variables (e.g., changes in GDL laws, increased media coverage, stepped-up enforcement, weather) beyond the scope of their program. For this reason, state highway safety offices and other entities should be careful when drawing any conclusions about a program's impact on what is happening on the road. Associations can be drawn to crash data, but not causal links. To gauge the latter, a sophisticated research design and large sample size are needed.

Additionally, the crash and violation data of teens whose parents participated in the intervention should be compared with that of teens whose parents didn't receive the

Building a Good Parent Program

same intervention (a control group) to fully understand impact. Factoring the inclusion of a control group into the program as its being built reaffirms the importance of thinking about evaluation at the onset, not late in the game, and ensures there's money in the budget for this important metric.

Facilitated programs that engage parents and teens together are shown to positively impact the former's role in coaching and monitoring their novice driver and the latter's safety.

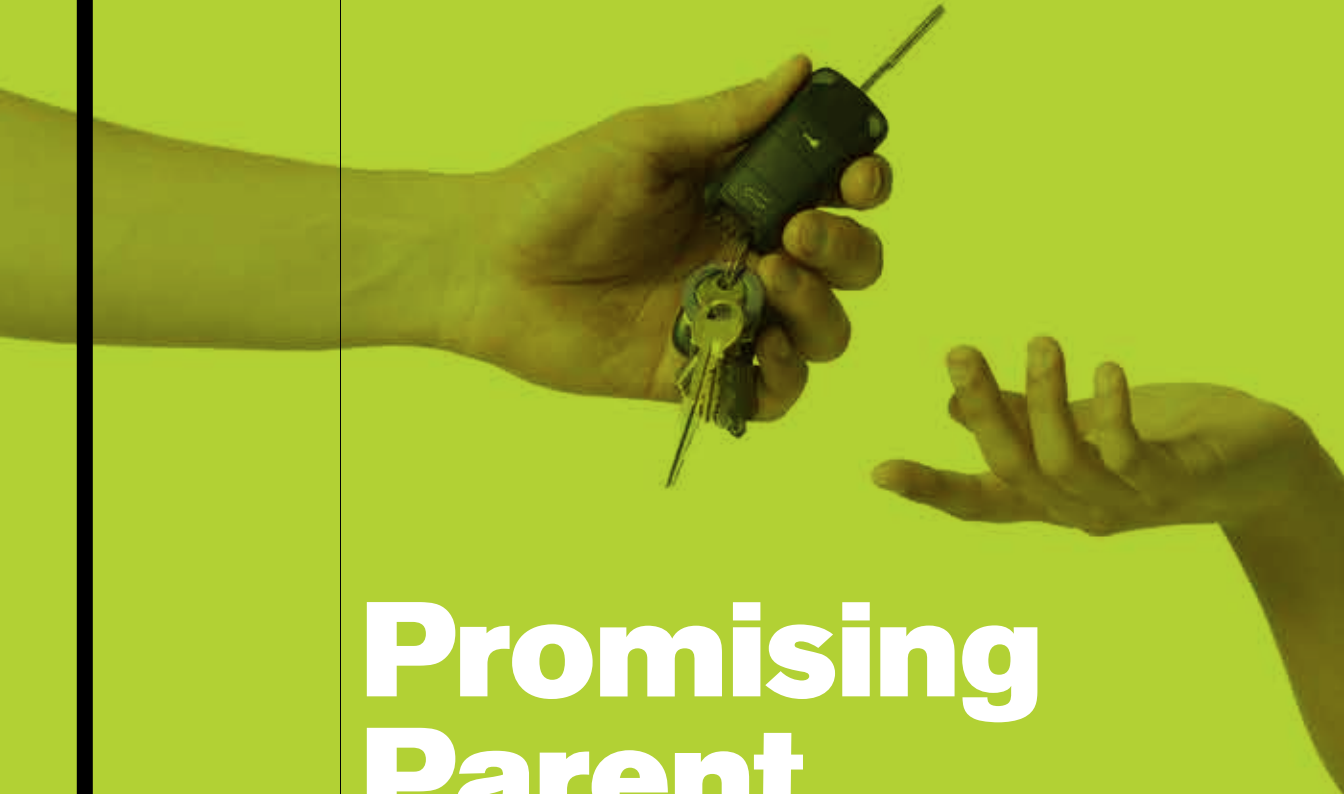
Facilitated, Family-Based Programs

Facilitated programs that engage parents and teens together are shown to positively impact the formers' role in coaching and monitoring their novice driver and the latter's safety. Research studies involving families of teen drivers in the U.S. and abroad, confirm the importance of having parents and teens partner on an intervention.

The Israel-based Green Light for Life (GLL) program, for example, examined the impact of a facilitated, 45-minute, in-home meeting with a young driver and his parents at the start of the accompanied driving phase (ADP), which lasts for three months following licensure. (New drivers are restricted from transporting more than two passengers for the first two years of licensure unless accompanied by an experienced driver.) The meeting addresses the objectives and importance of the ADP, parent and teen expectations, and "parents' willingness and ability to share their experience and hazard perception skills" with their young drivers (Toledo, Lotan, Taubman-Ben-Ari, & Grimberg, 2011). Not only did the session prompt positive perceptions of the ADP among parents and teens, but an 11% reduction in the crash rates of GLL participants compared to non-participants (Toledo et al., 2011).

In Washington State, families that participated in two, in-home, facilitated driving sessions – one prior to teen licensure and one after – were six times more likely to have a parent/teen driving agreement. Additionally, the licensed teens participating in the intervention were "less likely to drink and drive and drive with peers who had been drinking" (Haggerty, Fleming, Catalano, Harachi, & Abbott, 2006).

The facilitated *Checkpoints* program (see page 36) also shows a reduction in risk-taking by teens (as compared to their non-participating counterparts) and a larger propensity for parents to establish critical restrictions (Zakarajsek et al., in press). This program, along with the previous two, are led by facilitators who are educated and trained to deliver the intervention. This ensures the programs' integrity, not only in terms of content delivery, but evaluation. While this may add to the cost of building and maintaining a program, the development and delivery of consistent and ongoing facilitator training is strongly recommended for ensuring a real effect on changing behavior. ●



Promising Parent Programs

Literally hundreds of programs exist today to help parents help their teen drivers. Many may be accessed online or are offered at schools and other community-based settings. Most are free and require only an investment of time, which can be as little as a few minutes. The programs described in this final section of this report (none of which are fee-based) are showing promise when it comes to helping parents partner with their teens to survive their most dangerous driving years. Some have been studied extensively with academic rigor, while others use pre – and post-tests and other measurement tools to determine audience impact. And still others, are new or one-of-a-kind and merit discussion. To aid states in determining how these programs measure up to the factors discussed in the previous section of this report, a *Good Program Elements* checklist is provided for each.



MICHIGAN

Checkpoints™ : The Facilitated Program



Has the following elements of a good parent program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement
- ✓ Employs a theory-based program model that includes ongoing evaluation
- ✓ Delivered by trained, educated facilitators
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

Developed by the National Institutes of Health, the *Checkpoints* program continues to be one of the most effective preventions for addressing teen crash risk (Simons-Morton, Hartos, Leaf, & Preusser, 2006). While the initial version of the program was passive – parents and their teens received a video and a series of newsletters during the permit and intermediate licensure phases of GDL – the current iteration, adapted by Shope and colleagues, is delivered in a

facilitated session lasting approximately 30-minutes.

During this time, parents and teens review and discuss a 9-minute video that covers teen crash risk, setting expectations about restricting initial driving privileges, and completion and adherence to a parent/teen driving agreement or PTDA. The facilitator then introduces the *Checkpoints* agreement and invites the participants, following a discussion about teen

HELP YOUR TEEN NAVIGATE REAL WORLD DRIVING

- For teens, car crashes are the #1 cause of death
- The first months with a license, driving at night, and with teen passengers are the most dangerous
- Driver education and practice driving are not enough
- Setting strict limits at first, then relaxing them over time will help your teen be safe!

To learn more go to...

youngdriverparenting.org

The Checkpoints Program
Checkpoints is a trademark of U.S. DASH.



Chapter Four Promising Parent Programs



driving risks specific to the first few months of licensure, to work in their parent/teen pairs on the first checkpoint. The session ends with parents sharing their intended driving restrictions for their teens (Zakrajsek et al., 2009).

The 30-minute version of the *Checkpoints* program was first facilitated by trained health educators in driver education classes. A comparison group – parents who received a copy of the National Safety Council's multi-page book, *Teen Driver: A Family Guide to Teen Driver Safety*, which discusses teen driver crash risk, parent/teen agreements and the *Checkpoints* program – was also convened, but did not involve facilitation. The trial yielded promising results as the parents and their young drivers who participated in the facilitated program reported greater awareness about teen crash risk, strong use of the agreement, and

“stricter-limit setting for driving on high-risk roads and in inclement weather” (Zakrajsek et al., 2009).

Since then, research assessing driver education professionals delivering *Checkpoints* to parents and teens during the latter's driver education experience has been completed and the findings continue to validate the program's effectiveness. In fact, researchers note that driver education professionals not only “successfully administered *Checkpoints*, [but] maintained program fidelity and obtained results surpassing those obtained previously” (Zakrajsek et al., in press). While teens who participated in the health educators study, were more likely to be restricted from driving in heavy rain and on certain roadways, the teens in the driver educator study had these same restrictions as well greater passenger and nighttime driving restrictions (Zakrajsek et al., in press).

Checkpoints: The Facilitated Program

Key findings of *Checkpoints* trained teens involved in this latest study indicate that they are (Zakrajsek et al., in press):

- sixteen times more likely to report PTDA use than controls (three-quarters were still using them six months after participating in the program);
- nine times more likely to have restrictions on driving with peer passengers and on weekend nights;
- three and a half times more likely to be restricted from driving on roads with speed limits over 55 mph; and
- restricted from transporting, on average, one fewer passenger than their control counterparts.

The Checkpoints teens were less likely to engage in risky driving behaviors such as traveling 20 or more miles per hour over the speed limit and running through red lights

The study also looked at crash rates during the first six months of licensure for the *Checkpoints* and control teens and found no differences. The *Checkpoints* teens, however, were less likely to engage in risky driving behaviors (determined through completion of a risk-assessment scale) such as traveling 20 or more miles per hour over the speed limit and running through red lights (Zakrajsek et al., in press).

States looking to emulate the *Checkpoints* experience should be aware that this research has been conducted in Michigan, a state with a two-phase driver

education requirement: teens receive instruction prior to the permit phase and again just prior to intermediate licensure. Currently, the timing of *Checkpoints* coincides with that second phase. That begs the question would the program be as effective if it were offered prior to the permit phase? This is clearly something for researchers to determine. States no doubt would benefit greatly from such a study since when to deliver teen driving information and tools to parents is as important as what and how. Meanwhile, this program, materials and training are ready for other states to use with minor adaptation for their own GDL. ●

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MICHIGAN

Checkpoints™ : On the Web, Pediatric Referrals

Has the following elements of a good parent program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement (*Checkpoints on the Web* only)
- ✓ Employs a theory-based program model that includes ongoing evaluation
- ✓ Delivered by trained, educated facilitators (Pediatric referrals only)
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

To bolster parental usage of the *Checkpoints* program (just 35% of parents invited to participate in the voluntary face-to-face program did so) and to provide a means for parents who participate in the face-to-face session to refer back to it, the intervention has been translated for wide-spread parent use via the Web (www.saferdrivingforteens.org). To date, nearly 30,000 parents of Michigan teen drivers have taken advantage of the online *Checkpoints* program presented by the University of Michigan

Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) and the Michigan Department of Community Health (UMTRI, 2012).

What researchers learned as a result of building the *Checkpoints* website is highly instructive and of tremendous value to states and organizations thinking about going down the same path. Parent focus groups (as well as parent-teen dyads) were convened throughout the process to help guide the initial design plans as well as test the website at several stages. While

Checkpoints: On the Web, Pediatric Referrals



The program seems to be a natural fit for pediatricians, who earlier reported regularly counseling their teen patients about teen driving topics such as seat belt (88%) use and alcohol (81%).

parents responded positively to the information and the parent/teen driving agreement (PTDA), they needed assistance with the latter and raised concerns about privacy prompted by a registration page and the potential for marketing tie-ins. Additionally, focus group participants stressed that parents are busy and may not be aware of the need to take advantage of the program until their teens crash and/or commit a violation.

A graphic designer was tasked with translating the research-based content for broad audience appeal with a strong focus on flow, look, color scheme, and diversity, while a promotional plan (described previously on pages 22-23) was developed and tested to determine the most effective way to create awareness of the website and spark parent usage. Findings from a preliminary evaluation were used to modify the website to increase parent/teen driving agreement usage as well as fine-tune the promotional efforts for the final evaluation phases (Bingham et al., 2012).

In addition to testing the impact of using earned and paid media to drive parents to the website, UMTRI is

partnering with pediatricians. Working in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics *Pediatric Research in Office Settings* program with funding from the CDC, physicians in 14 states (California, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Montana, North Carolina, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Vermont, and Utah) are delivering a brief intervention to parents of teen patients while they're in the office for well-child and preventive visits. The intervention includes discussing the crash risk for teen drivers, encouraging parents to visit the *Checkpoints* Web-based program, and giving them promotional materials (e.g., key chains, adhesive note pads, bookmarks) that have the website URL (www.youngdriverparenting.org) printed on them. The website is available and useful to parents in any state.

The program seems to be a natural fit for pediatricians, who earlier reported regularly counseling their teen patients about teen driving topics such as seat belt (88%) use and alcohol (81%). While nearly half also talk to teens about cell phones and speeding, a smaller percentage discuss the dangers of teen passengers (41%),

We deal with many diseases, but this is the one that's most likely to be fatal. A teen deserves to be warned in advance of licensure and we have the means to do it.

drowsy driving (25%), parental limit setting (23%), and driving at night (21%). The discussion drops off significantly when it comes to GDL laws (13%), car selection (9%), driver education (8%), and a parent-teen driving agreement (10%) (Weiss, O'Neil, Shope, O'Connor, & Levin, 2010). And while many pediatricians (38%) are not aware their state has a GDL law, they are informed about the increased risk when teen drivers transport their peers (79%) and drive at night (72%).

