

The Department of Motor Vehicles

Teen Safe Driving in CT 2011: Continued Progress

The DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving

Commissioner Melody A. Currey

Annual Report on Effectiveness of Connecticut's Teen Driving Laws
August 2011

Executive Summary

Connecticut is entering its fourth year of having toughened and strengthened teen driving laws. These measures remain among the strongest in the country. By many critical standards, Connecticut for several reasons continues to show signs of improved safe driving by teens, enforcement of the teen driving laws by police and promotion of community awareness propelled by safety advocates and parents. A strained state budget now will require the DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving to seek private-sector and foundation-provided funding to continue this outreach that helps to produce these beneficial effects for teen drivers, their families and their communities.

This year's report finds most noticeably the number of 16 and 17 year-olds holding licenses has continued to decrease, despite their statewide population remaining stable since 2008 when the laws were enacted. Although safety advocates differ on interpreting the reasons, all agree this decrease plays a beneficial role in Connecticut's progress because of the continued reductions – as the charts in this report show - in crashes and deaths of drivers as well as convictions for violating the teen driving laws. These criteria alone embrace the core reasons for statewide action three years ago: A demand to curb the tragedies that crashes bring and a call for more intensive efforts to foster safer teen driving both through awareness as well as sanctions.

A series of high-profile crashes in 2007 triggered an intensive nine-month public awareness and law-changing campaign in 2008. A task force to recommend changes to teen driving laws was formed. Safety advocates including those from the state and federal government, education, law enforcement, public health, medicine, parents and others examined the issue and proposed solutions. Their proposals brought revamped laws requiring longer periods of passenger restrictions for teen drivers, an earlier 11 p.m. curfew time for these drivers to be off the road except for certain situations, harder penalties through increased fines and license suspensions for violators of the laws, rigorous training requirements for study and on-the-road practice, and a mandated parent-teen information session about safe driving and teen development. This report shows in detailed ways with numbers – and explanations from some of the advocates themselves -- the significant progress Connecticut continues to make in preventing these tragedies and fostering awareness among teens and parents for safety precautions.

Crashes overall are down by 28 percent when comparing 2007 - the year before the laws were passed -- to 2009, the latest figures from the state Department of Transportation for crashes in which 16 or 17 year-old drivers' were determined to be the contributing factor. Fatal crashes of any kind – whether the teen driver was at fault or not - remain below their 13 per-year average from 2005 through 2008, when the new laws took effect.

Most convictions on these young drivers' records show a trending decrease. Convictions are down for violations for cell phone use and distracted driving, speeding, driving under the influence (per se), and failure to wear a seat belt or having more passenger than seat belts. Convictions for violating the passenger restrictions and curfew laws, the 2010 final numbers reflect an increase over the previous year. Although only 647 is being reported so far for 2011, this final number could rise as courts close outstanding cases.

However, the continuing issuance of citations reflects the pledge of law enforcement to help teens learn about safe driving. Police continue to enforce Connecticut's 48-hour suspension

law, which affects predominantly male 16 and 17-year-old drivers. The on-the-spot suspension is designed to send a quick and swift message to both parent and teen that the laws must be obeyed. When a teen is charged with violating one of the toughened driving laws for them, police can seize the license for 48 hours, file a suspension report with the DMV and then parents must sign at the police station for the return of the license. Since August 1, 2008, police have made more than 1,500 seizures. Police on-the-street presence helps to contribute to robust community outreach that grows each year.

Connecticut is showing that it has the will and determination to make driving safer for this age group, said former task force consultant Dr. David Preusser of Preusser Research Group, Inc., a Trumbull research firm that studies teen driving as part of transportation safety analysis it does for state and federal agencies. However, one significant aspect about keeping that effort strong at the DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving in the years ahead will be funding for its projects. Limited staff, resources and funding pose a challenge to find private sector as well as foundation revenue sources for fostering community outreach across the state. One significant project, The DMV Teen Safe Driving Video Contest, with the Travelers Companies as the contributing prize sponsor, has shown continued growth since its inception. Other kinds of projects have the same potential, but lack the funding sources to bring them statewide or to targeted communities.

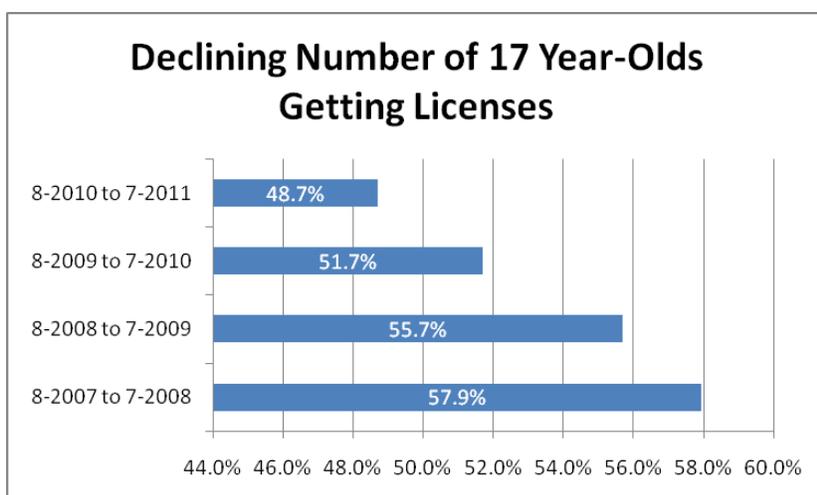
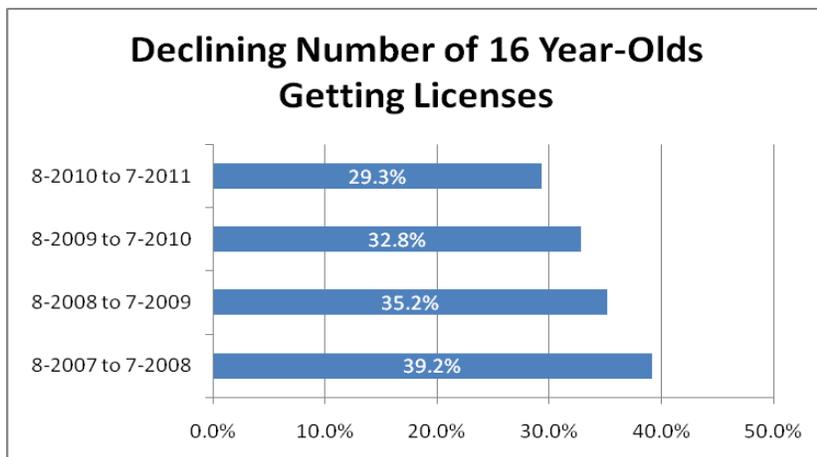
Public awareness about the laws and consequences of poor driving by teens reach daily into the lives of young drivers. They are often brought together by their generation's unique place in history to have Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and other social networking sites. They promote and share their ideas, concerns and criticisms that in turn spread important safety messages in many different ways to a multitude of audiences. For example, the DMV Teen Safe Driving Center's YouTube site with teens' self-made videos has garnered 42,500 views of its videos. The Center has more than 219 people are following it on Twitter and its Facebook and web pages continue to get visitors daily. Teens and other safety advocates report constant activity on their social networking pages as well. In addition, the brick-and-mortar person-to-person presentations occur by groups like Mourning Parents Act Inc., Connecticut Children's Medical Center, Yale-New Haven Hospital's Trauma Department and scores of police departments, high schools, insurance companies and community-based organizations.

