



Andy Beshear
GOVERNOR

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
transportation.ky.gov

Rebecca Goodman
SECRETARY

Contact: Marla Marrs
Office of Highway Safety
Marla.Marrs@ky.gov
502.352.5963

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kentucky Teens Encouraged To Buckle Up and Stay Focused Behind the Wheel
National Teen Driver Safety Week is Oct. 18-24

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 14, 2026) – As National Teen Driver Safety Week approaches, Team Kentucky is joining the national effort to protect young drivers and save lives by encouraging teens to buckle up, stay focused behind the wheel, and talk with their parents about safe driving behaviors.

“Through year-round programs and teen-focused initiatives, we give students opportunities to learn the importance of making safe choices behind the wheel,” said Transportation Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Goodman. “By giving young people the knowledge and tools they need, we can help keep our people safe and shape better drivers for the future.”

The Teen Driver Safety Week campaign, spearheaded by the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#), is one of several school and community programs supported by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s Office of Highway Safety to promote safer roadways. Throughout the year, outreach programs and hands-on activities are offered, such as a rollover crash simulator to encourage seat belt use, the Ghost Out program aimed at sober driving, and others.

These educational campaigns are focused on not only engaging young drivers in highway safety, but also on driving down injuries and fatalities on Kentucky roadways. In September, Team Kentucky [announced](#) the winners of the second Safe Teen Driving Challenge - an initiative to promote safe habits in teens across the state by giving personalized driving insights through the DriveWell Go app and reward the top five scorers win sponsored cash prizes.

Over the past three years in Kentucky, there have been more than 49,000 crashes involving a teenage driver, resulting in more than 13,000 injuries and 197 deaths. NHTSA reports that motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teens in the United States. Per mile driven, teens are involved in three times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers.

To help reduce those numbers, teens and their parents are encouraged to discuss safe driving habits such as buckling up, staying focused behind the wheel, obeying speed limits, and avoiding impaired or drowsy driving.

Those are highlighted in NHTSA's six basic rules for the road:

1. **Avoid Distracted Driving:** Keep your eyes and attention on the road. Avoid texting, phone use, eating, adjusting controls, and other distractions.
2. **Wear Seat Belts:** Buckle up on every trip. Seat belts are one of the most effective ways to prevent serious injury or death in a crash.
3. **Minimize Passengers:** Having multiple teen passengers increases the chance of risky driving behaviors and fatal crashes.
4. **Obey Speed Limits:** Speeding reduces a driver's ability to react and safely navigate unexpected situations.
5. **Drive Sober:** Alcohol, marijuana and other drugs can impair judgment, coordination and reaction time. Never drive impaired.
6. **Don't Drive Drowsy:** Lack of sleep can slow reaction time and increase the risk of making driving errors. Make sleep a priority before getting behind the wheel.

For more information and statistics on teen driving, visit NHTSA's website www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving.

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