Capitalizing on this willingness to counsel, while recognizing the need to address the knowledge gaps, pediatricians participating in the *Checkpoints* project review a self-study manual that includes facts about teen driving risks; frequently asked questions with responses; brief motivational interviewing skills to help them talk with parents about the topic; and sample scripts to guide discussion with parents and teens. In addition, pediatricians are also asked to review audio-tapes of actual practitioners interacting with families, as well as visit and review the materials on the teen driving website. Prior to being certified to participate in the project, they're also asked to tryout the intervention on three patients. Once they've completed this process, the pediatrician receives a box containing promotional materials that include a button to wear stating, *Ask me about teen driving*, a supply of the items to give parents, and posters and other materials for display in the office. How is the program received by

physicians and their patients? "It's a slam dunk," said one Hawaii-based pediatrician. "Since I have a positive relationship with my patients and parents are grateful for the information, it's easy to bring up. I tell parents to go to the website because it's a trusted source and has bona fide information that can save their child's life. They typically tell me they'll check it out right away." Hawaii, according to the program researchers, is leading the other states in the amount of time parents are spending on the *Checkpoints* website (visitors to the site are asked to indicate via pull down menus who referred them; Google Analytics is used to monitor traffic).

This pediatrician's enthusiasm for the program is evident not only in how he talks about it, but in the additional steps he's taken to engage his patients and their parents. "I have a sample parent-teen agreement that I show to reinforce our discussion. I do believe they're listening, because I've been the family's trusted source of medical information for the teen's entire life."

His message to fellow pediatricians who may be skeptical about following his example is compelling. "We deal with many diseases, but this is the one that's most likely to be fatal. We have the time and opportunity to inform parents and teens so that they can take action. Plus, it's the easiest study to do. There's no consent or data collection required as well as no ulterior motive. A teen deserves to be warned in advance of licensure and we have the means to do it." ●

KEY CONTACT

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NEW JERSEY:

Share the Keys

Has the following elements of a good parent program:

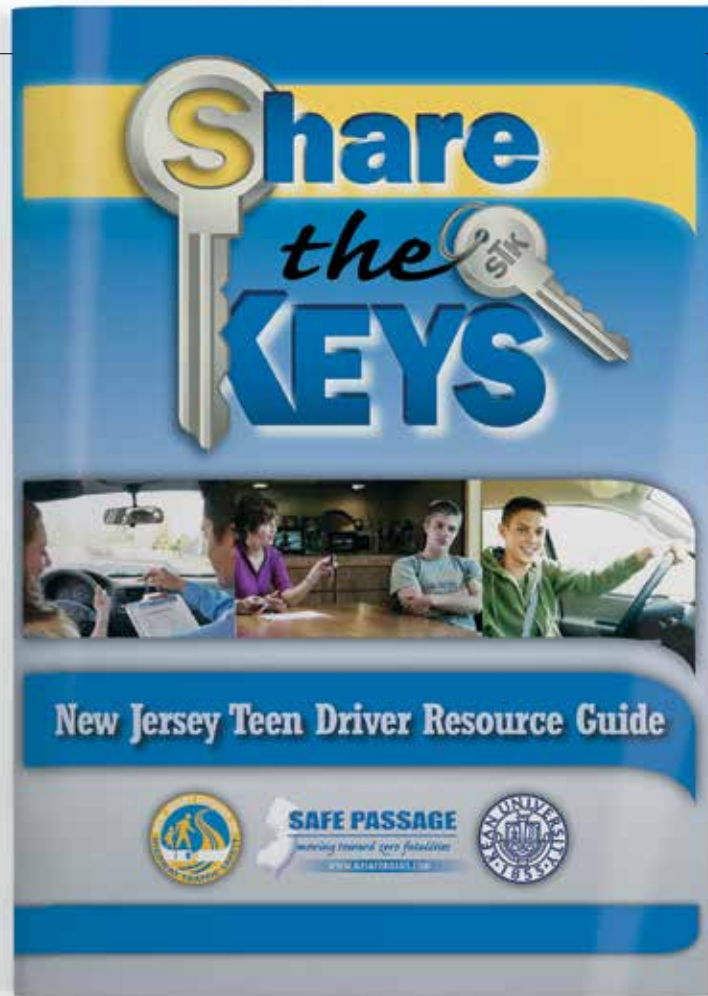
- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement
- ✓ Employs a theory-based program model that includes ongoing evaluation
- ✓ Delivered by trained, educated facilitators
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

State highway safety officials in New Jersey knew that if they were going to get parents engaged in managing their teen drivers they couldn't wait for the Legislature to make it happen. So they partnered with a professor at Kean University and a State Police trooper to build and pilot a parent-teen orientation program called *Share the Keys (STKs)*.

Three years later (and still no mandate) more than 10,000 parents and teens have participated in the 75-minute program, which is offered through high schools across the state. A team of 200 facilitators (law enforcement, parents, safety advocates, and teens) has been trained to deliver the program, which was built using the

program theory model advocated by CHOP. The behavioral objectives and target constructs are grounded in parental influence research conducted by CHOP (*Driving Through the Eyes of Teens* 2007 & 2009), the CDC (Parents are the Key program), NIH/University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (*Checkpoints*), and Bruce Simons-Morton (parental influence). "We built this program based on what the research says parents need to know to help make their teens' safer, not on what we thought parents should know," said the SHSO's special projects manager.

The program's long-term vision is to reduce teen driver crashes, injuries and



deaths, while the behavioral objectives focus on ensuring that parents understand the state's GDL and effectively enforce it at home, serve as good role models, increase supervised practice with their novice driver, and control the keys. Target constructs address knowledge, self-efficacy and normative beliefs. Much of the information shared with parents and teens is pulled directly from CHOP's study, *Driving Through the Eyes of Teens: A Closer Look (2009)*, which discusses:

- how parenting styles affect a teen's crash risk;
- the critical role parents play;
- the need to limit primary access to a vehicle (make teens ask for the keys);
- the importance of setting limits through the use of a parent/teen driving agreement;
- parents leading by example; and
- ensuring a teen logs at least 50 hours of practice during the permit phase.

Currently, New Jersey is just one of three states that does not require teens to log a minimum number of supervised practice hours under its GDL program. A program may need to be aligned with best practice rather than the state's GDL provisions to do the most good.

Individuals trained to facilitate the program receive instruction not just in the content, but the science behind it. "We talk about situational leadership, accelerated learning and facilitation techniques (explained in Appendix B) because we want everyone who leads this program to understand the method behind the message," said the state highway safety office's special projects manager. "Everything is done for a reason, it's not happenstance," she stressed. "We've incorporated problem-solving exercises into the program to help stimulate thought and allow participants to make connections and build neural networks, which create actionable meaning and value for learners."

STKs also uses gain-framed (positive) messaging so that parents not only hear about a particular behavioral objective (*parents can lower their teen's crash risk by enforcing the passenger restriction*), but feel compelled to try it out. Both the facilitator training and parent-teen presentations were written in a positive voice. When it comes to presentation of the material, facilitators are trained to *share not preach* by presenting the facts and the proven approaches that will help parents lower their teens' crash risk. "We want parents to decide for themselves what to do with this information and then we support their decisions with the tools and resources they'll need to accomplish these tasks. We recognize that when you get a person to try on a behavior, he is more likely to make that behavior his own," the SHSO official said.

Role playing, group and parent-teen

dyad discussion (including time to begin working on an agreement), problem-solving, and even a bit of humor courtesy of Taylor Swift and the team at *Saturday Night Live* are built into the program. Every family receives a 24-page resource guide, which includes a sample parent/teen driving agreement, an overview of the GDL program and other resources. Facilitators reference the guide throughout the session so that parents not only know what's in it, but feel comfortable using it once they're at home.

It's also important to note that facilitators are trained in effective facilitation. The focus is not only on knowing and feeling comfortable with the material and helping to lead the discussion, but encouraging participants to reveal their thoughts, feelings and experiences. One of the training slides, for example, points out that the literal meaning of facilitator is "one who makes things easy" (Knezek, 2012). "We give facilitators the tools to help parents realize that they can do this," said the SHSO special projects manager. "At the same time, we stress that while we want them to add their own personal experiences related to teen driving, deviating from the script is not an option."

This is important because it ensures consistency in evaluation regardless of who is presenting the material. Every parent is asked to complete a survey prior to the start of the program and another at the completion (currently a pre – and post-teen survey is not administered since the focus is on parents, the individuals with the most influence over their young drivers). Additionally, parents are invited to provide their name and contact information for follow-up six months after participating in the program. The survey was developed by Kean with input from a behavioral scientist

Individuals respond differently to messages depending on whether they're framed to emphasize a benefit (gain-framed) or a loss (negative-framed).

Even though messages may be factually equivalent, how the message is framed can influence a person's willingness to take action based on achieving a desirable outcome or avoiding an undesirable one.

Share the Keys

First-year findings show that participation in the program is helping parents gain a better understanding of the critical role they play ensuring their teens increase their practice driving (81% will increase time spent with their teen behind the wheel).

at CHOP to ensure that what parents are asked syncs with the behavioral objectives and supporting interventions.

First-year findings show that participation in the program is helping parents gain a better understanding of the critical role they play ensuring their teens increase their practice driving (81% will increase time spent with their teen behind the wheel). Additionally, 76% of parents will enforce GDL at home, while 76% intend to control the keys. The six month follow-up study is also showing promising results: 84% of parents say they now understand the GDL and enforce the nighttime driving (11 p.m.-5 a.m.) and passenger restriction (only one passenger regardless of family affiliation unless a parent or guardian is in the vehicle), while 63% control the keys and 47% spend 7 hours or more a month practice driving with their teen (Marrero, 2012)

Parents are adjusting their parenting styles, too. While 30% of the parents who completed the pre-survey indicated they use an authoritative style to manage their teen driver (52% indicated they were permissive, 9% were authoritarian and 9% were uninvolved), this increased to 47% when contacted six months later. The use of a driving contract, meanwhile, currently stands at 18% and overconfidence in their teen's driving ability stands at 61% (Marrero, 2012). These findings have prompted the SHSO to retool the facilitator training to ensure that instructors complete all of the interactive exercises that reinforce the importance and use of a parent/teen driving agreement. Additionally, they're reviewing the follow-up survey, administered to parents

6 months after completing the program, so that the question addressing a teen's driving ability is worded to ensure they're measuring a parent's perception of their teen's driving skills rather than compliance with house rules and GDL.

The team behind STKs recognizes there's more work to be done in both areas. "The overconfidence expressed by parents is a reflection of their misunderstanding of teen driver safety," said the SHSO official. "Helping them come to an understanding that more closely aligns with what we know about good driving – it takes experience and maturity – is something we continue to focus on as we work to improve the program. And we're continuing to look for opportunities to reinforce the importance of the parent/teen driving agreement."

That commitment to getting it right is also reflected in all of the materials – marketing, training, presentation – used in the program. Recently, videos were added to the PowerPoint presentation to better illustrate specific challenges (e.g., driving at night, with multiple passengers) teens and parents may face once the former is driving independently. The resource guide was also recently updated and the facilitator training was revised to include an actual presentation of the program. All of the program materials, including the supporting research and other documents, are available online at www.njteendriving.com/sharethekeys. They're grouped for easy access by individuals who want to bring STKs to their community, become a facilitator or are already trained to lead the program. The STKs team pointed out that having the materials online also makes it easier to keep the information up to date.



Organizations that host the free program are asked to go to the website and download and print the pre- and post-surveys and parent information form. The resource guide is printed by the SHSO and made available to facilitators; however, an electronic version is also available online. The host organization (typically high schools and/or parent-teacher organizations) is also encouraged to actively promote the program through e-blasts, pre-recorded parent notification calls, flyers, posters, and press releases.

Like the *Checkpoints* program, attendance is typically voluntary. Some schools have made participation in the program mandatory – a teen must attend with a parent or guardian to park on campus. Other schools tie it to proms or offer extra credit or incentives to bolster attendance. Facilitators have reported speaking to audiences as small

as 10 and as large as 750. Parents who participate in the program, however, overwhelmingly say that it is of value and will help them help their teens.

What's next for STKs? Evaluation will assess the program's impact on teen driving behavior, crash and violation rates in New Jersey and it is being adopted for use in Pennsylvania and Tennessee. Facilitator training continues, with a focus not only on increasing the ranks, but ensuring that individuals trained in the original version of the program are up to speed with the new and improved release. Several facilitators are also being tapped to become instructors since the current training team consists of just three individuals. "We need to increase that number," admitted the SHSO official, "but we also want to make sure that whoever we bring on board is committed to staying true to our evidence-based road map." ●

KEY CONTACT

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CONNECTICUT:

Building on a Mandate

Has the following elements of a good parent program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

Because of the training, [parents] were doing things with their teens they would not have done otherwise and more likely to enforce GDL rules.

Connecticut, while not the first state to mandate parent education addressing teen driving (that distinction belongs to Massachusetts), is the first to require parents to attend a 2-hour program with their teens. Prompted by a series of high-profile crashes in 2007, then Governor M. Jodi Rell established a Teen Driver Safety Task Force that reviewed Connecticut's teen licensing requirements and made a number of recommendations that included the parent training program.

Parent acceptance of the mandate, along with the program's impact on parental engagement, has been studied by researchers who found strong support for the requirement after the first two years of implementation. Parents would recommend the training to other parents and thought it would help them in their role as the parent of a teen driver. But perhaps most importantly, nearly half of the respondents "said that because of the training, they were

doing things with their teens they would not have done otherwise and many said they were more likely to enforce GDL rules as a result of the instruction" (Chaudhary & Williams, 2010).