DMV is proud of the work statewide community supporters have given to teens and their families for this cause, and their wanting to protect them from dangers acutely facing new drivers, said Commissioner Melody A. Currey, pointing out that this work is the foundation for Connecticut's continued progress.

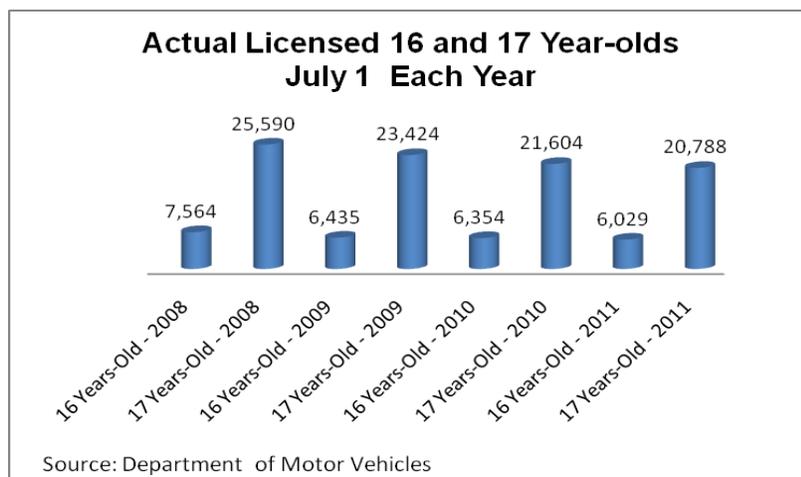
*Report prepared by William K. Seymour, Director, DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving

Licensing information

Licensing data continues to show an overall decline. The total number of licensed 16- and 17-year-old drivers has dropped since the laws were first enacted.



For comparison, in 2001 the 16-year-old licensing rate was 42 percent. For 17 year-olds, the licensing rate was 64 percent. To see the change another way, below is a chart showing the changes in specific numbers of all licensed 16 and 17 year-olds on each July 1 for the past four years.



Population of both age groups in the last four years has been relatively constant each year since August 1, 2008. Dr. Preusser, of Preusser Research Group, said his studies indicate a number of factors for this change in licensing. Chiefly is the combination of family shortage of discretionary spending in a poorly performing economy and Connecticut’s toughened laws making the allure of having a driver’s license for some less inviting. He said that those families whose teen needs a license will find a way to afford the costs associated with driver training and providing a vehicle. Yet, clearly an increasing number don’t see the need and some teens are opting out of getting one when they immediately can qualify.

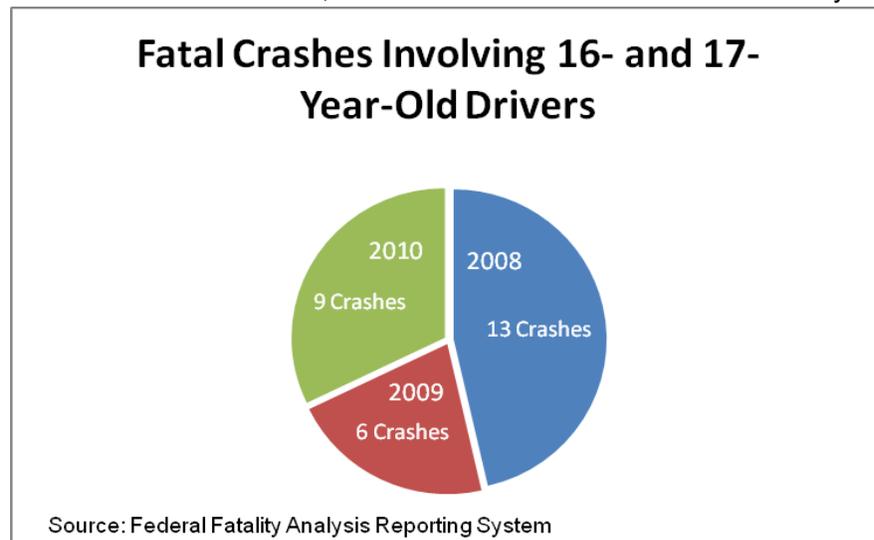
Driving, he said, is losing some of its social status position as a “right of passage” or signal of independence. Teens are finding different measures to gauge that stage in life. Other advocates offered that parents also have chauffeured teens more than those in past generations and the perceived need for a vehicle is not as strong by the teen. In addition, more colleges restrict the use of cars on campus during a first and second year and this plays a part in delayed licensure.

The New York Times pointed to this decline nationally in 2008 when it reported that the proportion of 16-year-olds nationwide who hold driver’s licenses has dropped from nearly half to less than one-third, according to statistics from the Federal Highway Administration. “Reasons vary, including tighter state laws governing when teenagers can drive, higher insurance costs and a shift from school-run driver education to expensive private driving academies. To that mix, experts also add parents who are willing to chauffeur their children to activities, and pastimes like surfing the Web that keep them indoors and glued to computers,” the paper’s report stated.

