

Interactive website helps parents keep teen drivers safe

May 22 2012, By Bernie DeGroat



Nearly 30,000 parents around the state are using a free, interactive web resource that provides information and tools to help parents protect their teens while they gain experience driving without adult supervision.

This online program — www.saferdrivingforteens.org — is presented by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute and the Michigan Department of Community Health through a grant from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Prom season and the end of the school year are an exciting time of year for teens, but it is also a time when they are likely to be [driving](#) more often and to a larger variety of destinations. The special celebrations and year-end activities offered by many schools and communities create more pressure for teens to drive at night and to give other teens rides," said Ray Bingham, a research professor at UMTRI, as well as the U-M schools of medicine and public health.

"Teen drivers are at greater risk in these situations compared to adults, due to their young age and inexperienced driving. The excitement and increased likelihood of exposure to alcohol and drugs that may accompany some celebrations add to teens' risk. Many [parents](#) find that this is a good time to make extra effort to help their teen drivers stay safe."

The website features an easy-to-use, interactive parent-teen driving agreement called Checkpoints that helps clearly establish where and when teens can drive without [adult supervision](#), and how teens can earn increased driving privileges. Because the agreement is interactive, parents can use it now to establish driving privileges for prom and graduation season and revisit it as their teen gains driving experience. The website also includes information about Michigan's driving laws for teens, and videos about using the agreement and talking with teens about driving.

The Checkpoints parent-teen driving agreement was created by Bruce Simons-Morton of the National Institutes of Health and has been tested multiple times in several states, including Michigan. [Teens](#) whose parents use the agreement receive fewer tickets and report less risky driving behaviors (e.g., speeding, tailgating, turning fast, unsafe lane changes, cutting in front of other vehicles, going through yellow or red lights).

More information: www.saferdrivingforteens.org

Provided by University of Michigan

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