The program, like its New Jersey-counterpart *Share the Keys*, has clearly identified objectives that include: ensuring that parents understand and support the GDL law, serve as positive role models, and coach their teen. All three are proven to be effective for helping parents reduce their teens' crash risk. However, Connecticut's parent orientation objectives also call upon parents to "list the driving skills their child must master to pass the state required road test, identify the driver's education class modules and their relevance to developing good driving skills, and provide examples of driving behaviors to avoid because they may negatively influence a new driver" (Connecticut Division of Motor Vehicles [CT DMV], 2008). Whether these objectives positively impact teen crashes,

Building on a Mandate

particularly the latter, which uses a loss-framed (negative) rather than gain-framed approach, is unknown and something the state may want to investigate further.

The program's goal, meanwhile, is to "assist parents/guardians...coach and mentor their teenagers into safe and skilled drivers" (CT DMV, 2008). This is accomplished through the objectives outlined above, which are supported by a series of target constructs that focus on teen crash risk, brain development, hazard awareness, and parental roles and responsibilities. While there is no formal training required to deliver the program, instruction and discussion are led by certified driver education teachers, who follow a curriculum outline developed by the DMV. How the material is presented, however, is not formally prescribed beyond what is addressed in the outline.

87% of parents who participated in the program agree that it should be a requirement.

Has parent acceptance remained strong and how has the program evolved four years after launch? According to researchers and licensing agency officials, 87% of parents who participated in the program agree that it should be a requirement, while 85% said they either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that the information was helpful. Delving deeper, 18% of parents said the course "increased their confidence a great deal in teaching their teen to drive, while 47% said their confidence was somewhat enhanced" (Preusser Research Group as cited in The DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving, 2012).

An analysis of what parents who have taken the course know about the state's GDL program as compared to parents who haven't reveals that the program is helpful. For example, 90% of parents who have taken the course are aware of the passenger restriction that applies to teens during the second six months of intermediate licensure as compared to 84% of parents who haven't taken

the course. But the most statistically significant gains are associated with parent knowledge of the 11 p.m. nighttime driving restriction (77% of parents who took the course know about the restriction as compared to 52% who have yet to take the course) and teen brain development issues (59% versus 35%) (Preusser Research Group as cited in The DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving, 2012).

What is concerning is the limited knowledge parents have about the state's 48-hour administrative license rule. An important component of the new penalty structure enacted in 2008, the rule allows a police officer to initiate an *on the spot* suspension of a teen's driver license for violating the passenger and/or nighttime driving restrictions of the GDL as well as for speeding, reckless driving and driving under the influence. Just 8% of parents knew about the rule after taking the mandated course, which is double the rate of parents who know about it on their own. (A SHSO official noted that these findings may be the result of low awareness of and reluctance on the part of law enforcement to enforce the rule.) Additionally, researchers found, as they did when they surveyed parents previously, that one-quarter did not report an "increase in their information about teen driving risks" (Preusser Research Group as cited in The DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving, 2012).

These findings are prompting Connecticut officials to question not only the content, but who is delivering the program, as well as when and how. A curriculum study led by traffic safety, driver education and injury prevention specialists is back on track after being stalled by funding issues. The goal is to develop training modules that, pending DMV approval, could be used to strengthen not only the parent-teen orientation, but other aspects of the state-mandated driver education curriculum. Another study will look at where the orientation fits

within the current curriculum to determine the most appropriate time to present this information to parents and teens: prior to the teen receiving the permit, prior to intermediate licensure, several times during the GDL program? “We regulate curriculum and content, but we don’t regulate timing,” stressed a DMV official. “We need to figure out where it fits neatly, logically and educationally in the driving school process.”

State officials and members of the DMV Commissioner’s Advisory Commission on Teen Safe Driving also acknowledge that delivery impacts not only what is heard but whether it is having an impact on behavior. They recognize the importance of determining to what extent the curriculum is being followed, as well as how parents and teens react to the curriculum and what they feel can be improved. They also want to know how the key information is communicated – are participants engaged in discussion or simply lectured to throughout the 2-hour time period?

“Finding out whether there are more effective ways of presenting this information is a priority,” said the DMV official. “We need to look at the evidence-based research that shows what works and partner with the driving schools on content delivery.” Commission members plan to audit the course at locations across the state. Also on the table is the need to address language and cultural issues, a concern for all states.

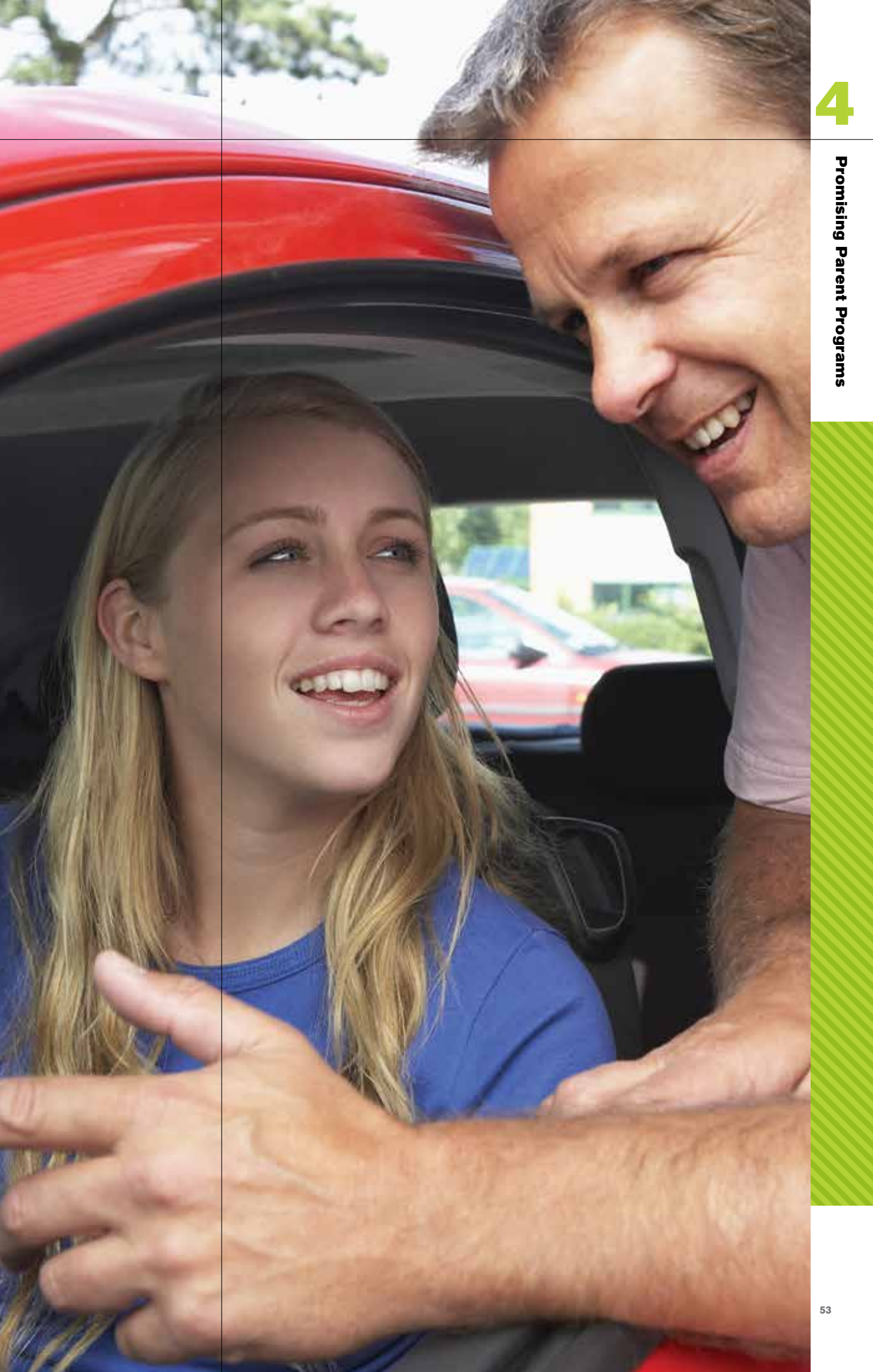
An advisory committee has been working on the creation of a new short video, featuring both parents and teens, that can be used to convey critical enforcement, safety and parental management messages. Instructor support for this resource is strong as over 80% view it as a helpful tool. “We know that in the current program, there’s more dispensing of information than cultivating discussion. The video would help break that up and prevent participants from tuning out,” explained the DMV official.

A parent package is also in development that will include a CD-ROM containing a training manual, video, sample parent/teen agreement (which is currently distributed with the learner’s permit; it’s provided on a pad to DMV offices for easy tear-off), PowerPoint presentation, and talking points for distribution to high schools, public health, and community and service organizations. The purpose of the materials is to “supplement the parent-teen program,” the DMV official explained, “not replace it.”

Clearly, Connecticut is in the enviable position of having the means to compel parents to get educated about the critical role they play in training, monitoring and partnering with their novice drivers. The challenge is to continue to evaluate how they present this information, as well as leverage existing and future research, to ensure the program is indeed hitting the mark when it comes to parent engagement. ●

KEY CONTACT

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MONTANA:

Leveraging an Administrative Rule

Has the following elements of a good program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement
- ✓ Employs a theory-based program model that includes ongoing evaluation (*KEYS* program only)
- ✓ Delivered by trained, educator facilitators (*KEYS* program only)
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety (*KEYS* program only)

State officials in Montana, meanwhile, are using a different approach to engage parents in their teens' novice driving experience. With just under one million people in the state, driver education is offered only through high schools. Recognizing that 85% of schools require attendance at a parent meeting as a prerequisite for successful completion of driver education, the state revised the Traffic Education Standards in 2012 to include a mandatory parent meeting.

This administrative rule establishes the time for meeting delivery – at the beginning of the driver education class – as well as the content. The meeting must focus on ensuring that parents have an understanding of the state's GDL law as well as an overview of the best practices in graduated licensing and parental involvement including (State of Montana Health Enhancement & Safety Division [State of MT], 2012):

- managing their teen's graduated learning process through each stage of the GDL;

Leveraging an Administrative Rule

- tips on supervising the driving practice during the initial permit phase;
- tips to determine when their teen is ready for the next step in driving;
- objectives for success and significant hazards associated with each driving phase; and
- information and tools to negotiate and adopt a written parent/teen agreement that reflects the expectations of both, including clearly defined restrictions, privileges, rules, and consequences that serve as a basis for the teen to earn, and for the parent to grant, progressively broader driving privileges.

The rule also allows a school district to include any other information that it “considers important for the successful and safe completion of driver education” (State of MT, 2012).

What do driver education teachers think about the requirement? “I think it’s a blast to get parents involved,” said the Whitefish School District’s Traffic Education Coordinator. “I can’t think of a better place in education when parents and teachers should be working together. Parents don’t have a clue about the GDL restrictions and the risks for teens, so partnering with them is critical.”

What’s important to note is the age at which Montana teens may start the GDL program. “Teens can get a permit as early as 14 1/2 [what’s referred to as a Traffic Education Learner License or TELL],” said the Whitefish TE Coordinator. “In our district, we prefer to schedule the teens based on their age, so our classes are primarily composed of 15-year-olds, who are still young but definitely more mentally and socially ready than their younger counterparts. We assign homework that involves parents, as well as have parents administer a test to their teens before completing the program. Together we’re getting their kids ready to drive and parents are happy to be a part of it.”

Even with the mandate that parents participate in a meeting, not all are reached. Montana’s GDL program allows teens to opt out of the traffic education course if they wait until age 16 to obtain a permit. “Sure they’re more mature, but I worry about what they and their parents don’t know,” said the Whitefish TE Coordinator. “Montana has a high fatality rate due to things like speed, alcohol and a secondary seat belt law. Additionally, we’re a big state, so you’ve got to drive to get around. Some parents in the more rural areas don’t see the need for it or have the time, so they by-pass it or their kids just drive illegally. There are also cost issues [approved programs receive a state subsidy, which helps to lower the student fee] as well as some instances where parents had their first teen enrolled in what I call a ‘show me’ program. They’re the bare bones courses that aren’t going to compel mom and dad to spend the money on the next child.”

Despite these challenges, he indicated that 90% of the students in his district enroll in the traffic education program. “I think we’re successful because of the quality of instruction and our focus on parents,” he explained. “Parents can talk too much when they’re in the car with their kids, plus they’re nervous. We teach our students to use commentary driving [putting into words what you see ahead of you, what you’re thinking

I think it’s a blast to get parents involved (in driver education). I can’t think of a better place in education when parents and teachers should be working together.

Research conducted with parents across the state who have teens enrolled in driver education, confirms there is strong support (76%) for parental involvement.

and what you're going to do], so that when it comes time for the parents to take over, they're finding that their kids are aware what's going on around them. And that makes for a better learning environment."

Research conducted with parents across the state who have teens enrolled in driver education, confirms there is strong support (76%) for parental involvement in driver education. Most parents want information and instruction, including written materials and tools to help them assess their teens. Capitalizing on this finding, the Montana Office of Public Instruction partnered with Montana State University and the Montana Traffic Education Association to develop and pilot a series of five parent-teen homework assignments. Dubbed *KEYS (Keep Encouraging Young driver Safety)*, the program is designed to "integrate parent involvement into the driver education curriculum," as well as help "increase parent motivation to supervise, restrict and monitor their teens' driving" (Hartos, Huff & Carroll, 2009).