Dr. Preusser pointed out that parents today are becoming more concerned than previous generations of parents about the dangers of teen driving and the risks the come with it for everyone.

Crash information

The latest federal statistics for 2009 and 2010 show an increase from six to nine in the number of fatal crashes in which a 16 or 17-year-old driver was involved regardless of fault. These do not separate only those teens determined to be a contributing factor to the crash. For all drivers involved in fatal crashes, Connecticut in 2010 alone saw a nearly 40 percent increase over the



2009 period. Across all driver ages, Connecticut in 2010 saw an increase of 16 percent versus the 2007-2009 overall average. Safety advocates point out that an increase for teens would not be unusual given the statewide figures for all drivers.

To see the numbers of crashes that could involve judgment and other driving-related factors in a teen, the state

Department of Transportation records for 2009 are the most recent available. In those records the number of overall crashes in which the driver in this age group has been considered “at fault” or a “contributing factor” to the crash has been falling steadily from 2007 through 2009.

The total numbers for those crashes involving 16 and 17-year-old drivers have dropped since 2007:

- 5,640 in 2007
- 4,704 in 2008
- 4,502 in 2009

Safety advocates point out that the numbers are reducing in part because fewer teens are obtaining licenses, but they maintain as well that the increased safety awareness by both parents and teens are also contributing to greater safety behind the wheel.

Below are selected tables from the state DOT’s Connecticut Accident Summary tables for January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009, for crashes involving 16- and 17-year-old drivers of vehicles requiring a state license and in which the teen driver was determined to be a contributing factor to the crash.

Table 1 - Accident Severity *

Severity	Number of Accidents	%
Fatal Accident	6	0.15
A-Injury Accident	32	0.79
B-Injury Accident	270	6.68
C-Injury Accident	289	7.13
Property Damage Only	3455	85.27
TOTAL	4052	100.00%

* Based on the most severe injury sustained in the accident

Table 2 - Injuries per Accident

Injuries per Accident	Number of Accidents	%
1	444	74.75
2	109	18.35
3	27	4.55
4	11	1.85
5	2	0.34
8	1	0.17
TOTAL	594	100.00%

Total # of Injuries = 805
 Injuries/Accident = 805/4052=0.20

Table 3 - Fatalities per Accident

Fatalities per Accident	Number of Accidents	%
1	5	83.33
2	1	16.67
TOTAL	6	100.00%

Total # of Fatalities = 7
 Fatalities/Accident = 7/4052=0.0017

Table 4 - Route Class

Route Class	Number of Accidents	%
Local	1738	42.89
State Route	1609	39.71
US Route	433	10.69
Interstate	272	6.71
TOTAL	4052	100.00%

Table 7 - Month of Occurrence

Month	Number of Accidents	%
January	463	11.43
February	332	8.19
March	294	7.26
April	304	7.50
May	377	9.30
June	399	9.85
July	308	7.60
August	301	7.43
September	263	6.49
October	378	9.33
November	303	7.48
December	330	8.14
TOTAL	4052	100.00%

Table 5 - At or Between Intersections

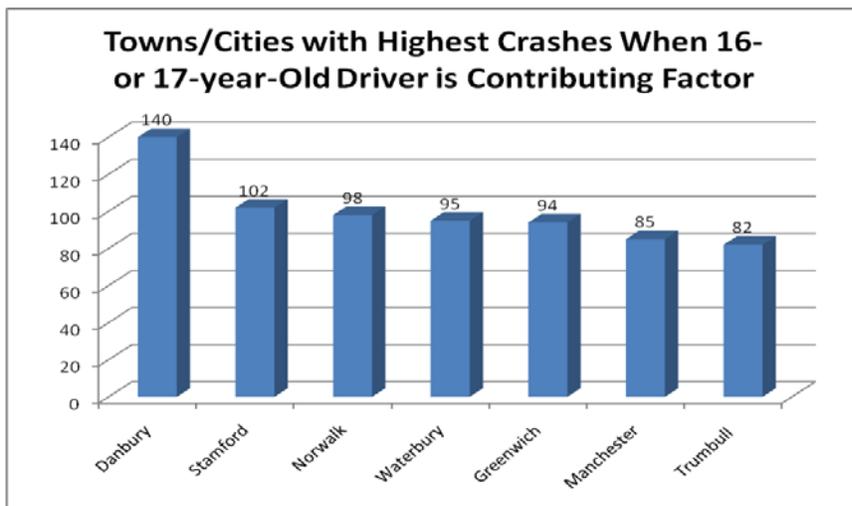
At or Between Intersections	Number of Accidents	%
Between Intersections	2199	54.27
At Intersection	1853	45.73
TOTAL	4052	100.00%

Table 6 - Accident Occurred On

Accident Occurred On	Number of Accidents	%
Main Roadway	3965	97.85
On-Ramp	42	1.04
Off-Ramp	37	0.91
Connector	7	0.17
Service or Rest Area	1	0.02
HOV Lane	0	0.00
Weigh Station	0	0.00
Collector Distributor Roadway	0	0.00
TOTAL	4052	100.00%

Table 8 - Day of the Week

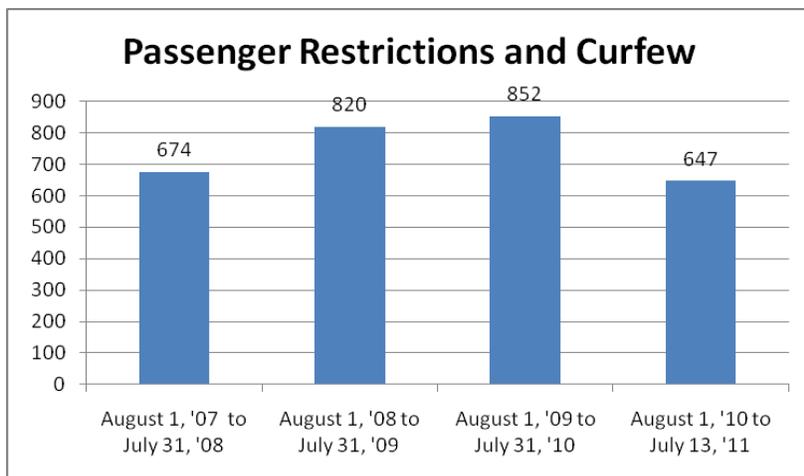
Day	Number of Accidents	%
Sunday	433	10.69
Monday	493	12.17
Tuesday	554	13.67
Wednesday	582	14.36
Thursday	647	15.97
Friday	762	18.81
Saturday	581	14.34
TOTAL	4052	100.00%



