Promoting Parent Involvement in Teen Driving
An In-Depth Look at State Initiatives

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http://teendriving.statefarm.com
GHSA takes a look at...

• Protecting Teen Drivers (2010)
• Curbing Teen Driver Crashes (2012)
• Promoting Parent Involvement (2013)
This report discusses

- Why parents are important
- What they need to know
- The obstacles for parent engagement & how to overcome them
- The elements of a good parent program
- Promising programs
Why parents?

• Primary teacher/coach

• Primary enforcer road rules, safe driving behaviors/practices

• Primary influencer (even more so than peers)
What do parents need to know?

- Inexperience & brain development the culprits
  
  The playing field is level for teens.

- The key risk factors
  
  Not always what parents think!

- GDL is their tool
  
  Provide a primer, connect the dots, identify best practice
What do parents need to know?

• Parenting style matters
  Authoritative parent = less crash risk, risky behavior

• Driver ed/training just beginning
  6-hours does not a driver make, progressive practice essential

• Use a parent-teen driving agreement
  Outline the risks, rules & consequences while promoting ongoing dialogue
What are the obstacles?

• Don’t recognize risks
  Help them fixate on the right risks through facilitated guidance

• Unfamiliar with GDL, viewed as guideline
  Minimum standard to exceed, enlist trusted sources to promote GDL’s proven principles

• Lack of time
  Leverage the Web, incentives & mandates; provide practice tips & tools
What are the obstacles?

• My teen is a good, safe driver
  Use real stories and peers to motivate parents, stay firm on the restrictions

• Not the Best Role Models, But Don’t Want to Be Told How to Parent
  Lead by example, provide positive call to action, engage the community
What are the Elements of a “Good” Parent Program

• Discusses the risks for teen drivers

• Explains how, why GDL works to address risk

• Reviews the critical role parents play teaching, supporting & managing their novice drivers

• Explains the importance of & provides opportunity to try out a PTDA
What are the Elements of a “Good” Parent Program

• Employs a theory-based program model that includes evaluation

• Delivered by trained, educated facilitators

• Emphasizes parents/teens working together for safety
Promising Parent Programs

Share the Keys (NJ)

- Has all the “good” elements
- Network of facilitators, ongoing training
- Web access to materials, regular updates
- School-based delivery, incentives (no state mandate)
- Positive messaging, share not preach

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.
Share the Keys

**Pre/post-test findings:**
- 81% will increase teen practice
- 76% will enforce GDL
- 76% intend to control the keys
- 30% authoritative parenting

**6-month survey findings:**
- 84% now understand GDL & enforce nighttime driving & passenger restriction
- 63% control the keys
- 47% spend 7 hrs/more practice driving w/teen
- 47% authoritative parenting
Promising Parent Programs

Connecticut’s Parent/Teen Program

✓ Has 4 of the 7 “good” elements
✓ State mandate, 2-hours
✓ Delivered by driver education professionals
✓ Some positive messaging, behavioral objectives
✓ Content outline, but no set curriculum, new video
✓ Assessment planned for content & delivery

Finding out whether there are more effective ways of presenting this information is a priority. We need to look at the evidence-based research that shows what works on content delivery.
Connecticut P/T Program

87% agree program should be required

85% strongly/somewhat agree information is helpful

18% increased confidence a great deal, 47% somewhat enhanced confidence in teaching teen to drive

90% aware of passenger restriction in 2nd 6 months of licensure (84% for non-participants)

77% know about nighttime driving restriction (52% for non-participants)

59% know about brain development issues (35% for non-participants)
Promising Parent Programs

Montana Parent Meeting/KEYS

✓ Has all of the “good” elements (KEYS)
✓ Traffic Education Standards include mandatory parent meeting
✓ Time & content standards (GDL, practice, PTDA) for parent meetings
✓ No guarantee all parents are reached (permit @16, no DE required)
✓ KEYS capitalizes on strong (76%) support for parental involvement, voluntary
✓ Five parent-teen, progression-based homework assignments, rating form, PTDA, practice log, overview of phases of learners tied to GDL

KEYS stresses that practice is the only way to eventually gain mastery of driving and it takes years of driving to become competent. Parents’ time is ALWAYS limited, but it’s only a 5-week commitment and the effects could last a lifetime!
Montana KEYS

Two recruitment strategies – one class required participation w/signed consent (opt out offered); other class voluntary. Families exposed to requirement 24xs more likely to participate, higher homework completion rates.

Pilot test found families strongly supportive of the materials, 90% reported willingness to do all activities across all 5 assignments.
Key takeaways

• Promote GDL as a parent support program

• Help parents connect the dots between GDL provisions & risks

• Alert parents to GDL deficiencies & offer supplements

• Parents need to determine their teen’s readiness to drive
Key takeaways

• Educational materials/programs must be accurate, relevant, helpful & based on sound science

• Legislatures must overcome the fear of a mandate backlash, parents want & appreciate information

• More research is needed to determine when & who is best to reach parents, how much practice is best
Questions???