



Teen Talk

A quarterly newsletter from the Children's Hospital League's Resource Center

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Our peer leaders, Caitlin, Pauline, and Asharee, buckle up for safe summer driving.



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Safe Driving Saves Lives

By Asharee and Pauline

You've waited 16 ½ years for this day. Now it's finally here. You've passed your driving test and you have your license. You can't wait to drive your parents' car or your own car unsupervised and you're itching to cruise around with your friends.

But wait...what's all the worry about? – "Wear your seat belt", "Don't have friends in the car", "Watch out for other drivers", "Be home by midnight", and "Don't even think about drinking and driving!"

This is supposed to be the best time of your life... isn't it? If this sounds familiar, you're one of the many teenagers who will receive a lot of warnings from parents, teachers, and other adults about the dangers of getting behind the wheel.

The media portrays teenagers as reckless drivers who lack the responsibility and maturity necessary to drive safely. You may not agree with this but the truth is that automobile accidents involving teen drivers are four times more likely to be fatal than accidents involving older drivers. **This makes car accidents the number one cause of teenage deaths between**

the ages 15 and 20. But wait, there's more! One predictable cause of teen car accidents is drunk driving. Drunk driving is responsible for approximately 25% of all car accidents involving teens. In fact, 17,000 alcohol-related

deaths occur in the United States each year. Crazy, don't you think!? It makes sense with these statistics that many laws have been passed in most states to try to reduce this number, especially laws that address underage drinking.

Another reason for teen car accidents is nighttime driving. Although your social life may pick up at night, the reality is that nighttime driving is harder for everyone. It's even more difficult to assess road conditions, see signs, and ignore distractions when you're an inexperienced driver. You probably learned in driver's ed that it's against the law to drive after midnight if you are

under age 18, unless a parent or guardian is in the car with you. If you break this curfew and you get stopped, you can have your license suspended for a minimum of 6 months, which means "bye-bye freedom". ♥

Summer Safety Quiz

By Caitlin

True or False? Test YOUR knowledge!

- ① You only need to put on sunscreen once and you're all set for the day.
- ② Tanning helps my acne.
- ③ You can get burned on a cloudy day.
- ④ I should drink even when I'm not thirsty.
- ⑤ There are clothes that have SPF in them.

Answers on page 2.

Summer Safety Quiz Answers!

Sink your teeth into summer with a delicious

Tomato and Mozzarella Sandwich!

Ingredients:

- 2 pita bread rounds, cut in half
- 4 ripe tomatoes, sliced
- 5 tablespoons of olive oil
- 4 (1 oz.) pieces of mozzarella cheese
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 cup of fresh basil leaves
- salt and pepper



Preparation:

Warm up the pita pockets. Place tomato, mozzarella, garlic, and basil in a bowl, sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste and drizzle with olive oil. Place all ingredients in warmed pita pockets. Make 4 servings.



On June 14th, The CYWH participated in a Community Health Fair for over 400 Boston Public middle school students. This event was sponsored by the Harvard Medical School Office for Diversity and Community Partnership.

For road rules and license info check out these web sites:

FAQs about Learner's Permits and Junior Operator Licenses

http://www.mass.gov/rmv/jol/21336_web.pdf

Driver's Manual <http://www.mass.gov/rmv/dmanual/index.htm>

AAA Insider program for New England teens, free membership:

<http://www.aaa.com/aaa/240/sne/membership/INSider.html?zip=02115>

1) FALSE: SPF (Sun Protection Factor) is measured by timing how long skin covered with sunscreen takes to burn compared to uncovered skin. So if you are wearing SPF 15, it will take you 15 times longer to burn than when unprotected. Make sure that you reapply sunscreen after swimming, or if you sweat a lot, or after towel drying. You can add to your sun protection by staying in the shade during peak sun times (10am-4pm), covering up, wearing sunglasses and a hat, and using a sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher protection.

2) FALSE: You might have heard that tanning helps with acne, not true! Although tanning can temporarily mask skin imperfections, it doesn't cure acne. And tanning can add to skin damage by causing wrinkles, sunspots, and skin cancer.

3) TRUE: Did you know that 80% of the sun's ultraviolet rays can pass right through clouds? And the coolness of a cloudy day is deceptive, so you might not feel yourself getting burned. Only on heavily cloudy

days is UV radiation completely eliminated. So remember your sunscreen if you will be spending time outdoors even on a cloudy day.

4) TRUE: During the summer, it's very important to stay hydrated. Being thirsty is a sign that you are becoming dehydrated so don't wait until you are thirsty drink water throughout the day.

5) TRUE: Clothing has been developed that contains SPF. Stylish hats, shirts, even dresses have been designed to protect you from the sun. But if you don't want to spend the money on special fabrics, here are some pointers for sun-safe dressing. Wear unbleached cotton because it has UV absorbers. Make sure that the clothing is tightly woven. To check, hold the fabric up to a window to see how much light comes through; darker clothing generally has a higher SPF. Beach cover-ups can help, but remember that all garments lose about 1/3rd of their protective ability when they get wet! ♥

Driving Tips and Tales

Tips Here are some important tips to remember if you are a teen driver –

- **First things first, always buckle your seat belt.** Seat belts really do save lives!
- **Know, understand and obey the rules of the road.** If you get a ticket your car insurance will cost more.
- **It's definitely not cool or safe to talk on a cell phone while driving.** If you need to make a call, take the time and pull over in a safe area.
- **Pay attention to road conditions.** If the weather is bad, don't drive until the weather conditions improve.
- **Wait the full 6 months after getting your license before giving a ride to friends under the age of 18!** Friends distract friends while driving, even when they don't mean to, plus if you get caught, your license will be suspended for up to 90 days.

Tales Let's face it everyone has a story about either a tragic car accident or a near fatal one. At first the story may impact our lives making us more cautious drivers for a while, but more often than not, the story is

soon forgotten. If we could remember some of the stories and learn from others' mistakes, we might become better drivers.

We asked teens for driving stories...here are a few personal accounts of events that actually happened:

"I would have had a cousin, but she's dead now. On New Year's Day, when she was 15 years old, the boy who was driving her in a car smashed into a telephone pole. She flew through the windshield and landed on the ground and died. Her family has never really recovered from losing her. I always wondered what it would have been like to get to know her, my cousin Becky. When she died, I decided I wanted to live. Now I always buckle my seat belt. I never get in a car with a drunk person. I'm careful on the road."
-DH

"When my best friend's brother got his first car, he was driving it way too fast on a deserted road. He skidded and the car rolled, and he ended up upside-down on the side of the road. His car was totaled. He is so incredibly lucky he is still alive. I know that if he wasn't speeding, he never would have lost control of his car."
-BF

"One day my boyfriend was driving me home. He had his license for a little over 6 months but he wasn't experienced enough to drive on winding roads at night. To make the situation worse, he was speeding and I wasn't wearing a seat belt. We went spinning out of control. At first, I thought it was pretty cool, it felt like a roller coaster ride until I got out and saw that the car was all banged up. I realized we could have died. It really scared me. My boyfriend was pretty bummed out when his parents told him he couldn't borrow the car anymore."
-CP



As teenagers we hope that you realize that having your license is both a fun time and serious time as the responsibilities are huge! Your parents and those that love you want you to be safe...so don't forget that SAFE driving SAVES lives. ♥