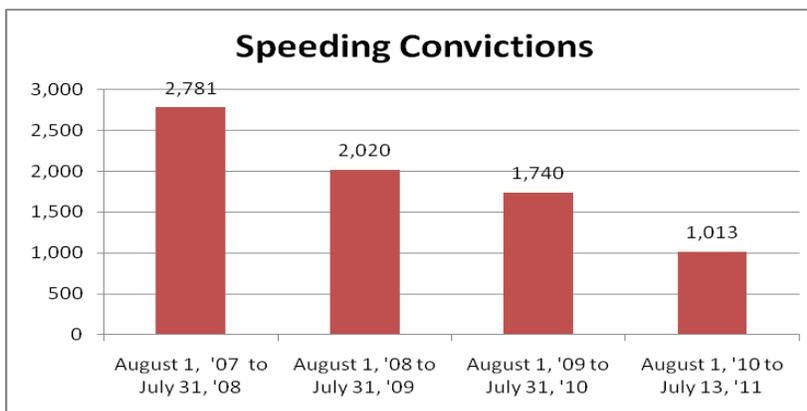
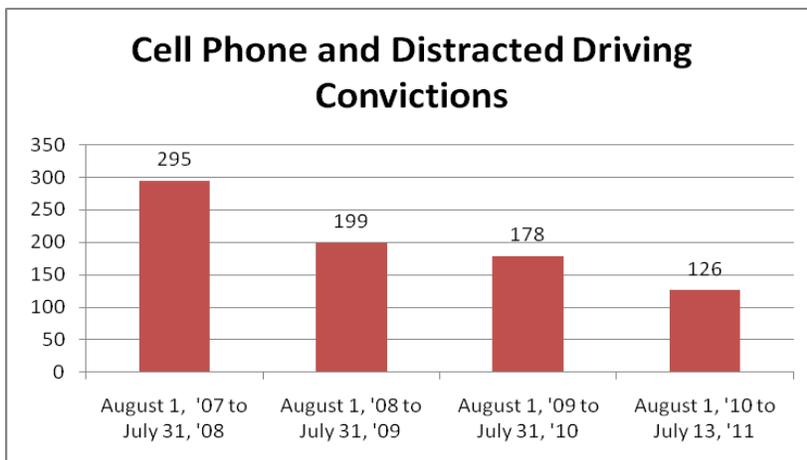
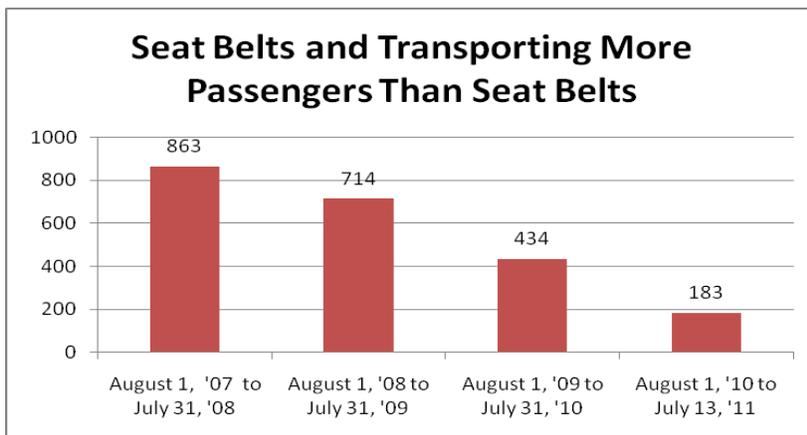
Danbury, which has reported the highest crash rate for this segment of drivers for several years, has recently begun to take aggressive action. Police officials there this fall will begin offering safety information to teens seeking licenses and their parents. Other police departments in the state as well as high schools have started similar kinds of education programs either as special seminars or part of classroom curriculum

Conviction information

Most convictions on DMV records for the new teen driving laws continue to fall except the for the passenger restriction and curfew laws.

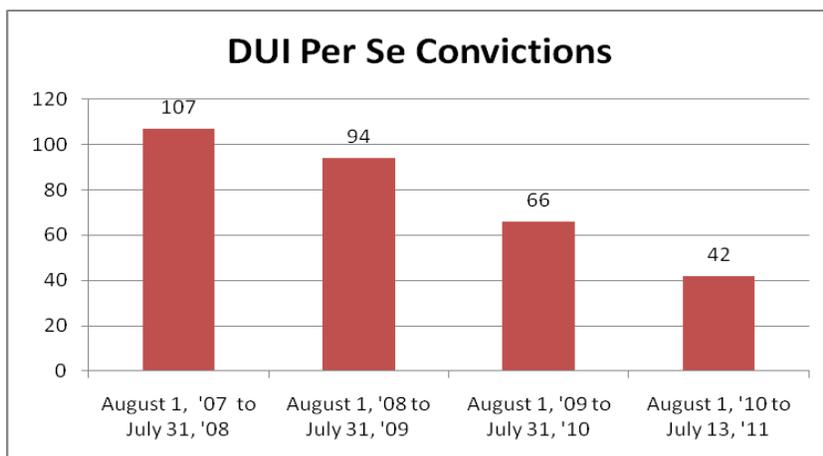


Last year's adjusted numbers that come as courts closeout cases showed an increased in convictions for passenger restrictions and curfew violations when compared to the first year of the new teen driving laws. While this year's numbers are lower, they are nearly the same as reported last year. If the same increase follows, then that number could rise to about the same 850 range. However, in all other areas of the laws, the adjusted numbers continue to indicate a downward trend in convictions.



“By many measures, especially convictions for offenses related to teen driving laws, we are seeing the help of police in both enforcing the law and in spreading the word about safety to our most inexperienced drivers.”

