

Be a **ROAD MODEL** for Your Teen Driver



“You never stop worrying about your kids,” so the saying goes, but perhaps nothing drives parental anxiety higher than hearing these words from your teenager: “Can I borrow the car keys?”

In Washington, an intermediate driver’s license is a rite of passage. It’s also a time to reinforce the right skills and safe habits so that your teens begin a lifetime of safe driving.

As a parent or guardian, you’re not a bystander. Your involvement makes a difference. Be a road model. Here are some suggestions.

Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) research found that, compared to teens who perceive their parents as uninvolved, teens who perceive their parents as authoritative are:

- ✓ 50% less likely to crash
- ✓ 71% less likely to drive intoxicated
- ✓ 30% less likely to use a cell phone when driving
- ✓ 50% more likely to buckle up



Set Rules

Insist on 5 rules for teens to follow when they drive:



- 1 No cell phone
- 2 No extra passengers
- 3 No speeding
- 4 No alcohol or drugs
- 5 Buckle up

Road Model Tip: Practice what you preach. Starting from the first time your child rides in the car seat they are watching you. If you make exceptions, they will too.

Focus on Road Safety for the Whole Family

(and there is an app for that!)



Download an app...like Life360...that can track and share the driving behaviors of everyone in the family. This lets everyone you choose who has the app see each other's driving history (like speed, sudden acceleration, hard braking). More than just a way to monitor teens, it encourages conversation among all family members about how each is driving, helping create a culture of driving safety within your family.

Road Model Tip: Install the app before your teen starts driving so they can monitor your driving before they hit the road (see pro-tip above). This also lessens their resistance to the app when they begin to drive themselves.

Prepare

Preparation helps you become a better road model and coach for your teen driver. Here are some resources to help you get ready:

Washington Department of Licensing's Parents Guide to Teen Driving

<https://www.dol.wa.gov/business/drivertraining/docs/BehindTheWheelGuide.pdf>

Your definitive source for knowing and enforcing driving laws and intermediate driver's license requirements, including how you can play an active role in your teens driver education.

TeendrivingAAA

<https://teendriving.aaa.com/HI>

With interactive tools and resources, including widgets and a webinar for parents, AAA provides parents with great resources and advice to help them become effective in-car coaches, with advice on managing their teen's overall driving privileges.

Young Driver Parenting

<http://youngdriverparenting.org>

A non-profit organization offers training, tips and resources for parents, including sample safe driving agreements that parents and each young driver in the family can sign and follow.



Road Model Tip: Share these resources and tips with other parents...if you and the parents and guardians of your teen's friends are all in this together, you strengthen the culture of safety that surrounds your teen and their peers.