KEYS is based on the tenets of goal-oriented persuasion used in the *Checkpoints* program and the Hoover-Dempsey Sandler model that demonstrates the impact parental involvement has in positively influencing a child's outcome in school (Hartos et al., 2009). The assignments view parents as "supervisors of practice driving and driving skills rather than teachers of driving skills" (Montana Office of Public Instruction [MOPI], 2012a). Teens, meanwhile, are tasked with helping their parents become familiar with the "terms and procedures they're learning in driver education" (MOPI, 2012a). *KEYS* recognizes that for the homework assignments to be most effective they must be (MOPI, 2012a; Hartos et al., 2009):

- Delivered in an interactive environment that promotes a conversational rather than academic feel that engages both parents and teens.
- Progression-based (completed step-by-step basis rather than all at one) to ensure parents and teens have adequate time to assimilate the information into practice driving before beginning the next, more advanced topic.
- Produced in a high-quality manner (e.g., paper stock, color, design) to convey a sense of importance, value and significance to the user.

The purpose of the parent-teen homework assignments is for families to ensure that their novice drivers "show the knowledge, skill and behaviors for safe driving," which the Montana Office of Public Instruction defines as "being able to safely navigate roadways and safely interact with other roadway users" gained through experience (2012b). Each homework assignment addresses two to three safe driving topics (e.g., safety precautions/equipment; traffic laws/courteous driving; vision, balance and judgment) and includes four to five family activities (e.g., properly adjusting mirrors; what it means to be a courteous driver; practicing on curves, hills and at intersections).

Parents and teens are instructed to

carefully review the information provided, fully and thoroughly perform the parent-teen activities, and complete and submit the assignment sheet to their driver education instructor. Additionally, parents rate their teens' progress on the assignment sheet by using a scale of good, fair or indifferent. A box is also provided to record comments. This information is designed to not only help parents and teens identify additional areas for practice and/or discussion, but to aid driver education professionals who track and monitor student progress and share this information with parents.

The *KEYS* teen driver rating form lists 18 safe driving behaviors (e.g., positive attitude, speed control, gap selection, following

Parent-Teen Activity #3: Driving Pictures



<p>Driving Situation. For each picture, (1) put an "X" on the "target" you would use for driving, (2) draw in the driver's central, side/fringe, & peripheral vision ranges, & (3) circle all the possible issues with line-of-sight & path-of-travel.</p>	<p>Evaluation. For each picture, (1) list 3 issues for driving in the scene, & then list (2) the best speed control option & (3) the best lane position option for each.</p>
	<p>Issue 1: View cut off from hill up ahead</p> <p>Issue 2: Animals could dart out on the road</p> <p>Issue 3: Narrow, soft shoulders</p> <p>Speed control option: Keep the same speed but prepare to brake if necessary</p> <p>Lane position option: 1</p>
	<p>Issue 1:</p> <p>Issue 2:</p> <p>Issue 3:</p> <p>Speed control option:</p> <p>Lane position option:</p>
	<p>Issue 1:</p> <p>Issue 2:</p> <p>Issue 3:</p> <p>Speed control option:</p> <p>Lane position option:</p>

Each picture represents the perspective and quality of the driver's view.

Parent-Teen Activity #4: Driving Pictures



<p>Driving Conditions</p>	<p>Driving Situation. Using the 29 driving condition to the left, number all the driving conditions that you can find in each picture. Write the numbers for the conditions you find directly on the conditions in each picture. Note: Not all numbered conditions will be found on each picture.</p>	<p>Evaluation. For each picture, (1) list the 3 most problem conditions & then the best (1) speed control option & (2) lane position option.</p>
<p><u>Time of day</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> early in morning bright sun/glare late in afternoon nighttime <p><u>Weather conditions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> rain snow/ice on road black ice <p><u>Road conditions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> intersection hill crest curve in road no street lights no painted lane lines overpasses or bridges unusable or unforgiving shoulders steep dropoffs on side of road 		<p>Condition 1: Pedestrians</p> <p>Condition 2: Limited vision by curve/hill in road</p> <p>Condition 3: Parked cars</p> <p>Speed control option: Slow/stop with foot on brake</p> <p>Lane control option: 1</p> <p><small>Photo courtesy of AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety</small></p>
<p><u>Traffic conditions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> tailgating heavy traffic oncoming traffic pedestrians motorcyclists bicyclists animals <p><u>Obstructions to sight</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> windows fogged scenery trees on side of road buildings on side of road parked vehicles construction area reduced visibility for other reasons 		<p>Condition 1:</p> <p>Condition 2:</p> <p>Condition 3:</p> <p>Speed control option:</p> <p>Lane control option:</p>
		<p>Condition 1:</p> <p>Condition 2:</p> <p>Condition 3:</p> <p>Speed control option:</p> <p>Lane control option:</p> <p><small>Photo courtesy of AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety</small></p>

Each picture represents the perspective and quality of the driver's view.

Leveraging an Administrative Rule

Parents' time is ALWAYS limited, but it's only a 5-week commitment and the effects could last a lifetime!

distance) to help parents periodically assess their teen drivers' safety knowledge, skills, performance, and adaptability. *KEYS* also includes a parent/teen driving agreement; a supervised driving log to track practice by date, time, condition, and skill(s) addressed; and an overview of the phases for learning to drive (e.g., novice, or beginning, nearing proficient or advanced beginning, proficient or nearing competent, and competent). This last document is particularly instructive for parents as it links the three stages of the state's GDL program (permit, intermediate and full-licensure) along with knowledge, skill level, performance, adaptability, and the likelihood for being distracted to the four phases. Additionally, it stresses that regardless of phase, "practice is the only way to eventually gain mastery" and "that it takes years of...driving to become...competent" (MOPI, 2012c).

While *KEYS* is a voluntary program, the pilot-test found families were strongly supportive of the materials with 90% reporting a willingness to do all of the activities across all five assignments. Two recruitment strategies were used during the pilot – one required all families taking a particular traffic education class to participate (families signed a consent form or chose another class) and the other made participating in the program voluntary within the class. Not surprisingly, families exposed to the first strategy were 24 times more likely to participate. Additionally,

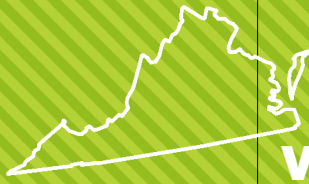
classes that required participation had higher homework completion rates for some assignments, than their voluntary counterparts (Hartos et al., 2009).

Like parents in other states, researchers found that time is an issue for Montana families and suggested placing a gain-framed (positive) safety message on *KEYS* materials to encourage their usage. State officials concurred and the tag line "Parents' time is ALWAYS limited, but it's only a 5-week commitment and the effects could last a lifetime!" can be found on several *KEYS* documents including one that provides positive feedback about the homework assignments from both parents and instructors who participated in the pilot program (MOPI, 2012a; Hartos et al., 2009).

Regardless of whether *KEYS* remains an elective or is eventually required, additional research is warranted to assess parental support for the program on a broader scale and its impact on teen driving. Additionally, as a result of the pilot, both teacher candidates and certified driver education teachers are receiving training in the use of the material. Along with discussing how best to deliver and collect the assignments to maximize the learning experience, the training also focuses on using persuasive communication techniques to engage parents and ensure the homework is completed (Hartos et al., 2009). ●

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VIRGINIA:

Making the Case for a Mandate, Adding a New Twist to the Licensing Ceremony

Has the following elements of a good parent program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement (*PSTD* program only)
- ✓ Delivered by trained, educated facilitators (*PSTD* Program only)
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

States seeking to garner legislative and/or regulatory support for mandating parent involvement in driver education and training, may want to take a cue from Virginia. In 2004, The Old Dominion state launched a pilot program requiring parents and teens in Prince William County to attend a 90-minute safety program as part of the in-classroom portion of the state's driver education curriculum (the latter must be completed before a teen may begin the state mandated 14-hours of behind the wheel instruction). Six years later, the legislature extended the

pilot to three other counties – Fairfax, Loudoun and Arlington – within Planning District 8.

Today, the parent/teen safety program, which was developed and is administered by *Partners for Safe Teen Driving (PSTD)* with funding from the SHSO, is not only provided in the mandated areas, but in 43 other schools districts around the state (parent involvement is strongly encouraged). The program covers the state's licensing process and GDL program, which begins at age 15

Adding a New Twist to the Licensing Ceremony

1/2 and includes both the nighttime driving and passenger restriction that are enforced as secondary offenses (parents are encouraged to supplement these); tips for coaching new drivers; a facilitated discussion about teen crash risk and specific driving behaviors (e.g., distraction, speed and alcohol) that often trip up new drivers; and an overview of a parent/teen driving agreement that includes time for individual family conversation.

Recognizing the critical role parents play in preparing their teens to drive, *PSTD* has also developed tools to bolster participation in the 90-minute program as well as continue the discussion at home. For example, there's a *45-Hour Parent/Teen Driving Guide* (the state's GDL requires teens to log at least 45 hours of supervised practice driving during the permit phase) that outlines a series of lessons designed to help teens build skill and remain crash-free in low and high-risk driving environments. A brochure/fact sheet addresses what parents need to know before their teens drive including:

- the risk factors, with an emphasis on brain development and inexperience;
- the critical role parents play in setting a good example;
- the importance of knowing and enforcing the GDL law; and coaching tips.

While our teen crash and fatality numbers have been on the decline statewide, the gains made in District 8 tout the importance of parent involvement.

The guide and brochure, along with a training kit designed to help school districts and driver education teachers promote and run parent/teen sessions, are available on the *PSTD* website (www.safeteendiving.org).

Is the program working? *PSTD* officials report that teen drivers in Prince William County Schools (PWCS) have the lowest crash rates in the state. A closer look at Virginia Department of Education Statistics from 2009 reveal that, "for every 100 students who completed the driver licensing process through the PWCS Driver Education Office [which includes the parent education mandate], only 2.19 students (down from 17 students) had a crash in their first year as a driver. This compares to eight students and adults who learned to drive through commercial programs," noted a *PSTD* official. *PSTD* staff would like to see the mandate extended statewide and a SHSO official indicated that the

message that parent involvement makes a difference rings loud in Virginia. "While our teen crash and fatality numbers have been on the decline statewide, the gains made in District 8 tout the importance of parent involvement."

If Virginia does expand its parent education mandate statewide, it would become the first and only state in the nation with two face-to-face opportunities to reinforce the critical role moms and dads play in their teens' licensure. Currently, Virginia is the only state that requires teens to attend a licensing ceremony with a parent or guardian. Once teens complete all of the driver education and training requirements (including the road test) mandated under the GDL program, instructors issue a 180-day temporary provisional (intermediate) driver's license and notify the courts of that action. Teens then receive a notice to appear (in appropriate court attire) before a local Juvenile and Domestic Relations



The licensing ceremony empowers parents to know that they have control over that license and can say no.

Court judge, with a parent or guardian, within that 180-day time period to receive their intermediate license.

The content of the group ceremony, which typically lasts 30 to 60 minutes, is dictated by the judge. But one element that is consistent from one court room to the next, is who is handed the license – the parent, not the teen. “The licensing ceremony empowers parents to know that they have control over that license and can say no,” said a SHSO official. “GDL is a parent program that allows parents to make choices, despite push back from teens, and this ceremony confirms that.”

Although the SHSO has offered a teen driving-related session in conjunction with the state's annual judicial conference, currently the SHSO provides no formal training to assist judges in conducting the licensing ceremony. “Because this training is key, the SHSO worked with The Century Council to discuss ways to enhance this component of the licensing ceremony,” said a SHSO official. “While I believe that the vast majority of judges deliver a strong

message about the seriousness of licensure and the importance of parental involvement, there's always room for improvement.”

From this discussion, The Century Council developed and worked with the Virginia Supreme Court to distribute the resource kit, *I Know Everything (IKE)*, designed to help judges better engage parents and teens and enhance the licensing ceremony. The research-driven effort, which included a telephone survey of Virginia Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court judges, and a nationwide survey of teens 15 to 18 years of age and their parents, resulted in the identification of key characteristics of the ceremony, along with a better understanding of how parents and teens seem to agree on what defines unsafe driving behavior, while differing on the consequences. The research prompted development of key messages for parents and teens. The teen message focuses on paying attention 100% of the time when driving. For parents, it's about modeling safe driving behaviors as well as reinforcing that driving is a privilege not a right and exercising their authority by punishing careless or bad driving behavior (The Century Council, 2012).

The *IKE* kit includes a suggested format for incorporating the core messages into the licensing ceremony, along with a short video, facts for parents and teens, and an introduction to the *IKE* website. The latter, which includes a safe driving checklist and links to a variety of resources, is promoted as a way to keep the discussion going after teens begin independent driving. A refrigerator magnet touting the importance of paying attention, being a safe driver and engaging in two-way communication (*parents ask your teens where they're going and who they're going with;*

Adding a New Twist to the Licensing Ceremony

I'm not trying to put the responsibility that comes with licensure off on them (parents), but I can't over-emphasize how critical it is that they stay involved.

teens tell your parent where you're driving and who you're traveling with) is also available for display at home.

What do judges think about the material? "I'm particularly thrilled with the video," said the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Judge for Botetort County, located 20 miles from Roanoke in a rural part of the state. "I start my ceremony with it and then have a trooper speak before I distribute the licenses and offer a few closing remarks. I previewed [it] extensively and had others on my staff as well as my 20 and 16-year-olds watch it. The tone and language are upbeat and resonate with teens. My daughter made it clear that you can only talk so much to teens and that keeping it snappy is important."

Keeping teens and parents engaged throughout the ceremony is important. "I've only got these families for a short period of time, so I want to ensure that what I say and they hear has impact. While I talk to the teens and believe that the video can help, my message is really directed at the parents. I'm not trying to put the responsibility that comes with licensure off on them, but I

can't over-emphasize how critical it is that they stay involved. I let them know I'm on my third teenage driver and understand if they're anxious, which typically prompts a lot of head nodding and some jaw setting as what I say strikes a nerve."