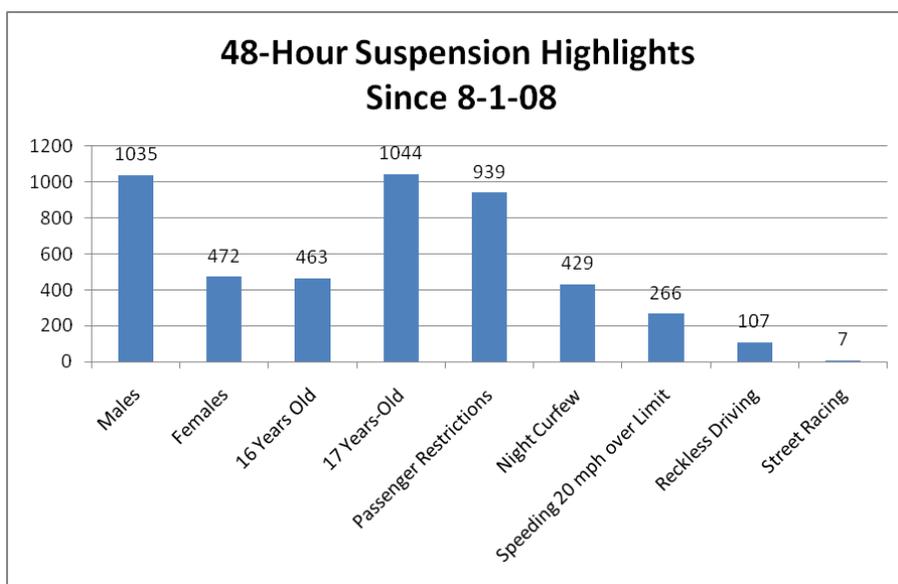
— Dr. Brendan T. Campbell,
Connecticut Children’s Medical Center



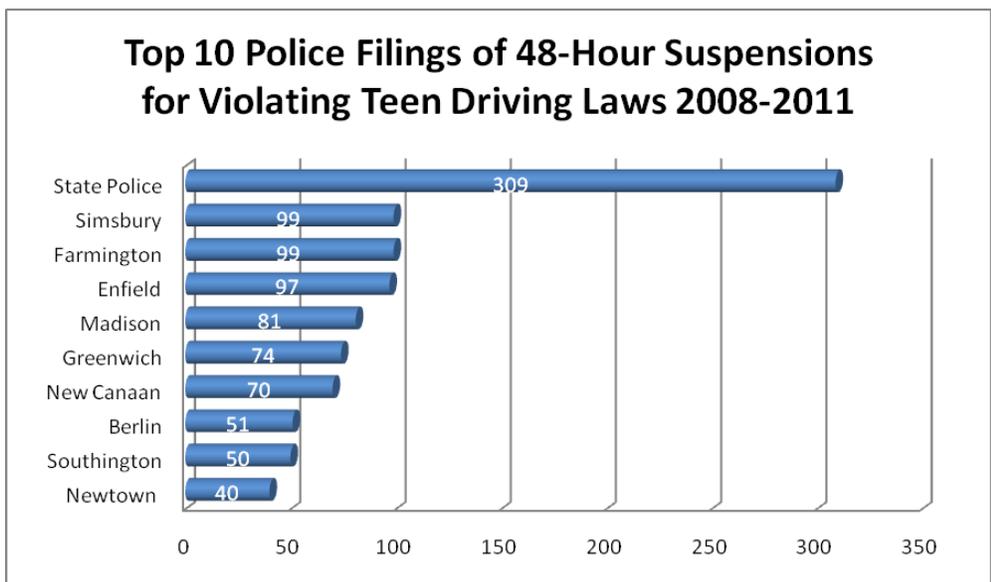
DUI Per Se Convictions dropped 38% by the second year of the new laws.

48-Hour Suspension Information

In 2008 when the Connecticut General Assembly passed the laws to help teens become better drivers, it included a first-in-the-nation provision for police to give a 48-hour suspension of a teen driver's license for certain violations, such as passenger restrictions, curfew, speeding, reckless driving and driving under the influence. Nearly 1,500 such suspensions have occurred since August 1, 2008. The rationale behind the law centered on making both teens



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and parents aware that a violation had occurred. Teens whose licenses were seized by police for 48 hours would get them back by appearing personally at the police station with a parent who would sign for it. By the second year of the laws, there was a 32-percent increase

in the number of 48-hour suspensions filed with the DMV. However, this last year shows a four-percent reduction – 532 filed in total for last year compared to 556 the previous year. It is not a law evenly applied with every violation issued. DMV records show that 647 convictions were entered for last year on passenger restrictions and curfew violations alone, an offense that could bring a 48-hour suspension. However, police departments are becoming more aware of the law as a tool for education. The DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving, in conjunction with the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association would like to take the opportunity on this third anniversary of the tougher teen driving laws in Connecticut to thank police officers across the state for their work. They help to make teens safer by identifying those who are in violation and take the necessary steps to ensure that our laws are properly and fairly enforced and everyone understands the consequences of violating those laws.

Public Awareness Activities Information

DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving

DMV Teens Safe Driving Contest

The Department of Motor Vehicles' Center for Teen Safe Driving (ct.gov/teendriving), in conjunction with its corporate prize sponsor Travelers, has for the last three years offered to high school students statewide, or students of high school age who are home educated, a contest for creating award-winning teen safe-driving video public service announcements. It is called *"From the Driver's Seat to the Director's Chair."* Winning students in three categories share \$9,000 in cash prizes, provided by Travelers, to their high schools. Students also received an evening of recognition and celebration in a gala affair also sponsored by Travelers. The three-year statistics and growth of the contest show an overwhelming success. The number of videos entered this year increased by 100 percent - to 164 from around the state -- and the 571 students involved nearly doubled from the previous year. That number increases to 1,063 students for the entire three years the contest has run. Added to that is the DMV Center for

Teen Safe Driving YouTube channel recording 43,000 upload views of contest videos in the last two years (youtube.com/teensafedriving12) . The contest's Facebook page (tinyurl.com/facebookdmvteens) shows more than 18,000 page views for the same period.

