

AAA: 'A Deadly Mix'

Study Shows Teens Driving with Teens a Dangerous Combo

IRVING -- Risky behaviors among 16- and 17-year-old drivers involved in fatal crashes increased when teen passengers were present according to a study conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. With motor vehicle crashes ranking as the leading cause of death for teens, AAA Texas is calling for greater parental involvement and increased awareness of Texas' graduated driver's licensing program to promote road safety.

The new research, released as part of Teen Driver Safety Week (Oct. 14-20), shows that the prevalence of risky behaviors generally grew for 16- and 17-year-old drivers as the number of teen passengers increased. Among 16- and 17-year-old drivers involved in fatal crashes:

The prevalence of speeding increased from 30 percent to 44 percent and 48 percent with zero, two and three or more teen passengers, respectively.

The prevalence of late-night driving (11 p.m. to 5 a.m.) increased from 17 percent to 22 percent and 28 percent with zero, two and three or more teen passengers, respectively.

The prevalence of alcohol use increased from 13 percent to 17 percent and 18 percent with zero, two and three or more teen passengers, respectively.

"Mixing young drivers with teen passengers can have dangerous consequences," said AAA Texas VP Branch Operations, Rhonda Wilson. "AAA urges parents to set and consistently enforce family rules that limit newly licensed teens from driving with young passengers."

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety analyzed data on fatal crashes that occurred in the United States from 2005 through 2010. The report documents the prevalence of passengers ages 13-19 in fatal crashes involving drivers age 16 and 17, and examines the characteristics of those crashes according to age, sex and number of teen passengers present. Researchers found that 9,578 drivers age 16 and 17 were involved in fatal crashes, and that 3,994 of these included at least one teen passenger.

"Teen crashes remain a huge problem nationwide," said AAA Foundation President and CEO Peter Kissinger. "Our past research clearly shows how young passengers substantially increase a novice driver's risk of being in a fatal crash, and these new findings underscore the need to refocus our efforts, to address the problem, from state legislatures to parents."

AAA Texas supported Texas' Graduated Driver License (GDL) Program which began January 1,

2002, and created two phases of driving requirements for minors.

Phase One
If you are under 18 years of age, you must:

- Hold a learner or hardship license for a minimum of six months.
- Be accompanied by a person at least 21 years of age.
- Maintain a valid learner license. If a learner license is suspended or revoked, the remaining six-month period must be completed after the suspension has ended.

Phase One does not apply to motorcycle (Class M) or hardship license holders.

With the completion of phase one, reaching the age of 16, and the completion of the classroom and driving portions of driver education, a minor is eligible to obtain a provisional license and "graduates" to phase two.

Phase Two

Phase two restricts the driving privileges of provisional license holders, and motorcycle/moped license holders (under 17 years of age), during the twelve-month period following the issuance of the license. The following restrictions apply:

- May not operate a motor vehicle with more than one passenger in the vehicle under the age of 21 who is not a family member,

may have the restriction removed by applying for a duplicate license at a driver license office and paying the required fee.

"Graduated driver licensing programs have been shown to greatly reduce crashes, injuries and deaths for everyone on the road when they limit new teen drivers to no more than one passenger," continued Wilson. "Steps parents can take, such as setting and enforcing a parent-teen driving agreement, can build on state laws to improve safety by gradually easing teens into driving."

- May not operate a motor vehicle while using a wireless communication device, except in case of an emergency.
- The license restriction will indicate the date phase two expires.

Upon completion of phase two, the restrictions no longer apply. This restriction will be removed at the next renewal after the phase two date expires, or the licensee

of any other age group.

• Drivers aged 16 to 17 are involved in about seven times as many crashes per mile driven compared to drivers in their forties, fifties or sixties.

• Teenage drivers are over-represented in crashes that result in the death of other people, such as their passengers, pedestrians or occupants of other vehicles.

AAA has a wide range of tools available at TeenDriving.AAA.com to help parents simplify the learning-to-drive process including parent-teen driving agreements, online webinars, licensing information and free online information developed from a National Institutes of Health program.

BCM: Flu Vaccine Has Evolved to Cover New, Active Strains

HOUSTON -- This year's influenza vaccine has changed to cover new strains expected to be active this season, according to experts at Baylor College of Medicine (www.bcm.edu).

"The new strains in the vaccine are based on the strains that circulated in the Southern Hemisphere that are expected to be prevalent in the Northern Hemisphere this winter," said Dr. Flor Munoz, assistant professor of pediatrics -- infectious diseases at Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital (www.texaschildrens.com).