The Botetort judge admits that he doesn't follow the *IKE*-recommended ceremony format, but feels that what's in the kit can be of help to his peers who may not have experience with teen driving. "We handle a lot of family matters, so what's in the kit is organized in a manner that can be helpful and instructive. Plus, when it comes to the licensing ceremony, there are two camps – the judges that keep it upbeat and brief and the ones that are blunt, direct and use scare tactics. I'm more of the upbeat guy, but I also know this is serious business. I review all of the licenses before each ceremony to see if I know anyone and I come down off the bench to personally distribute them as well as shake the teens' hands."

The Century Council developed the package not just to help guide the Virginia ceremony, but to inspire other states to "mimic the program" (GHSA, 2012). ●

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PENNSYLVANIA & CONNECTICUT:

Fitness to Drive, A Tablet in Every Exam Room

Has the following elements of a good parent program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

In **Pennsylvania**, teens are required to have a doctor sign-off that they're fit to drive to obtain a learner's permit. That opportunity is not lost on teen safe driving advocates, who recently began working with pediatricians (and some family practitioners) to help them become resources for parents and teens as well as champions for the state's recently enhanced GDL law. Advocates estimate that nearly 100,000 teens enter the state's driver licensing system annually.

Piggybacking off the nearly three decades old Traffic Injury Prevention Project (TIPP) developed by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) through funding provided by the SHSO, this new

initiative compliments the statewide project which focuses on traffic safety issues for children from birth through young adulthood. Using a grant from The Allstate Foundation (provided through a partnership with AAP), TIPP staff are working to educate the more than 2,000 AAP-associated pediatricians as well as the 550 community-based pediatric practices located across the state.

To do that, the PA AAP and the SHSO hosted a continuing medical education teleconference for pediatric practitioners that addressed changes to the state's GDL law which took effect in December 2011 as well as the rationale for those changes and their correlation to crash data. The amendments, known as



thin marked spaces and parallel parking.

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DATE				
TIME				

Maximum total time for all sessions – 6 hours driving with large trucks and busses.

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Maximum total time for all sessions – 10 hours driving on city streets, country roads and highways.

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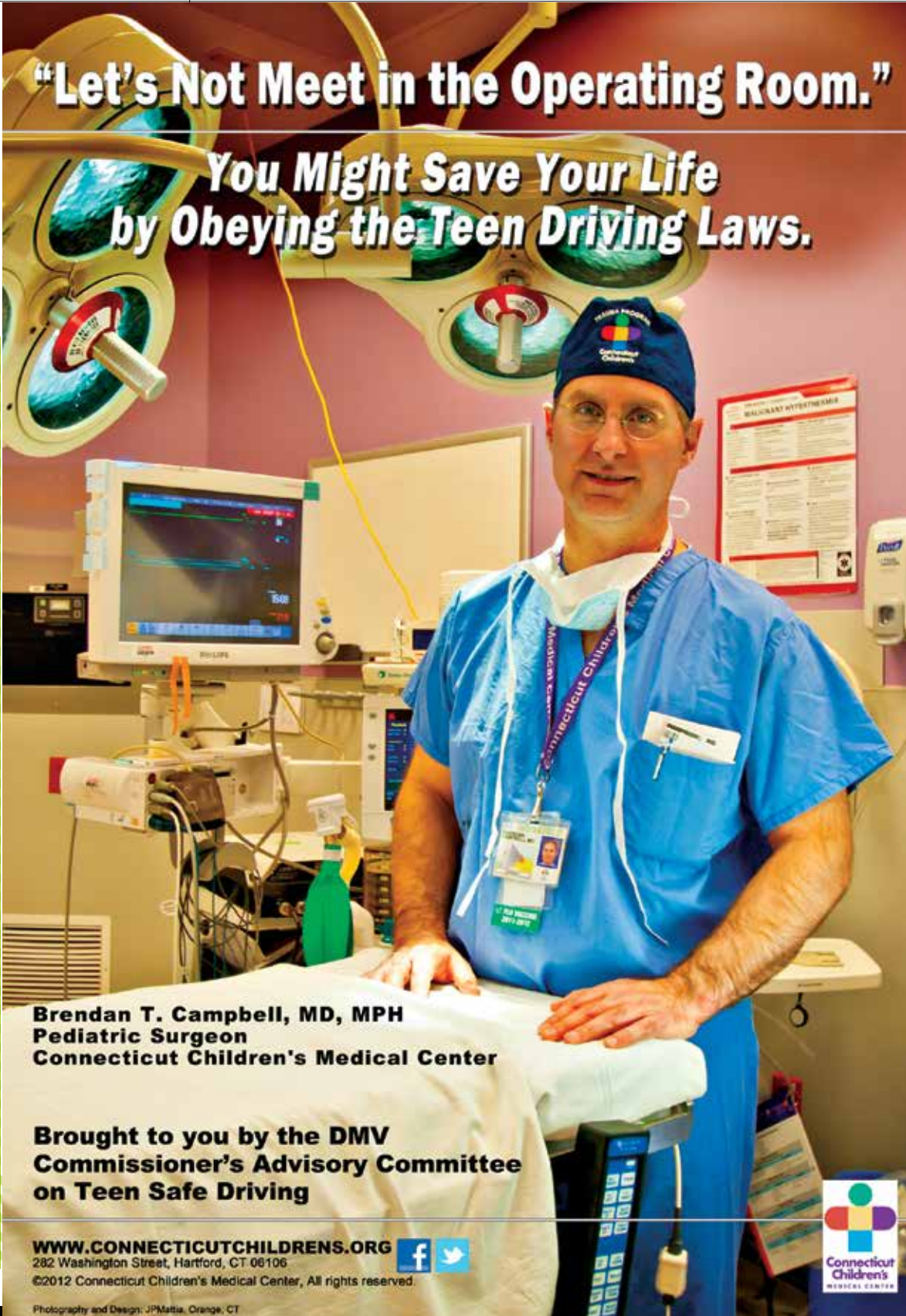
EMERGENCIES
Driving in snow, recovering from a "drop off"

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Maximum total time for all sessions – 23 hours driving in parking zones; stopping for school buses; stopping for pedestrians.

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DATE				
TIME				



https://pdotforms/young_drivers/tutorsguide.pdf




“Let’s Not Meet in the Operating Room.”
You Might Save Your Life
by Obeying the Teen Driving Laws.

Brendan T. Campbell, MD, MPH
Pediatric Surgeon
Connecticut Children’s Medical Center

Brought to you by the DMV
Commissioner’s Advisory Committee
on Teen Safe Driving

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Connecticut
Children’s
MEDICAL CENTER

Photography and Design: JPMedia, Orange, CT

Fitness to Drive, A Tablet in Every Exam Room

Pediatricians convey to teens that they understand their interest in learning to drive and want to help, while ensuring that parents know what is necessary to protect their teens.

Lacey's Law, were supported by the PA AAP and reinforce the importance of practice driving as well limit passengers and require seat belt use by all drivers and passengers under 18. Additionally, the CME, which was facilitated by Dennis Durbin, MD, MSCE, FAAP, co-director of the Center for Injury Research and Prevention at CHOP, also included a review of the issues that heighten a teen's risk for injury and death on the road, and steps parents and teens can take in addition to GDL to lessen that risk.

To help pediatricians translate what they learned on the call into a meaningful exchange with parents and teens, materials were developed for use in the exam room including a colorful and eye-catching mini-poster, a folder that includes both parent and teen specific tip sheets addressing communication, practice driving, overcoming the risks, and the GDL. A sample parent/teen driving agreement is also provided along with a teen driving FAQ. While the expectation is that the pediatrician will briefly review this material with teens and parents when signing off on the Learner's Permit Application (DL-180), not all teens may come into the office. Pennsylvania law allows the form to be completed up to 6 months prior to the teen's 16th birthday (the minimum age for obtaining a permit) and it is valid for one year from the date of the physical examination.

"We recognize that some forms may be dropped off and picked up, eliminating the opportunity for that physician/family discussion," said a TIPP official. "That's why we encourage physicians to have the conversation early and to raise it whenever the teen is in the office. The more opportunities they have to discuss the topic the better. That may mean a general discussion the first time, followed by several conversations

overtime focusing on the GDL program and how it addresses the risk, followed by the use of an agreement, and the importance of following and adhering to the rules."

The end game, says TIPP officials, is to promote conversation in an environment that has the teen's best interest at heart. That means pediatricians convey to teens that they understand their interest in learning to drive and want to help, while at the same time ensuring that parents know what is necessary to protect their teens. While it's too early to tell if the initiative is having an impact, TIPP will be working with physicians to collect not only patient contact data, but information concerning how they are interacting with patients (with deference to HIPAA requirements) and how patients are responding.

Connecticut pediatricians are also leveraging The Allstate Foundation/AAP partnership to develop and test a new approach to providing anticipatory guidance about novice driving to their teenage patients and parents during the formers' 15, 16 and 17-year-old well visits. Currently, 19 practices representing approximately 75 AAP members have been recruited to deliver teen driving information through the state's Pediatric E-Network, a partnership between the Connecticut AAP Chapter and the Injury Prevention Center (IPC) at Connecticut Children's Medical Center, using Android-based tablets. The network, which is designed to support and supplement clinician efforts by providing information that is both accurate and relevant to patients, includes a *Learning to Drive* module composed of three main videos. The videos, all two-minutes or less in length, feature a single speaker – a trauma surgeon, a state trooper, a driving school instructor – who discuss the risks, legal consequences and

Chapter Four Promising Parent Programs

“Now that you’re driving, are you being safe when behind the wheel? That’s also an important part of staying well.”

Michael G. Caty, surgeon-in-chief,
Yale-New Haven Children’s Hospital



Brought to you by the DMV Commissioner’s Advisory Committee on Teen Safe Driving.



The IPC senior program manager overseeing the project indicated that they hope to expand it to include 50 pediatric practices and reach more than 5,000 teens and their parents annually. “We’ve had success working with the practice managers in the offices and we typically host a lunchtime session during which we discuss the magnitude of this public health threat for teens and explain how the application can be used. We don’t, however, tell them exactly how to implement the system, recognizing that each practice must figure out how to work it into their routine. We do recommend that the teen – sometimes the parent is also in the exam room – be given the tablet while he’s waiting to see the doctor in an exam room. The doctor or clinician then asks if the teen or parent has any questions and provides collateral materials which include a sample contract and a GDL brochure.”

Ensuring patient usage of the tablets is critical and something the IPC is monitoring closely. “The tablets have a feedback loop that allows us to track the number of families reviewing the modules by practice. If we see low usage in a particular practice, we can check in with the staff to determine the reason why. We make it very clear when a practice signs on that the tablet doesn’t magically appear in a teen’s hands. Everyone in the office needs to be trained in how this works and every teen has to be asked if he got the tablet, plus this information should be recorded in his chart. We also point out the value of tying this to a patient’s electronic medical record because there is the possibility that a doctor may, in the future, be able to bill for providing this anticipatory guidance. While most pediatricians understand the importance of talking about prevention, their training does not necessarily extend to counseling teens and their parents on issues like driving safety.”

strategies for safe driving. There’s a strong focus on parent training and monitoring, as well as what GDL is and why it exists. As teens and their parents progress through each module, they’re prompted to answer questions designed to make for a more active experience lasting about 5 minutes. The use of a parent/teen driving agreement is also introduced as a proven way to help parents address their teens’ high crash risk. Interestingly, the state trooper featured in one of the videos is female, which should resonate with the parent – mom – who typically handles doctor visits.

Fitness to Drive, A Tablet in Every Exam Room

The IPC official did point out that this ability to monitor usage can only occur if the pediatric office is operating on a WiFi network. “We’ve had over 2,500 completions since the first practice went live in June of 2012, but there are ongoing issues that need to be addressed to ensure we’re capturing all activity.” (Currently, practices are being asked to manually report usage numbers as a means of verifying what is coming in electronically.) He also noted that being network-enabled allows the device to receive automatic updates when a module is revised. “Every time the application is opened on the tablet, it checks for updates, which means less work for the practice.”

Another feature is the ability of families to sign up for teen driving safety text message. “When a teen and parent finish the module, they’re invited to send a text to a number

to receive more information about teen driving. In the future we plan on making better use of social media like Twitter to keep parents and teens informed.”

There is also discussion about splitting the single module into three age-specific applications (15, 16 and 17-year-old). For now, however, the focus is on recruiting more practices to test the E-Network as well as securing additional tablets and tracking usage. States considering investing in the development of an application to engage teens and parents would be wise to keep a close eye on the Connecticut pilot and learn from this experiment. Additionally, as the pilot continues, gaining a better understanding of the impact the modules are having on parent engagement possibly through surveys and/or focus groups would be helpful. ●

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GEORGIA & MINNESOTA:

PRIDE, Teen Driver Parental Awareness

Has the following elements of a good parent program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement (TDPA program only)
- ✓ Employs a theory-based program model that includes ongoing evaluation
- ✓ Delivered by trained, educated facilitators (*PRIDE* program only)
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

States can also take a cue from Georgia and Minnesota, where a nearly decade-old program in the former, and one that's just gaining steam in the latter are schooling parents in GDL and teen driving.

Led by a dedicated team at the **Georgia** Traffic Injury Prevention Institute (GTIPI), with funding from the SHSO, *PRIDE* or *Parents Reducing Injuries and Driver Error* is a free, two-hour program that addresses the attitudes, knowledge and behavior of both parents and teens as the latter prepare to become

new drivers. Led by trained volunteer instructors, some of whom are parents who participated in *PRIDE* with their own teens, the program opens with a brief parent/teen session. Parents then go off into their own session (as do their teens) where they participate in a facilitated discussion about Georgia's GDL law, known as TADRA (Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act), and how they influence and impact their new teen driver. They're asked to rate their own driving (teens rate their parents, too, while in their own session) and share this information with the teens once the

PRIDE, Teen Driver Parental Awareness

An average of 53% of parents improved their overall knowledge of Georgia's teen driving law, posting average before and after mean test scores of 83% and 93%, respectively.

groups reconvene for the final segment of the program. The exercise, says GTIPI officials, is an eye-opener for parents and generates significant discussion.