In addition, more categories of recognition were added for students and teachers:

- The St. Francis Care Award to Schools and Teachers for Most Consecutive Yearly Rankings in Top 10 Prize (\$1,000 in total) - \$500 to each teacher for use in providing a teen-safe driving program
- The Travelers Challenge Prize - most views of a Top 10 Contest entry posted on DMV Teen Safe Driving Center YouTube site - \$1,000 to the school to use in providing a teen-safe driving program
- IIMPACT and The Connecticut Children's Award to School with the Most Entries in Contest Prize - \$500 to the school to use in providing a teen-safe driving program
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Recognition Award to Principals - Certificates
- The University of Hartford School of Communication Award to All Top 10 Student Directors and High Schools for Ranking Top 10 for Video Communication Excellence

This social responsibility project was suggested in 2008 by teens on DMV's teen advisory panel. It told DMV officials that "teens talking to teens" could have strong credibility. Teens like hearing from other teens and they want a message that relates directly to their lives. They said teens don't want a message with adults telling them what to do. They also said that teens should be featured in any commercials, advertisements, school assemblies or other presentations.

From this overall sentiment, DMV created this contest for teens to design and produce a short and crisp 25-second video public service announcement. Teenagers would be its target audience as well as the main actors, directors and producers of the videos. The contest's promotion of teen safe driving messages featuring teens talking to teens involves more than just teens learning about safety by creating and producing their videos. The contest also promotes the messages through the work of teens in their schools, the display of the videos on DMV and associated safety partners' websites and social networking sites and the use of the videos on state and national public awareness projects, such as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's pilot demonstration project in Connecticut on distracted driving.

This continuing success builds on growth each year of participating students, schools, teachers and parents. Collective work among these many people breeds a deeper understanding of Connecticut's teen driving laws as well as safe driving practices. That is the ultimate goal: Understanding the laws and safety measures with a hope that teens will follow them to reduce crashes, injuries and deaths. By reaching large numbers of teens and parents through the video contest, DMV believes it is educating them and developing public awareness about teen safe driving in meaningful ways.

Funding for Center for Teen Safe Driving

The DMV Center for Teen Safe Driving was created in 2008 as part of a major initiative to address reform of teen driving laws. It will soon start an aggressive outreach for funding continued activities. The Center's work focuses on effects of laws and legislation, increasing public awareness and establishing public-private partnerships to research and address myriad issues connected to teen behavior behind the wheel. DMV continues to work with a variety of statewide partners to coordinate, to support, to sponsor and to create activities of all kinds in communities across the state. Key program elements are local coalition development, peer-driven efforts, parent mobilization, health care community engagement and graduated driver license law enforcement. By mobilizing across a wide spectrum of individuals and organizations, and promoting peer, parent, healthcare, and enforcement activities, the Center aims to change the culture of teen driving and take the initiative to help prevent the public health problem. By evaluating the impact of programs, laws and awareness, the Center looks to establish model programs that other communities can replicate.

Funding for its activities has been scarce due to extreme limitations in the state budget and limited opportunities to seek funds. However, its video contest has shown the potential for success, as well as its partnerships with other organizations, when funding is supplied. Previous contributions have come from Travelers, Allstate, State Farm insurance companies and federal funds through the Governor's Highway Safety Office at the state Department of Transportation.

Selected Safety Advocates in Their Own Words

Chief Douglas S. Fuchs, Redding Police Department President, Connecticut Police Chiefs Association

Since its inception here in Connecticut nearly three years ago, Police Chiefs across the state have been avid supporters of the graduated license requirements for teens as well as strict consequences for actions which violate those regulations. That being said, all of us would much rather educate parents and teens about these laws and inherent dangers than take enforcement action against violators or make that knock on the door at 3 o'clock in the morning.

To that end, in August of 2008 the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association in conjunction with Channel 3 and DMV launched a PSA campaign to educate residents of the then, "new" law and what it meant for new drivers. This campaign was bolstered by two subsequent videos: one to educate police officers in Connecticut regarding the proper enforcement of these provisions and one to educate parents and teenagers.

In 2010 we again teamed up with Channel 3 and The Hartford insurance company to launch the "I Promise" campaign aimed at educating motorists, especially new drivers, of the dangers associated with distracted driving. In an effort to capture the teen audience, celebrities whom are attractive to that age group were utilized to convey the message.

In 2011 DMV and the CPCA will explore ways to bring more information about teen driving to officers throughout the state.

Law Enforcement spends a great deal of time educating parents and teens in our schools as well as targeting the risky or dangerous behaviors in an effort to reduce senseless injuries and fatalities which are associated with speeding, reckless driving, driving while under the influence and “curfew” violations. We know when our youth is most likely to fall victim to these behaviors: on a Thursday or Friday, sometime during the late evening or early morning hours and either when on break (January) or immediately following the end of a school year (June). It should also be noted that where we have seen the highest levels of teen crashes, for which a 16 or 17 year old was the contributing factor, are in cities which are “shopping destinations” that have large malls or other gathering places for our kids.

We will continue to work very closely with the Department of Transportation Highway Safety Office to secure grants which will allow us to put out extra patrols during those “dangerous” times as high visibility is one of our best deterrents for those who are not swayed by education.

Sherry Chapman, President, Mourning Parents Act, Inc.

Mourning Parents Act, Inc., also known as !MPACT, is a non-profit organization of volunteers whose mission is to eliminate tragedies caused by inexperienced drivers through awareness, education and legislation. All of !MPACT’s programs are offered to the public free of charge. !MPACT is made up of a broad coalition of family members and friends who have lost loved ones in crashes involving teen drivers. In the last year, !MPACT’s membership has grown to include young victim survivors and surviving drivers of crashes which resulted in teen deaths.

During this reporting period, !MPACT expanded its awareness and education programs. It presented its teen driving safety program in 37 separate forums, primarily high schools, reaching approximately 17,500 teens and parents. In addition, !MPACT partnered with a CT University radio station to develop and air a public safety message regarding distracted driving that is still getting play time. !MPACT has also been active in the past year in the policy making arena, promoting legislation at the federal level that will serve to protect teens throughout the United States, and by testifying at the state level against changes to Connecticut’s very robust GDL program.

