SAFE K!DS WORLDWIDE™

TOP TIPS TO KEEP TEENS SAFE BEHIND THE WHEEL
National Teen Driver Safety Week Puts the Spotlight on Safe Teen Driving Behavior

(Safe Kids St. Lucie, Port St. Lucie, Florida) – In recognition of National Teen Driver Safety Week (October 21-27, 2018), Safe Kids St. Lucie urges teens and their families to discuss smart strategies for staying safe behind the wheel. Motor vehicle crashes remain the leading cause of death for American teens and are most often the result of inexperienced teen drivers taking risks like not buckling up, texting, driving with teen passengers, speeding, driving under the influence or driving in the dark.

To learn more safety tips, visit: https://www.safekids.org/safetytips

"Every year more than two thousand teen drivers are involved in fatal motor vehicle crashes, most of which are caused by inexperience on the road," said Ronda Cerulli Coalition Program Director, Safe Kids St. Lucie. "Time and again we hear stories about teens whose inexperience, when combined with unnecessary risk-taking - like not wearing a seat belt- results in tragedy. Teen Driver Safety Week should serve as an important reminder to parents to talk to their teens about the necessity of buckling up and keeping the phone down on every ride, and to make sure you are following the rules too", said Clint Sperber, Health Officer and Administrator for the Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County

Safe Kids St. Lucie recommends the following top driving safety tips for teen drivers:

1. **Talk to your teens about how to be safe while driving.** Remind teens to follow traffic signals and laws, make eye contact with pedestrians, and enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully.

2. **Make a formal agreement with your teen and enforce it.** A 2016 research report by Safe Kids Worldwide showed that formal parent-teen agreements regarding driving restrictions help reduce risky driving, traffic violations and crashes.

3. **Let your actions speak as loud as your words.** Kids are always watching, even when you think they're not. So set a good example when kids and teens are in the car. If you buckle up, they are more likely to buckle up and if you speed, they will speed.

4. **Ensure your new teen driver gets at least 50 hours of experience under a variety of driving conditions**. Having more experience behind the wheel helps new drivers manage driving in the dark and driving with other teen passengers in the car, situations that can increase the likelihood of crashes for young drivers.

5. **Take action against distraction.** Teach teen drivers to put cell phones and other distractions in the back seat or out of sight until their final destination.

6. **Be alert around neighborhoods and schools**. When driving, be especially alert in residential neighborhoods and school zones, and be on the lookout for bikers, walkers or runners who may be distracted or may step into the street unexpectedly.

7. **Watch out for pedestrians.** Give pedestrians the right of way and look both ways when making a turn to help spot any bikers, walkers or runners who may not be immediately visible.

In further recognition of National Teen Driver Safety Week, Safe Kids Worldwide, with support from Chevrolet, released the results of their Teen Video Challenge. Kaylyn Barbour, a teen from Oklahoma, created the award-winning video in which she shares her story of how one choice to not wear her seat belt changed her life completely. The tragic experience has compelled Kaylyn to speak out to teens about the risks of unsafe driving behaviors.

Watch Kaylyn's Story
 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FgnurAswb18&feature=youtu.be

The Safe Kids Buckle Up program is a national initiative established 19 years ago by Safe Kids Worldwide and GM to keep children, teens and families safe in and around cars. GM's long-term commitment to educating families has helped the child safety program evolve into one of the most comprehensive in the nation, and covers children from birth to the time they become drivers.

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About Safe Kids St. Lucie County

Safe Kids St. Lucie County works to prevent unintentional childhood injury, the number one cause of death for children in the United States. Its members include St. Lucie County Fire District, St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department, Port St. Lucie Police Department, Children's Services Council of St. Lucie County, Ft. Pierce Police Department, St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners,CORE Program,United way of St. Lucie County, Tradition Medical Center, Communities Connected for Kids, St. Lucie County School District . Safe Kids St. Lucie is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations dedicated to preventing unintentional injury. Safe Kids **St. Lucie County** was founded in **2015** and is led by **Florida department of Health in St. Lucie County** For more information, visit safekids.org or www.safekidsstluciefl.org.

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