Every parent and teen who participates in the program is also asked to complete a pre-test evaluation form and post-test knowledge test. Additionally, 60 days and 12 months after completing the program, parents receive via e-mail a one-page *yes* or *no* survey asking if they're using specific things they learned in the program to support, coach and protect their novice drivers. They're also asked to indicate if their teen has been involved in a crash and/or received a citation since completing the *PRIDE* program.

Response rates for both the 60-day and one-year surveys average approximately 35%. To bolster completion of the 60-day survey, parents are notified that they'll receive a certificate of completion for responding, which they can submit to their insurance carrier (some companies offer a discount for completing the program). GTIPI officials point out that since parents self-report, measuring the validity of their responses is difficult. However, the parents who respond report a low incidence of crashes and violations involving their teens. (No comparison data is available for teens who did not enroll in the *PRIDE* program.)

Meanwhile, the results of the pre- and post-knowledge test scores for both parents and teens show an increase in awareness and understanding of the state's GDL law as well as the nighttime driving (midnight to 6 a.m.) and passenger restrictions (a stepped restriction that starts with no passengers for the first 6 months, followed by no more than one under 21 for the next six months and three thereafter) and the importance of

seat belt use. Between October 2009 and September 2011, an average of 53% of parents improved their overall knowledge of Georgia's teen driving law, posting average before and after mean test scores of 83% and 93%, respectively (Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute, 2011 & 2010).

PRIDE reaches approximately 1,200 families annually, mostly through voluntary participation. A small number of participants are required to take the program under a juvenile court mandate due to the teen committing a traffic offense (the only program of its type in the state receiving court referrals). Both parents of remanded teens as well as those who come voluntarily, give the program high marks. The former, however, are according to GTIPI officials, more likely to stay at the end of the program to chat with other parents and/or the instructor. Judges receive information about the program through continuing education conferences, which has prompted an uptick in teens attending as an alternative to sentencing.

The program is facilitated by instructors who undergo extensive training including classroom instruction, presentation practice, a final exam, and observation. Additionally, they must commit to teach the program at least four times a year, as well as attend a 3-hour training or complete an online course (both include an exam) annually to maintain their certification. The bar, according to GTIPI officials, is set high (retention is about 40%) to ensure the quality and integrity of the program and instruction.

Minnesota state highway safety officials have not included facilitator training in their recently launched community-based *Teen Driver Parental Awareness Program (TDPAP)*, which is designed for presentation in conjunction with driver education

classroom programs. The 90-minute *TDPAP* is “generic” to allow instructors to customize it “to suit their individual program and community needs” (Pehrson, 2012). It was developed by the SHSO’s youth traffic safety and alcohol coordinator based on research conducted by CHOP and other entities, with the objectives of (Pehrson, 2012):

- increasing parent and youth awareness of the most common risks for teens and the state’s GDL law;
- increasing parental understanding of the strong influence they have on their teen’s driving behavior; and
- providing information and tools parents can use to help support their teen to drive safely.

The program is an effective tool to reach out to parents. It raises their awareness, gives them an avenue to ask questions, and empowers them as educators of their children.

The program’s overarching goal is to reduce teen-involved crashes, injuries and fatalities. In addition to addressing the magnitude of the teen driver crash problem in Minnesota, the *TDPAP*, which is divided into three segments based on the objectives, also discusses why teens crash and how positive parenting (modeled after the authoritative parent detailed earlier in this report) can reduce that risk. Parents are introduced to a variety of tools including a sample parent/teen driving agreement, practice log and withdrawal of parental consent form (grants parents in Minnesota the right to revoke the driving privileges of a teen who is under 18). Additionally, parents are encouraged to regularly discuss with their teens the risks and responsibilities associated with driving, practice what they preach, allow plenty of time for practice, and remember that it’s up to them (not the law) to decide when their teen is ready for licensure.

TDPAP was rolled out as a pilot through communities that agreed to present to at least one class in 2012 and collect feedback via a pre- and post-parent awareness survey, and parent and instructor evaluations. These documents are contained in a 33 page *Discussion Guide* that also includes discussion points and exercises for each objective along with links to

research and other supporting materials, tools to promote attendance, a class preparation checklist, sample insurance quote information for including a teen on a family policy, positive parenting tips, and a list of Minnesota State Patrol contacts. Instructors are encouraged to invite law enforcement officials, EMS and other community members working in teen driver safety to participate in the discussion.

All the materials needed to facilitate and promote the program, including a PowerPoint presentation with extensive notes, are provided at no cost on a CD-ROM. Two brochures discussing Minnesota’s GDL law (*Teen Driver Road Rules*) and tips and tools for parents (*Teens Behind the Wheel, A Roadmap for Parents*), are also provided free of charge via the SHSO website.

How are instructors responding to the *TDPAP*? “The program is an effective tool to reach out to parents. It raises their awareness, gives them an avenue to ask questions, and gives me an opportunity to direct their understanding of their role and empowers them as educators of their children,” said a new program facilitator. “So far, each of the pilot participants decided to make the parental awareness class a regular part of their driver education programs. I’m working with several other communities

99% of parents said the information will help them help their teens, while 98% would recommend the class to other parents.

PRIDE, Teen Driver Parental Awareness

that have expressed an interest as well," indicated the youth traffic safety coordinator. Through the first quarter of 2012, 12 pilot classes were conducted.

What about parents? Of the 227 who responded to the first round of surveys, their confidence in understanding the state's teen driving laws increased from 36% pre-*TDPAP* to 74% post-*TDPAP*. A closer look reveals that their knowledge of two key provisions of graduated driver licensing – a limit on passengers and driving at night – jumped significantly. For the passenger restriction, which can be complicated because it's a two-phase provision (only one passenger under 20 during the first six months of intermediate licensure; no more than three passengers under 20 during the second six months of licensure), parent understanding of phase one jumped from 63% to 87%, while their knowledge of phase two increased from 23% to 79% (Pehrson, 2012).

Parent knowledge of the nighttime driving restriction also increased from 43% before the class to 85% afterward. As for the value of the program, an overwhelming 99% of parents said the information will help them help their teens, while

98% would recommend the class to other parents. Meanwhile, 63% and 35% of the survey respondents, respectively, rated the class as excellent or good, while 2% said it was fair (Pehrson, 2012).

While initial response to the pilot is highly favorable, continued evaluation to ensure the program is achieving its desired objectives is essential. The SHSO has included information about how to measure the impact of the class in the *Discussion Guide*. In addition to the current surveys, the guide discusses conducting a follow-up survey with parents 6 months to one year after participating in the *TDPAP* to determine how much they retained as well as how they now view their role as the parent of a teen driver.

The SHSO may want to consider expanding this to including asking parents what measures they've taken to protect their teens (e.g., adoption of the positive parenting style) as a result of their participation in the program. An extended three to five year outcome evaluation (conducted by the Department of Public Safety using state motor vehicle crash and license data) is also planned to determine the program's impact on teen-related crashes, injuries and fatalities as well as risk-taking behaviors resulting in traffic citations. ●

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ROAD TRIPS® & STEER CLEAR®:

Promoting Practice and Safety

Has the following elements of a good parent program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement (*Steer Clear* only)
- ✓ Employs a theory-based program model that includes ongoing evaluation (*Road Trips* only)
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

CHOP research on parent involvement and improving practice driving for teens, prompted State Farm to launch *Road Trips*. The free, online, Web-based tool, which was developed with input from driving instructors, pediatricians, researchers, behavioral scientists, and safety engineers, supplements rather than replaces what is traditionally provided through commercial and high school-based driver education programs. One State Farm official refers to *Road Trips* as a “bridge between driver education instructors and parents by providing parents an easy-to-use approach aimed at maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of supervised driving practice.”

Road Trips uses a four-step process –

learn, plan, practice, and log – to help parents help their teens build skill over time. A closer look at the program reveals that each of the steps is carefully designed to ensure that teens not only try on new skills, but practice them over time and receive feedback before progressing to the next. A staff member at CHOP’s Center for Injury Research and Prevention compared it to what marathoners typically do to prepare for a race – they gradually work up to longer and longer runs, as well as use other techniques (e.g., weight training, nutrition) to become tops in their sport.

To ensure drivers in training stay on track, everything is logged into *Road Trips* (time of day, length of trip, weather conditions, roadway type) and tutorials





Road Trips & Steer Clear: Promoting Practice & Safety

Steer Clear is a popular program among families insured by State Farm. This is a testament to the ability to leverage the pocketbook to effectively engage parents in making teen driver safety a priority.

for parents are provided to help break down the skills young drivers need to learn. Pre-trip planning is emphasized as a way to get the most out of every practice drive and printable tip sheets are available for use in the car. Once a teen is ready to move onto the next stage of licensure (parent permitting), he can print out a complete summary of driving (type and accumulated time) for submission to the DMV. In the meantime, however, the log is a valuable tool for monitoring what has been practiced and accomplished to date as well as what has yet to be addressed in preparation for eventual licensure.

While *Road Trips* is available to anyone with a computer (parents do not have to be insured with the company), State Farm recognizes that parents are the greatest influencer when it comes to their teens. As early as 1999, the insurance company began offering the *Steer Clear* Driver Discount program for qualifying drivers ages 16-24. The program can be accessed online, through an iPhone or Android mobile app, or in paper form through a State Farm agent. It includes a parent/teen driving agreement (for teens 18 and younger; drivers 19 and older are required to adhere to a safe driving pledge), a trip

log that promotes a minimum of 20 practice driving trips, a passenger assessment log (for the supervising driver), and a driver self-assessment survey, which must be completed and submitted before the *Steer Clear* discount is applied. The driver must be free of at-fault crashes and moving violations for three years prior to entering the program and remain so through the duration.

Steer Clear is a popular program among families insured by State Farm. This is a testament to the ability to leverage the pocketbook to effectively engage parents in making teen driver safety a priority. With 17,800 agents, there is a veritable army of teen driving advocates available to help parents recognize the critical role they play in partnering with their teens to ensure they build skill and become safe drivers. Agents have access to an internal website that includes a teen driving section, as well as a variety of tools and resources ranging from sample tweets and Facebook posts to brochures and giveaways. "Lots of agents are involved in their communities and speak at schools and clubs; they recognize they're a significant influencer with parents," said the State Farm official. ●

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APPS & IN-VEHICLE CAMERAS:**Checking Up
on Your Teen****Has the following elements of a good parent program:**

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
(*Teen Safe Driver Program*)
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers (*Teen Safe Driver Program* only)
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety
(*Teen Safe Driver Program* only)

State Farm also recently launched a mobile app, *Driver Feedback™*, designed to measure what NHTSA calls three of the riskiest driving behaviors – hard acceleration and deceleration, and hard swerves. The technology, which is available in the Apple and Android app stores, measures acceleration, braking and cornering and provides a score for each as well as an overall score (up to 100) for each trip the driver records. While it's designed for all drivers, it can be particularly helpful for teens. This "impartial person in the car," noted a State Farm official, "can help reinforce what a parent is attempting to point out to a novice driver such as you're braking too suddenly." Driver education professionals, she added, test drove the app and found it useful for this purpose.

Another insurance company, American Family, has also invested heavily in helping parents monitor the driving of their newly licensed teens through

its free *Teen Safe Driver Program*. A motion sensor device (DriveCam) is installed (at no cost) near the rear-view mirror in vehicles driven by participating teens. When triggered by an erratic movement such as swerving, hard braking and sudden acceleration, the device records sights and sounds occurring both inside and outside the vehicle. When the device is triggered, the images and sounds are sent wirelessly to the Teen Safe Driver Center, where professional driving coaches review the footage. Parents can log into a confidential website, referred to as the dashboard, to see how their teen is doing in comparison to their peers as well as review a weekly report card, sent via email, featuring video footage and an objective assessment of their teen driver's performance (American Family Insurance [AFI], 2013).

To date, the direct feedback, which

Apps & In-Vehicle Cameras: Checking Up on Your Teen



both parents and teens can view, is having a positive impact. Since the program started, more than 10,000 families have enrolled resulting in a 70% decrease in risky driving behaviors and a 96% increase in seat belt use. One parent calls it a “win-win,” while another admitted that he’s now “sleeping better” (AFI, 2012b). Families enrolled in the program receive a discount (currently only available in Minnesota and Colorado) based on their participation, not their experience rating. That’s because all

of the information recorded via the sensors as well as the professional assessments remain confidential and are not shared with American Family (AFI, 2013). (American Family receives aggregated data, which is used to help evolve the program and the company’s message to parents and teens.) That’s okay with the insurance company, because the primary purpose of the *Teen Safe Driver Program* is to help educate teens and parents on the perils of risky driving and ensure the safety of its customers. ●

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ILLINOIS & NEW YORK:

Electronic Parent Alerts

Has the following elements of a good parent program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety
(*Teen Safe Driver Program* only)

Getting parents up to speed on the risks for teen drivers as well as how best to protect them through the enforcement of GDL provisions and positive parenting and coaching are proven to work. And while the use of in-car technologies such as the one employed by American Family show promise in helping parents get their teens through the first and riskiest year of independent driving, some states are using a less invasive way to help parents keep tabs on their novice drivers.