Joseph T. Cristalli, Safety Program Coordinator, Governor’s Highway Safety Office at State Department of Transportation

The Highway Safety Office continues to raise awareness regarding teen driver safety through community outreach efforts and working with our partners. The Highway Safety Office hosted a parent session at the United Way Youth Board Teens in the Driver Seat forum. Emphasis was placed on the safety benefit to teens of practicing driving with a parent in the car; increase parent’s awareness of the highest risks for teen drivers; redirect parental monitoring to high risk behaviors and why it’s so important that teens and parents not only understand but follow the graduated driver licensing laws. We participated in Seymour High School’s “Take a Stand” safety event, Hartford Job Corps Academy safety event, Middletown Safety day and University of Hartford Community Day

The Highway Safety Office partners with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) in support of “Power Camp” for youths from the ages of 12 and up with the skills and knowledge to initiate change in the reduction of alcohol and drug use. It also is a forum to educate the students

regarding the detrimental effects of what under aged drinking and substance abuse can have in their schools and communities.

The Highway Safety Office provides grant opportunities for our law enforcement partners to conduct compliance checks on retail outlets, crackdown on false identification, reducing the number of adults buying for youths, party patrols, and under-cover surveillance operations. Media is utilized to raise public awareness and concerns about the harmful effects of under aged drinking on adolescents, families, and the community. Public awareness continues to be strengthened through public outreach events. Additional funding is provided annually for DUI enforcement at the University of Connecticut, during Spring Weekend, where there have historically been instances of underage drinking.

Timothy Hollister, bereaved parent, former Task Force Member, blogger on teen driving issues

I have been active in the past year on several fronts. The first is my blog, From Reid's Dad, which continues to focus on advising parents on how they can supervise their teen BEFORE they get behind the wheel, as opposed to helping them learn to handle a vehicle per se. Second, I have published editorial pieces focused on distracted driving, making the point that Connecticut's distracted driving laws, like those of most states, have loopholes, such as not covering the coming wave of in-vehicle technology: interactive, dashboard-mounted screens that sync with smart phones and provide Internet access while the vehicle is in motion. Third, I have been working on a proposal that will be rolled out shortly on finding one or more high schools to volunteer to dedicate a portion of their website to letting parents and teens know which students in the school have had their driver's licenses long enough to carry passengers legally. Parents and teens have no way of knowing who in Connecticut has had his or her license for at least a year and thus is authorized to carry passengers.

We are seeking a volunteer school to try this for several months and then evaluate it. Finally, in May 2011, I participated in the day-long event in Washington DC, the launch of the Decade of Action, aimed at reducing worldwide traffic fatalities from 13 million to 8 million during the next ten years. I was introduced by former Secretary of Transportation Norman Moneta to a crowd of about 200 traffic safety advocates.

Pina Violano, Yale-New Haven Hospital's Trauma Department and Injury Prevention Program

Texting has become so commonplace that it is rapidly becoming a primary mode of communication. This reality is even truer among teenagers, who enjoy keeping in touch with friends and family through texting throughout the day. Sadly, many teenagers do not recognize texting as a potentially dangerous activity while driving. In fact, nearly half of teens report being a passenger in a car when the driver was texting. Use of cell phones while driving, including texting, contributes to twenty-eight percent of motor vehicle accidents involving teens. txt u l8r...bout 2 drive is a program developed by myself as Injury Prevention Coordinator , Adult and Pediatric Trauma Programs, Yale-New Haven Hospital, in conjunction with Allstate, and members of the Junior Board of the Friends of the Children Hospital to educate Connecticut high school students on the dangers of texting and driving, reinforcing the message that texting can wait if you are about to drive.

Encouraging students to text, ‘txt u l8r... bout 2 drive” before driving a car is a step toward safer teen driving. Licensed teen drivers are encouraged to sign a contract stating that they will turn off their phone while driving their car. Non-licensed teens are also able to sign a contract affirming that they will discourage cell phone use as a car passenger. Teens are given fact sheets, lanyards, bracelets, and thumb rings with the “txt u l8r” message to be a fun and constant reminder to drive safely. To date nine Connecticut high schools have participated in the txt u l8r campaign reaching over 9,000 teens with the txt u l8r.. bout 2 drive message. They include: Staples High School, Weston High School, Wilbur Cross High School, Amity Regional High School, Hamden Hall, Hand High School, Hopkins School, Naugatuck High School and Sacred Heart Academy

Garry Lapidus PA, Brendan Campbell, MD, and Kevin Borrup, JD, Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, Injury Prevention Center and Connecticut Teen Driving Safety Partnership

The Injury Prevention Center (IPC) at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center works to prevent injuries resulting from motor vehicle related crashes involving teens through research, education, and public policy work. The IPC leads the Connecticut Teen Driving Safety Partnership, a statewide coalition of non-profits, government agencies, and individuals that is a forum for cooperation on safe teen driving issues.

This year in cooperation with The Allstate Foundation, the IPC opened the Teen Driving Simulator Center in Rocky Hill. The simulator center is a place where teens can practice driving in a situation of no risk. The simulator holds twelve skills based driving lessons. Over 400 teens made use of the simulators last year. When the center closes in July of 2011, the simulators will be made available to schools and agencies across the state for placement through the IPC’s Driving Simulator Loaner Program.

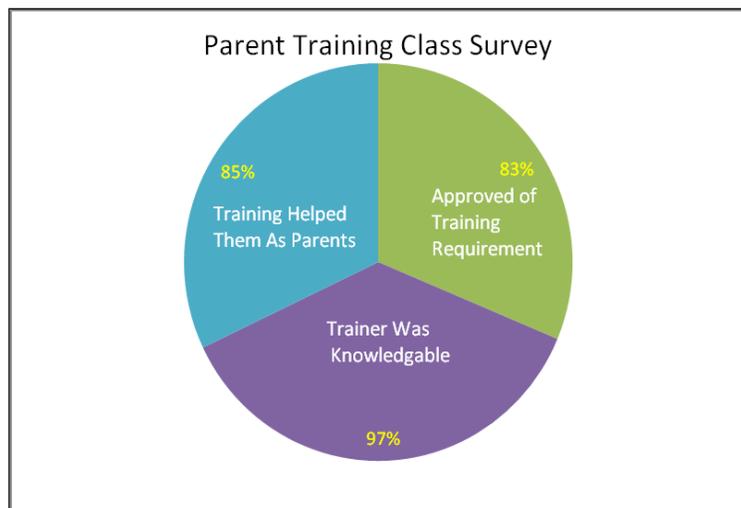
Through the Education Practices in the Community (EPIC) program of the Child Health and Development Institute, IPC staff visited physician practices throughout the state to encourage doctors and nurses to provide counseling on teen driving issues to teens and their parents. As part of this effort the IPC disseminated a revised version of its summary of the law for teen drivers in Connecticut and parent-teen driving contract.

