



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 20, 2020

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## **Teach Teen Drivers the Rules of the Road to Keep Them Safe**

*National Teen Driver Safety Week is Oct. 18-24*

Santa Cruz, Calif. – This week (Oct. 18-24) is National Teen Driver Safety Week, and the Santa Cruz Police Department is encouraging parents to discuss the importance of safe driving habits with their teens as newly licensed drivers.

This week, and every week, we want parents to get involved with their teen's new responsibilities as a driver and help them understand the rules of the road.

"New drivers will naturally be inexperienced," Santa Cruz Police Department Sergeant Wes Morey said. "Parents play an important role helping teens stay safe behind the wheel. It starts with practicing good habits like wearing a seat belt, staying off the phone and following the speed limit."

The greatest risk for teen drivers is distracted driving, speeding, and impairment. Throughout the week Santa Cruz Police Department offers tips to parents and caregivers on how to talk to teens about the consequences of making dangerous and illegal choices behind the wheel.

- **Avoid Distractions:** Cell phone use while driving is illegal. Drivers under 18 are not allowed to use a phone or other electronic device for any reason, including hands-free.
- **Understand Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Laws:** For the first 12 months you have a license or until the age of 18, no passengers under 20 years old are allowed unless a licensed parent, guardian or other adult 25 years old or older is in the car with you. Late-night driving (between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.) is also not permitted.
- **Never Drive Under the Influence:** All teens are too young to legally buy, possess or consume alcohol. Under California's zero tolerance law, any driver under 21 cannot drink any alcohol and drive (blood alcohol concentration of .01% or higher).
- **Follow the Speed Limit:** The road is not a racetrack. Speeding is a risky behavior that increases the chances of serious injury or death in a crash.

It's important for parents to let their teen know that driving is not a right, but a privilege. It can be taken away when they don't follow the rules.

For more safe driving tips to share with your teens, visit [gosafelyca.org](https://gosafelyca.org). To learn more about state laws for different traffic safety issues, visit the Governors Highway Safety Association [website](#).

Funding for this program is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



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