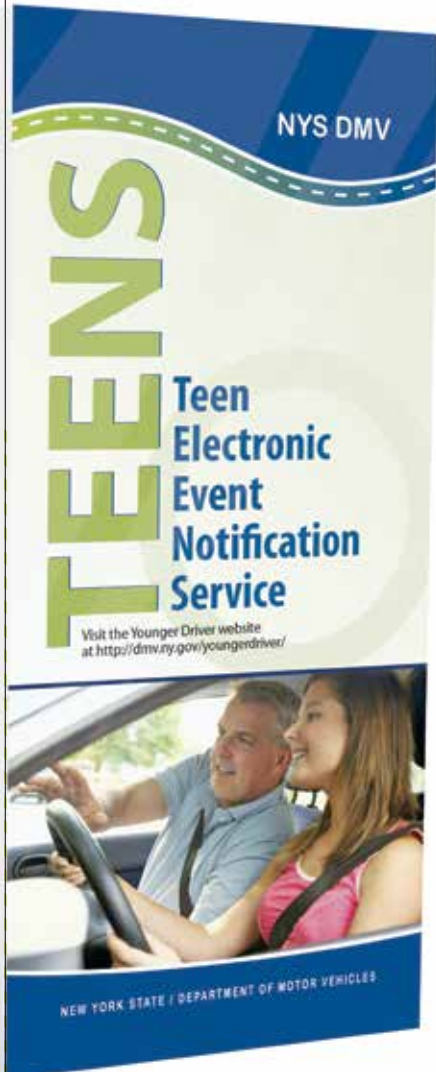
In **Illinois**, for example, a week after a minor teen (under 18) obtains a permit, his parents receive a letter containing a Unique Identification Number or PIN that gives them access to their teen's driving record. First, however, they must visit cyberdriveillinois.com, the state's online portal for conducting business with the Secretary of State's Office, which has responsibility for licensure. Once registered, parents can check their teen's drivers license

status, which includes any traffic convictions and supervisions, accidents, license suspensions or revocations, and other actions. Illinois state officials estimate that parents initiate up to 200,000 checks annually.

As an added fail-safe, under the state's GDL law, which was enhanced in 2008, when a teen under 18 years of age is convicted of a moving violation, a warning letter is mailed to his or her parents. While state officials acknowledge that there is nothing stopping a teen from intercepting the letter, the warning is also posted on the teen's driving record for parental access.

A similar program is also online in **New York**. **TEENS** (Teen Electronic Event Notification System) allows the parent or guardian of a New York State permit, driver license or non-driver photo ID card holder who is under 17 years of age, to sign up for e-mail and/

Electronic Parent Alerts



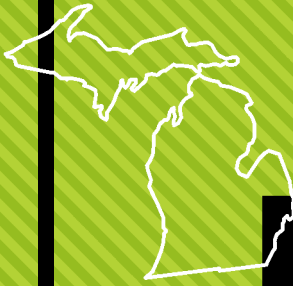
or mail notices when a motor vehicle crash; moving violation conviction; or suspension or revocation of a permit, driver license or driving privileges are entered on a teen's driving record. Parents may automatically enroll to receive notices from *TEENS* when their novice drivers apply for a permit. SHSO officials (who are based in the department of motor vehicles) estimate approximate 6,000 parents enroll monthly. Once a teen turns 18, their notification status becomes inactive, but until then there are more than 50,000 active participants in the *TEENS* database. ●

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MICHIGAN:

STOPPED Decals

Has the following elements of a good parent program:

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

Another approach that has its roots in Onondaga County, New York, but has since gone statewide in Michigan (and is in active in counties in other states including Georgia, North Carolina, Ohio, and Wyoming) earned a 2011 Bright Idea Award from the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University's JFK School of Government. Dubbed *STOPPED*, the *Sheriffs Telling Our Parents & Promoting Educated Drivers* program is a voluntary parental notification system that involves nothing more than affixing a small decal to the upper left side of the windshield of each registered vehicle operated by a driver under 21. If the vehicle is stopped by sheriff's deputies or any other law enforcement officer participating in the program, for any reason when a young driver is behind the wheel, the parent is notified whether a citation is issued or not. This "allows [parent] to enforce their rules of the road, which are often much tougher than those imposed by Michigan's motor vehicle code" (Michigan Sheriffs' Association [MSA], 2011).

"We view it as partnering with parents to enforce their supervisory role," said the executive director of the Michigan Sheriffs' Association. "It's not about catching kids, but keeping them safe." The program, which the association initiated in Michigan in 2005 with funding from AAA (it is now funded by State Farm), focuses on addressing poor driving habits early so that they don't stick with a teen throughout his or her lifetime. Association officials point out that teens can hide infractions like speeding, which can lead to crashes, from their parents because Michigan law doesn't require parent notification. That can lead to an escalation in unsafe behaviors that can be deadly (MSA, 2011).

Parents learn about the program through information provided at state licensing agencies, public presentations, driver education programs, police departments, and parent organization newsletters. They may register online (<http://stopped.michigansheriff.com>), at any Sheriff's office or via a toll-free number and decals are then mailed to

STOPPED Decals

In eight years we've never had a report of a car with a STOPPED sticker being pulled out of a ditch or a death notice delivered to a parent whose vehicles are enrolled in the program.

the address provided by the parent. If a traffic stop involving a registered vehicle is made, the officer can either complete a notification card, which notes the time and location of the stop, the driver's name and number of passengers in the vehicle, reason for the stop, and whether any citations were issued, or click on the *STOPPED* shield that can be found on the main screen of the unit's mobile data terminal and enter the information electronically. The notification is mailed or emailed directly to the parent who completed the registration form.

"In eight years, with over 25,000 vehicles registered, we've never had a report of a car with a *STOPPED* sticker being pulled out of a ditch or a death notice delivered to a parent whose vehicles are enrolled in the program – despite only having sent fourteen letters home to parents," said the Sheriffs' Association executive (MSA, 2012). In fact, the program, he noted, often prompts teens to fess up when they behave poorly behind the wheel. He recalled a mother who called to say that the program didn't work because she didn't receive a letter despite her son being stopped. "When I pressed her about how she knew that, she said her teen told her. I responded, sounds like it did."

While the program has yet to go nationwide, the head of the Michigan Sheriffs' Association said he looks forward to the day when parents in Michigan will be able to register their vehicles and receive feedback on their teen's driving even if they're pulled over in another state. ●

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DRIVE IT HOME:**Parent Website****Has the following elements of a good parent program:**

- ✓ Discusses the risks for novice teen drivers
- ✓ Explains how and why GDL works to address that risk
- ✓ Reviews the critical role parents play in teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers
- ✓ Explains the importance of and provides an opportunity to try out a parent/teen driving agreement
- ✓ Employs a theory-based program model that includes ongoing evaluation
- ✓ Emphasizes parents and teens working together for safety

The Internet is a helpful tool for finding information about teen driving. But as noted earlier in this report, it can be overwhelming to sort through the volume of material that is available as well as determine what resources are best. For states looking to leverage the Internet to impart teen driving information to parents, what should be considered when building (or linking to) a site so that parents not only find it, but stay and come back in the future? And more importantly, are they provided information that is helpful and evidence-based?

The National Safety Council, in partnership with The Allstate Foundation, GM Foundation, Toyota Foundation, and AT&T Foundation, and other donors, has launched a new website to help parents keep their new teen drivers safe. *Drive it Home* was built based on extensive research, including focus groups with parents, and uses a variety of approaches to engage and educate. The website's content is built around five key themes (NSC, 2012):

- Parents want what's best for their children including keeping them safe after they get their driver's license.
- Car crashes are the leading cause of teen death, but a parent's influence can make the difference.
- Teen drivers are inexperienced and everyone's teen makes mistakes. Parents are the experienced co-pilots who can help teens get the experience they need by riding with them regularly.



- Parents are coaches and must teach teens the right things, in an effective way.
- Parents have the authority to make and enforce the rules addressing the principal risks for teens – passengers, nighttime driving, cell phones/texting, and create stricter family rules, if necessary, than state laws allow.

The National Safety Council's goal is to reach at least one million parents and effectively change behaviors consistent with the proven principals of graduated driver licensing.

The website uses minimal copy coupled with eye-catching design and interactive tools to convey this information to parents. The tone is peer-to-peer rather than authoritarian. Additionally, short videos that are simultaneously quirky, humorous, emotional, and informative to appeal to the four parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, uninvolved, permissive) were created specifically for the website. Parents also have the ability to engage with each other through the community discussion board, register to receive weekly tips to help them coach their new driver and download a customizable parent/teen driving agreement.

Since the website is new its impact has yet to be measured. The National Safety Council's goal is to reach at least one million parents and effectively change behaviors consistent with the proven principals of graduated driver licensing. Will the initiative be successful? Only time, along with ongoing research that includes parent feedback, will tell. Just like the programs detailed previously in this section, evaluation is essential for ensuring that the intervention is positively impacting the desired outcomes. ●

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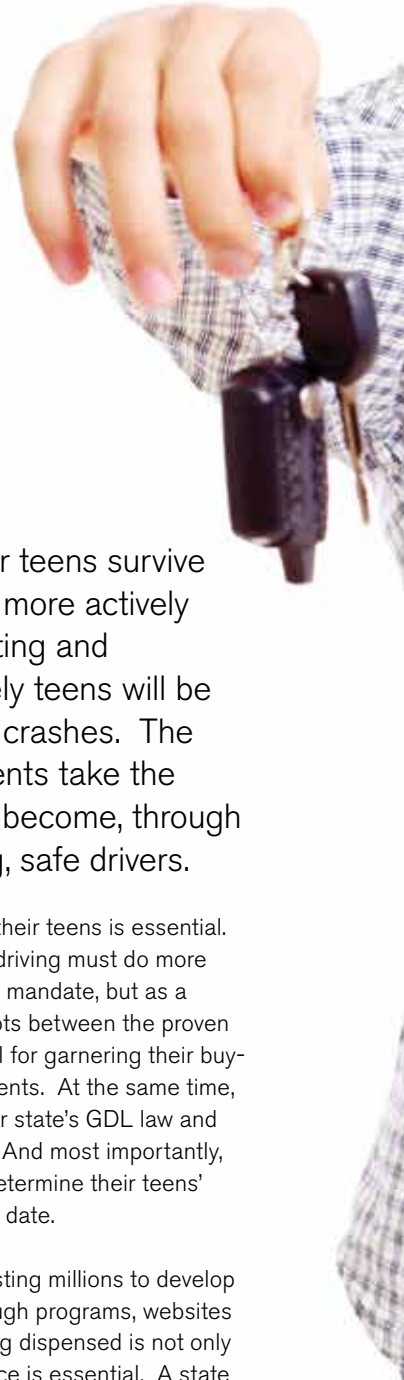
Conclusion

Where Do We Go From Here?

Parents play a critical role in helping their teens survive their most dangerous driving years. The more actively involved parents are in coaching, supporting and monitoring their new drivers, the less likely teens will be to engage in risky behaviors that lead to crashes. The opportunity and challenge is to help parents take the lead in helping their teens build skill and become, through extensive practice and ongoing coaching, safe drivers.

Equipping parents with the knowledge and tools to help their teens is essential. State highway safety offices and others working in teen driving must do more to promote graduated driver licensing, not as a legislative mandate, but as a parent support program. Helping parents connect the dots between the proven provisions of GDL and their own teens' safety is essential for garnering their buy-in and enforcement of both the time and restriction elements. At the same time, parents should be made aware of any deficiencies in their state's GDL law and what they should do to supplement those shortcomings. And most importantly, parents must understand that it's their responsibility to determine their teens' readiness to drive by considering much more than a birth date.

Government, non-profit and commercial entities are investing millions to develop and disseminate teen driving information to parents through programs, websites and printed materials. Ensuring that the information being dispensed is not only accurate, relevant and helpful, but based on sound-science is essential. A state interested in using and/or adopting an existing initiative would do well to review it with a critical eye and question the research used in its development and evaluation as well as what metrics are measured and how. For states looking to





build their own program, incorporating all of the essential elements of a good program is strongly recommended to ensure a real and measurable effect. Additionally, research confirms that encouraging the adoption of an authoritative parenting style along with the use of a parent/teen driving agreement through facilitated guidance, prompts greater parent engagement and less risk taking by teens. Despite misgiving about requiring parents and teens to attend programs, state legislatures must come to recognize that their constituents overwhelmingly appreciate the information they receive and deem it invaluable for protecting their teens. More should be done to create a clamor for this and other evidence-based educational programs, either through a mandate, the media or some other means.

While significant resources have been devoted to teen driving research, further study is needed to determine when is the best time to reach parents with critical teen driving information. Is this before teens begin learning to drive, prior

to intermediate licensure or at various times throughout a GDL program? Who are the most appropriate individuals to educate and engage parents – physicians, insurance agents, driver education professionals, other parents? And what, if anything, is being done to reach the parents of teens in culturally diverse communities and households where English isn't spoken?

Parents are the primary supervisor of their child's practice and early independent driving. Program research needs to determine the best ways to transfer higher order driving skills, along with the basics, from an experienced adult to a novice teen driver. That begs the questions, how much practice is enough and what practice is best?

Clearly, more work is needed to address these and other questions raised by this report. But what is certain, is that parents are key influencers when it comes how their teens drive. Helping parents make the most of that role can foster even greater gains in teen driver safety. ●



Appendix A

Parent-Targeted Teen Driving Programs

The following is an overview of national initiatives listed by sponsoring organizations that were developed to foster parental engagement in teen driving. It is by no means all-inclusive, nor does it suggest endorsement of any of these programs by GHSA, State Farm, the author of this report or the expert panel members. The information is provided only as a resource to readers who may be interested in learning more about a particular initiative.

AAA

Keys2Drive www.teendriving.aaa.com

The program is designed to help parents help their teens prepare for licensure. Parents are prompted to type in their state upon visiting the site, which brings up state specific information (e.g., GDL law, sample written exam questions). The site features a sample parent/teen driving agreement, the Dare to Prepare workshop (getting educated prior to beginning the permit phase of licensure), and StartSmart, a passive version of the *Checkpoints*™ program, which features newsletters and the parent/teen driving agreement.

Allstate & The Allstate Foundation

Teen Driving/Under Your Influence www.allstateenddriver.com

Teen Safe Driving Program www.allstatefoundation.org/teen-driving

This teen driver website includes a section for parents that promotes the influence parents have over their novice drivers, while the Teen Safe Driving Program features tips for parents, a sample parent/teen driving agreement localized by state, parent research, and information on graduated driver licensing including a link to state programs.