The IPC teamed up with the Kohl’s Cares for Kids program in designing a Cell Phone Pledge application for the iPhone. This application creates a contract for tweens and teens on responsible cell phone behaviors and can be a tool for parents in emphasizing that teen drivers not use any electronic device while driving (www.kohlstweensafe.org).

Parent-Teen Training Requirement Information

As stated previously in other reports, coupled with restrictions and increased penalties for violations, were new training requirements. These also are seen as helping bring down crash and conviction numbers. Connecticut became the first state in the nation to require a mandatory two-hour joint safe-driving education program that a parent or guardian must attend with the young driver in training. DMV, with funding from the state Department of Transportation, in 2009 surveyed parents to gauge the program’s effectiveness after a year of operation.

The results released in January 2010 showed that parents said it was overwhelmingly beneficial and has led them to adopt new safety measures with their young drivers. In the survey, 85 percent of parents reported that the training gave them more information to use in their parenting responsibilities with a teen driver. A large majority also said they would recommend these classes to parents of other teen drivers.

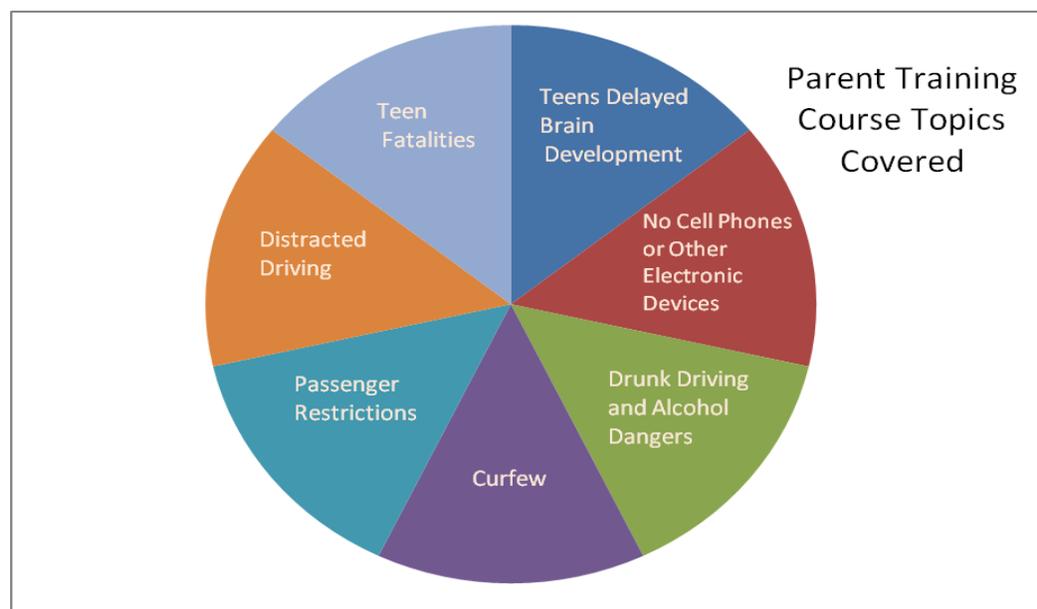


Almost half the parents also said that because of the training they were doing things with their young drivers they would not have done otherwise, such as enforcing the laws, reminding young drivers about the laws and dedicating more quality time for instruction. Almost all parents were satisfied that all relevant topics were covered during the course. The full report can be found at:

<http://www.ct.gov/dmv/parentsession>

All new drivers in Connecticut are required to take an eight-hour safe driving practices course, which

includes the parent-teen segment, at a driving school. The Department of Motor Vehicles provides driving schools with a general list of topics that must be covered in both the eight and its special two-hour parent-teen session.



New training standards also brought a tougher test that 16- or 17-year-old applicants must take both before obtaining a learner's permit and as part of the final licensing exam. The test has 25 questions

and applicants must get at least 20 questions correct. In July 2011 DMV eliminated a second 25-question test. The actual measure of learning about driving comes through the required

road-skills test before a license is issued. In addition, students were achieving high pass rates on the second test and department officials decided that the road-skills test was a better gauge of the knowledge a teen possessed and could demonstrate in a real situation. Permit holders must also now have at least 40 hours of behind-the-wheel training. The new battery of questions and bumped-up on-the-road training replaced a less rigorous approach.

Appendix

Chart and Table References

16 Year-olds Obtaining Driver Licenses pg. 4 and 5

17 Year-olds Obtaining Driver Licenses pg. 4 and 5

Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles
Licensing Data Information

Fatal Crashes Involving 16- and 17-Year-Old Drivers pg. 6

Federal Fatality Analysis Reporting System/
Connecticut Department of Transportation/Connecticut Data

Crashes of 16- and 17-Year-Old Drivers At Fault pg. 7

Connecticut Accident Summary Table/Motor Vehicle Accident Data
Connecticut Department of Transportation

Passenger Restrictions and Curfew Violations pg. 8

Speeding Convictions pg. 9

Cell Phone and Distracted pg. 9

Driving Convictions pg. 9

Seat Belts and Transporting More Passengers Than Belts Convictions pg. 9

DUI Per Se Convictions pg. 10

Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles Driver Records of Convictions Transmitted by
Judicial Department

Top 10 Police Departments for Filing 48-Hour Suspensions pg. 10

Parent Training Class Survey pg. 17

2009 Survey By Preusser Research Group, Inc. of Parents Who Attended Required Two-Hour
Course for Licensing of a 16- or 17-Year-Old Driver

Parent Training Course Topics Covered pg. 17

Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicle Curriculum for Driving Schools