

What Alberta is doing

On May 20, 2003 Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) became the law in Alberta and changed the way new drivers are licensed in this province. All new drivers must now go through a two stage process before they get a full-privilege license.

In stage one (learner phase) the new driver must drive for one year with a responsible adult. This learner period gives the new driver an opportunity to gain supervised experience in a variety of driving conditions. Stage two is a two-year probationary phase in which the new driver continues to gain experience driving under fewer restrictions. By requiring new drivers to practise under low risk conditions, GDL is a proven way to reduce injuries among new drivers.

For more information on Graduated Driver Licensing visit: www.saferoads.com

What you can do

Most teenagers overestimate their driving abilities and underestimate the risks of driving. This puts them at risk, both as drivers and as passengers.

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) is a great start to reduce the risks for new drivers but there is even more that you can do. Help your teen **L.E.A.R.N.** to drive by role modeling good driving behaviour and setting your own family rules.

Remember, what you DO often speaks louder than what you SAY.

You can make a **BIG** difference!

As a parent, you are involved in your teenager's driving in many ways – from coaching and supervision to paying for insurance and controlling access to the family vehicle. You have the right to set rules for your family and you will not be alone. Most parents set rules – whether their teens admit it or not!

**When you help your teen
L.E.A.R.N. to drive you not
only protect your own child, you
help to make the road a safer
place for everyone.**

This **Essential Message for Parents
of New Drivers** is brought to you by
Injury Prevention partners in Alberta,
working to reduce the number of Albertans
killed and injured every year in our province



Capital
Health



www.capitalhealth.ca/LEARN

A black and white photograph of a hand holding a set of keys. The hand is in the foreground, and the keys are hanging from the fingers. The background is blurred.

Help your teen
L.E.A.R.N.
to drive

Vehicle crashes are the number one killer of young people in Alberta.

1 in every 5 new drivers is involved in a collision during their first two years of driving.

Crash rates for young drivers are highest when there are teen passengers in the vehicle and at night.



L.E.A.R.N.

L. LIMIT THE NUMBER OF PASSENGERS

Passengers increase the crash risk for new young drivers. Fatal crashes involving 16-year-old drivers are more likely to occur when there are other teens in the vehicle – and the risk increases with every additional teen passenger. Consider a no-passenger rule for at least the first year of unsupervised driving. New drivers need time to practise without the distraction of other teen passengers.

E. EVERYONE WEARS A SEATBELT – EVERY TIME

Seatbelts provide the best protection in a crash, reducing the chance of injury or death by more than 50%. Over half of Alberta's teen drivers and passengers who were seriously injured in crashes over a five-year period were *not* wearing seatbelts. Your teen should only drive when everyone in the vehicle is buckled up. Help your teen understand that it's not about avoiding a ticket – it's about saving lives!

A. AFTER DARK, IT'S TIME TO PARK

Teen drivers and passengers are at a higher risk of serious crashes between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Consider restricting your teen's driving during these hours, especially on Friday and Saturday nights. Studies show that the number of nighttime crashes involving 16-year-old drivers can be reduced by almost 50% if driving restrictions start before midnight. You can renegotiate this rule once your teen shows responsibility and gets more driving experience.

R. RESTRICT DRIVING IN RURAL AREAS

In Alberta, over 75% of serious injury crashes involving teens happen in rural areas. While some of the drivers involved in serious collisions come from urban areas, almost 70% live in rural areas. Rural driving exposes drivers to more hazards such as gravel roads, soft shoulders, narrow lanes, poor visibility, long distances and deteriorating road conditions. The low level of traffic in rural areas can persuade drivers to take more risks, like not wearing seatbelts, drinking and driving or running stop signs. If your teen drives on rural roads, set rules on where, when and with whom they can drive.

N. NO ALCOHOL OR DRUGS – EVER

At least 50% of all teen drivers involved in serious collisions were intoxicated. Late nights or rural areas can limit a teenager's transportation options and expose them to greater risks. Alberta's GDL puts tough restrictions on alcohol use during the learner and probationary periods with a zero alcohol level. To further protect your family, make your own rule about zero alcohol and drug use – even after your teen has a full-privilege license.