American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association

Parent/Mentor Home Practice Guide <http://adtsea.iup.edu>

This skills log is designed to help parents conduct at least 50 hours of in-car instruction with their teens. The 40 lessons progress from pre-driving checks/adjustments and basic maneuvering to driving in various types of traffic, environments and weather conditions. Emphasis is also placed on helping the novice develop visual search skills, essential for safe driving. Each lesson includes coaching information and a checklist to monitor progress.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Parents are the Key www.cdc.gov/ParentsAreTheKey/

This initiative, which was piloted tested in two communities, consists of numerous tools (e.g., implementation, media and event planning guides; fact sheets; sample parent/teen driving agreement; parent pledge; posters; flyers; postcards) designed to help parents, pediatricians, businesses and community groups mount a teen safe driving campaign promoting the importance of parents. All materials are free and may be downloaded (hard copies may also be ordered from the website) and customized. Materials are available in both English and Spanish.

The Center for Injury Research & Prevention, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)

Teendriversource: Research Put into Action www.teendriversource.org

The content on this research-based website is organized by stakeholder – parents, teens, educators, researchers, policymakers – and contains information on cutting-edge research and evaluated strategies, as well as practical resources to download. The “I support and educate parents” section of the website contains numerous tip sheets, reports, PowerPoint presentations, parent/teen activities, and other tools in both English and Spanish that may be adopted for use in community or school-based settings. The site has HONcode Certification that it meets international standards for trustworthy health information.

Farmers Insurance

Teen Driver/YES http://www.farmers.com/teen_drivers.html

This parent specific section of the Farmers website, encourages moms and dads to phase in driving privileges, be clear on the rules, spell out consequences, and choose the right vehicle. Additionally, it promotes the critical role parents play in helping their teens become safe drivers through the Y.E.S. (You're Essential to Safety) program. Working together families get the facts, read stories and meet teens who have been involved in car crashes. Following completion of the program, which includes a video, online quiz and agreement, families are eligible for a policy discount.

Ford

Driving Skills for Life www.drivingskillsforlife.com

This national program, co-developed by GHSA, uses hands-on “ride and drive” events to help novice teen drivers build skill also educates parents and community members about teen safe driving. The program works closely with schools and states to educate teens. A parents section on the website features tips as well as a coaching guide that addresses four key areas – hazard recognition, vehicle handling, space and speed management – that often trip up teens. Videos designed for viewing by parents and teens together are also provided.

From Reid's Dad**A Blog for Parents of Teen Drivers** <http://fromreidsdad.org/blog/>

Written by Tim Hollister, the father of Reid, a 17-year-old Connecticut teen driver who died in a car crash in 2006, this award-winning blog focuses on the importance of parents putting the emphasis on supervision first and driving second. The blog, which launched in September 2009, discusses a myriad of topics including vehicle selection, effective GDL laws, older licensure for boys, parents as role models, and much more.

MADD**Power of Parents** www.madd.org/underage-drinking/the-power-of-parents/workshops

While the focus is on helping parents speak to their kids about underage drinking, this program, based on the research of Dr. Robert Turrisi and his colleagues at Penn State University, addresses many of the issues discussed in teen driving parent engagement interventions including parenting styles, being a good role model, establishing and enforcing rules and consequences, and dealing with peer pressure. Parents may request the free *Parent Handbook for Talking With Teens About Alcohol* from the website and/or locate a free, 30-minute, facilitated *Power of Parents* program offered in community-based settings.

Nationwide**Auto Insurance for Teen Drivers** www.nationwide.com/teen-car-insurance.jsp

This webpage provides short articles to help parents understand teen decision making as well as help them practice driving. The role of parents is discussed along with parent/teen driving agreements and distractions that trip up teens.

National Safety Council**Teen Driving Parents/Alive at 25** www.nsc.org/safety_road/TeenDriving/Pages/WhatParentsCanDo.aspx

This section of the NSC website addresses what parents can do to protect their teen drivers (e.g., know the risks, practice, establish and enforce rules, stay engaged) and includes a link to the *Checkpoints* parent/teen driving agreement, a teen safe driving blog, and the *Alive at 25* program. The latter includes a one-hour parent education program that works in consort with the 4-hour teen defensive driving program and includes the comprehensive publication, *Teen Driver: A Family Guide to Teen Safe Driving*.

NHTSA**Parents Central, Keeping Kids Safe** www.safercar.gov/parents

This website addresses traffic safety from infancy through young adulthood, with a focus on what parents should know before handing over the keys once a teen is ready to drive. The site discusses GDL laws, establishing ground rules, the importance of being a good role model, the limitations of driver education, and common safety problems for novice drivers (e.g., seat belts, distraction, alcohol).

NOYS**Under Your Influence** www.underyourinfluence.org

The National Organization for Youth Safety's parent website addresses the influence parents have over their teens by promoting involvement and guidance. Parents may download a free toolkit that includes links to numerous resources, programs and publications addressing driver education, distracted driving, vehicle maintenance, and model parent/teen driving agreements, as well as sign-up to receive a free newsletter and test their knowledge of teen driving via an interactive quiz.

SADD**ParentTeenMatters** www.sadd.org/ptm/index.html

This Students Against Destructive Decisions parent portal focuses on three key areas: underage drinking and other drug use, empowerment and parental involvement, and driving. The driving section encourages parents to take three critical action steps – be a good role model, know the law and join with others in the community. Parents may sign up to receive a free e-newsletter.

SafeKids USA**Countdown2Drive** www.Countdown2Drive.org

The interactive program, developed in partnership with CHOP, is designed for families with pre-driving teens and uses the development of a passenger agreement as a way to bridge the gap between no longer riding with mom and dad and becoming licensed drivers. The focus is on setting a tone of mutual respect as parents and teens work together at home or in a community-based setting.

State Farm**Teen Driver Safety Website** www.teendriving.statefarm.com

The site provides a comprehensive suite of free tools, tips, and resources designed to help teens and their parents throughout the learning-to-drive process. Programs such as *Road Trips*, *Road Aware*, and *Driver Feedback* can be accessed. Visitors can also find out more information on other State Farm efforts, such as *Celebrate My Drive®*, and auto insurance discounts, such as *Steer Clear*.

Appendix B

A Program Theory Model for Developing a Parent-Teen Intervention

A Six-Step Approach

1. Set a key health outcome – a clearly defined and measurable long-term vision.

First, when it comes to establishing a key health outcome (or long-term vision), it's okay to think big. Wanting to put an end to teen crashes and the resulting injuries and fatalities links directly to the *Zero Fatalities* initiative that has been embraced at both the state and national level. And it's measurable – crash data is collected by age (and may, in some states, be collected by license type as well), which allows for an assessment of whether an intervention is helping to contribute (even indirectly) to a reduction in teen crashes.

2. Identify behavioral objectives linked to the key health outcome.

Behavioral objectives, just like the key health outcome, must be clear. They need to specify who is being targeted (parents) and what they're expected to do (e.g., know their state's GDL law and enforce the proven provisions, be good role models). What is critical here is ensuring that the objectives are “based on a clear understanding of the associated risk and protective factors for the specified health outcome as well as the social and developmental context in which the behaviors are performed” (Winston, Jacobsohn, & Hafetz, 2009). For states, this means the objective *being a good role model*, for example, links back to the key outcome of reducing teen crash risk (research shows that teens emulate their parents' driving behaviors). If this and other behavioral objectives lead to a key outcome, prioritizing which outcomes have the greatest impact is important along with determining if certain outcomes work better with particular demographic groups (Winston et al., 2009).

3. Identify the target constructs that influence adoption of the behavioral objectives.

Constructs are essentially the current knowledge, beliefs and skills of the audience whose behavior is being influenced. These are impacted by things like norms and self-efficacy. This is the point where states may throw up their hands and say *this is way too complicated*. But what states need to find out is what parents already know and believe about teen driving, what is influencing that understanding (e.g., their adult peers, their exposure to teen driving information, cultural beliefs) and whether they have the ability and motivation (self-efficacy) to change. For example, if parents believe that GDL is a punitive program, moving from their current belief to the desired target construct would involve helping them understand that GDL actively supports parents' efforts to keep their teen drivers safe. If a parent is open to hearing and receiving this information, it could lead to the adoption of a behavioral objective (e.g., know and support the GDL and enforce the proven provisions).

4. Design and develop intervention content that address the constructs.

How states design and develop the intervention content so that it addresses the target constructs and ultimately leads parents to try on and adopt a particular behavior is next. Using the *Checkpoints* program (referenced previously in this report) as an example, parents and teens learn about the risks for newly licensed teens – driving at night, on high-speed roads, in inclement weather, with passengers – and how GDL programs address some but not all of that risk (e.g., limit passengers, restrict night time driving). Supplementing the GDL provisions, which parents may or may not like (their current constructs), with stricter limitations is the behavioral objective. To influence parent adoption of that behavior, the facilitator uses a particular intervention or tool, in this case discussion and completion of one section of the parent/teen agreement, to help them get comfortable with this new way of thinking and acting. Prior to participating in the individual exercise, everyone participates in facilitated discussion, which uses compelling teen driver research findings to explain and reinforce the risks.

What is critical to understand at this point is that the construct that compels parents to adopt behavioral objectives is impacted by situational leadership. Situational leadership is particularly important because it speaks directly to the need to adapt to the individual learner's level of motivation and ability in order to effectively teach, train and/or guide. Situational leadership acknowledges that no single approach works best, that the facilitator's success is dependent on

each participant's receptivity and capabilities, and that there are four distinct approaches that should be considered when attempting to engage the audience delegating, supporting, coaching, and directing (Knezek, 2012). These approaches can each be linked to one of four research-based parenting styles (see page 11 for the importance of parenting styles):

1. delegating authoritative → 2. supporting authoritarian → 3. coaching permissive → 4. directing uninvolved.

Looking at just one style, uninvolved for example, the facilitator recognizes that this parent is unwilling, unable and possibly insecure about supporting his young driver, so informing and instructing this parent is most appropriate (Knezek, 2012). Tying this to the parent/teen driving agreement exercise used in the *Checkpoints* program, this parent will need the facilitator to describe the task in detail, as well as direct and support his participation.

Regardless of parenting style, combining situational leadership with accelerated learning, where participants are given multiple opportunities to learn and grow in a positive environment, is something else states should consider. Additionally, presenting information from a positive or gain-framed rather than a negative or loss-framed perspective is proven to help individuals move beyond particular beliefs and tap into their full potential (Knezek, 2012; O'Keefe & Jensen, 2007). For instance, *teen drivers who are monitored by their parents are less likely to crash* versus *teens are more likely to crash when their parents aren't involved*. Accelerated learning also recognizes the importance of collaboration, learning by doing (with feedback), making concepts concrete, and taking into account not just the brain-centered aspect of learning but the emotional and social impacts as well (International Alliance for Learning, 2011). This speaks to the need for states to be sensitive to the tone and delivery of the intervention as well as the importance of the person tapped to facilitate the program.

Thus states should always build their interventions with input from facilitators and their target audience. This should include soliciting stakeholder input on everything from usability, format and delivery channel, to the messages, language and supporting materials. Piloting the intervention with a small segment of the target audience before going mainstream will enable a state to determine what is and isn't working and make adjustments accordingly. This trial and error approach, may lengthen the time between program development and full implementation, but it will pay dividends in the long run.

5. & 6. Evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions and refine the interventions and behavior change model, as needed.

The remaining steps are evaluating the evaluations and refinement. When it comes to evaluation, the focus should always be on uncovering whether the intervention leads to the desired outcome. That exposure could lead to scrapping the entire program and starting over or simply retooling a particular intervention. As the program is refined, evaluation continues and is never static. The goal is to provide the best program possible so that it produces the desired key outcomes and can be used by others attempting to reach similar audiences. Not only will you tweak intervention components, you will likely refine your target constructs and the behavioral objectives.

Additionally, states should keep tabs on new research as well as changes to GDL and others laws that impact teen drivers. And adapt the program accordingly. These new developments could impact normative behaviors making a particular target construct no longer necessary.

For more information on using program theory, refer to Winston and Jacobsohn's 2010 *Injury Prevention* article, *A Practical Approach for Applying Best Practices in Behavioral Interventions to Injury Prevention*, as well as <http://www.cdc.gov/eval/resources/index.htm> and www.teendriversource.org.



Appendix C

A Caution About Using Pre- and Post-Test Evaluation Tools

The use of pre- and post-test knowledge tests or surveys is a simple, low-cost way to method for determining if individuals participating in an intervention are gaining a better understanding of key information and concepts or likely to adopt and/or change behaviors. Most providers administer a pencil and paper survey at the beginning and end of the program and then compare the data. This can be helpful for ongoing program evaluation.

A word of caution, however. The participant's perception of the construct being assessed may change due to their participation in the intervention. Traditional pre- and post-test measures assume that the respondent's assessment and understanding of the concept being measured won't change from the pre- to the post-test. This could result in an underreporting of any change between the pre- and post-test (Drennan & Hyde, 2008).

Why does this happen? Researchers explain that the participants are essentially rating their knowledge of or ability to do something at the time of the post-test "on a different dimension" than they did at the time of the pre-test. This occurs because they've gained a better understanding of the construct the provider is attempting to influence and/or change (Drennan et al., 2008). This is what is known as response-shift bias. And what the post-tests may reveal, to the dismay of the provider, is that participants' understanding changed only slightly or didn't change at all.

To counteract this, some researchers suggest using a retrospective test, which asks participants to think back to what they knew or did at beginning of the program and compare it with what they know or do now. This "then-test" is administered at the same time as the post-test to ensure that the participant is using "the same internal frame of reference." (Drennan et al., 2008). This evaluation method can be a more reliable indicator of whether a particular educational intervention did, in fact, prompt a behavioral change on the part of the participants (Drennan et al., 2008).

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