

COUNTDOWN 2:DRIVE

Safe passengers today. Good drivers tomorrow.



A parent and young teen activity designed to keep teen passengers (ages 13-14) safe in the car and prepare them for the day when they will drive!



www.Countdown2Drive.org

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What is Countdown2Drive?

Problem: The greatest threat to a teen's health and safety is a car crash. As teens get older they tend to use seat belts less. It is a proven fact: seat belts save lives. Teen passengers may begin to ride with older siblings, in carpools and with new teen drivers. Helping young teens know what to do to stay safe in a car is critical. In 9 states, teens as young as 14 can begin to drive. At Safe Kids USA, we believe teens that are safe passengers today will make good drivers tomorrow.

Solution: Countdown2Drive is a program for teen pre-drivers and their parents. It is a web based program that enables teens ages 13 and 14 to record their beliefs and thoughts about safe driving behaviors AND it gives their parents and caregivers the same opportunity. The program then blends their comments and creates an agreement the two can talk about to negotiate family rules and guidelines before it is time for a learner's permit.

Five Steps to Keep Teens Safe in a Car

- 1 Always wear a seat belt.** Teen seat belt use declines with age.
- 2 Do not distract the driver.** Many crashes among teen drivers are due to driver distraction.
- 3 Never ride with drivers who have been drinking or doing other drugs.** Using alcohol and other drugs changes the way drivers make decisions and respond to emergencies.
- 4 Ride with experienced drivers only.** Your parents can help you decide who and what counts as an experienced driver.
- 5 Avoid riding with drivers you know are unsafe.** You know when you feel unsafe. Do not put yourself in a car with someone who takes unnecessary risks.

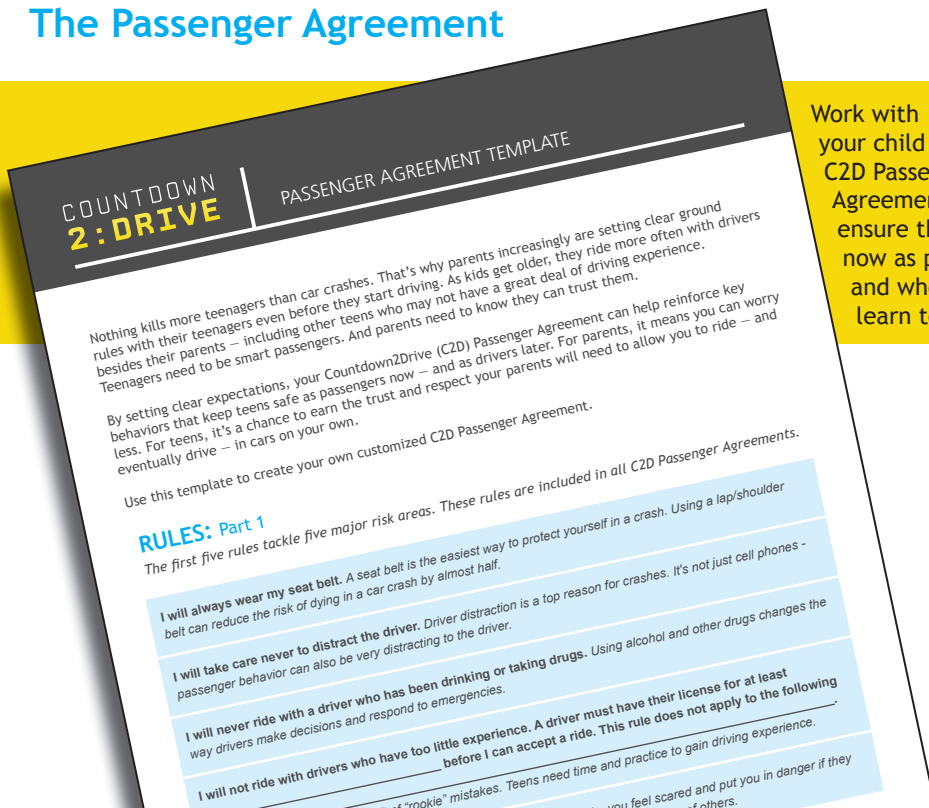
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Our studies found:

1. Kids ages 13 and 14 (if they haven't already driven a car) are anticipating the day when they can drive. Their interest is keen.
2. Parents of kids ages 13 and 14 have not thought about their teen as a soon-to-be driver. Teens in 9 states can drive at age 14 and at age 15 in 33 states. Is your state one of these?
3. Parents tended to overestimate their teen's seat belt use.
4. Parents most often get information about things of interest to their 13- and 14-year-old from family members first and friends second. Parents can help each other with passenger and driver safety information.



The Passenger Agreement



Work with your child on a C2D Passenger Agreement to help ensure their safety now as passengers and when they learn to drive.

About Countdown2Drive

Safe Kids USA's Countdown2Drive is a fully developed program with a facilitator's guide, state laws, fact sheet, talking points, script and other information to enable and equip interested caregivers and parents to talk about this sensitive issue. All materials are free. We invite you to be the first of your group to start the discussion. Log onto the Web site and customize the Passenger Agreement so it fits your teen and your family's needs. Remember, safe passengers today make good drivers tomorrow.

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A program of Safe Kids USA