This year's flu vaccine covers the same 2009 H1N1 influenza A strain that continues to circulate since the pandemic, but will include a new H3N2 influenza A strain as well as a new B strain. It is important to receive this year's vaccine to be protected against the flu.

According to Munoz, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations indicate that everyone 6 months of age and older should get vaccinated against influenza. Influenza vaccines are available in the form of a shot given in the muscle and a nasal spray. Healthy persons between the ages of 2 and 49 years have the option of getting the nasal spray instead of the shot, but anyone with underlying health conditions needs to get the shot.

Because the vaccine is currently readily available and it takes about one to two weeks to have full protection against influenza, it's recommended that people get vaccinated now.

Children between 6 months and 8 years of age

who have never been vaccinated before must get two doses of the vaccine within one month of one another to be fully protected. Children in that age group who were not completely immunized in the past must also get two doses this year to be fully protected. Munoz recommends parents consult with their child's pediatrician to see how many doses their child needs.

For those who are hesitant about getting vaccinated, Munoz emphasizes that the influenza vaccine is safe. Symptoms such as body aches and malaise are common after receiving the flu vaccine, but the influenza vaccine does not cause the flu.

The vaccine has proven to be quite effective in preventing complications from the influenza virus. This is especially important for older adults and young children, who are more susceptible to severe complications if they get the flu, including hospitalization and death.

Although some people may still get the flu after being vaccinated, the illness may be milder than it would be if they were not vaccinated.

"Remember that getting vaccinated protects you and others around you, especially if you have a newborn infant or someone in your household who cannot be vaccinated. You will be protecting them by vaccinating everyone around them to prevent bringing the flu into the home," said Munoz.

This is also true for those with underlying conditions such as asthma and heart disease that cause them to be more susceptible to severe complications from influenza. They and others in their household should be vaccinated to prevent complications from influenza.

Presidential Expert to Speak in USW Lecture Series Next Week

HOBBES, N.M. -- Presidential historian, Michael Beschloss, will visit Hobbs as the Fall 2012 Jack Maddox Distinguished Lecture speaker on Nov. 12, 2012. The lecture will take place at Tydings Auditorium on the Hobbs High School campus at 7 p.m.

Michael Beschloss is an award-winning historian and the best-selling author of nine books. He

also co-authored, with Caroline Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy: Historic Conversations on Life with John F. Kennedy (2011).

Newsweek has called Beschloss "the nation's leading presidential historian." He serves as NBC News Presidential Historian—the first time any major network has created such a position—and appears regularly on Meet the Press, Today, and all NBC network programs, and is a regular commentator on PBS NewsHour.

In 2005, he won an Emmy for his role in creating the Discovery Channel series Decisions that Shook the World, of which

he was the host.

Beschloss was born in Chicago in 1955. An alumnus of Williams College, he also has an advanced degree from the Harvard Business School. He has been an historian on the staff of the Smithsonian Institution (1982-1986), a senior associate member at Oxford University in England (1986-1987) and a senior fellow of the Annenberg Foundation in Washington, D.C. (1988-1996).

Beschloss holds honorary doctorates from Williams College, St. Mary's College (Maryland) and Lafayette College. He has also received the State of Illinois's Order of Lincoln and the Harry S. Truman Public Service Award from Independence, Missouri.

He is a trustee of the White House Historical Association, the National Archives Foundation and the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs.

The Jack Maddox Distinguished Lecture Series is sponsored by the J. F. Maddox Foundation in honor of its founder, Jack Maddox. The purpose of the Series, which has been hosted by University of the Southwest since its inception,

is to contribute to the quality of life in Lea County and the surrounding area by providing nationally recognized speakers for intellectual stimulation and entertainment.

Past speakers include Peyton Manning, Laura Bush, Dr. Robert Ballard and Ben Stein.

Tickets for this event are FREE, but required to enter. Contact Laurie Dean at 575-492-2108 or at tickets@usw.edu to reserve your tickets via regular US mail.

You may also pick up tickets from an area ticket location beginning September 10, 2012.

Ticket distribution locations are: Chambers of Commerce in Artesia, Carlsbad, Hobbs, Lovington, Denver City (Texas) and Seminole (Texas); Western Commerce Bank in Carlsbad and Hobbs; Woolworth Library in Jal; Tatum Schools Administration Office; and University of the Southwest Administration Office, Lea County State Bank, Hobbs Public Library, First American Bank, Hobbs Municipal Schools Administration Office, Center for the Arts, and the President's Office of New Mexico Junior College, all in Hobbs.



Beschloss

Gaines County Sporting Events

November 8

JV Indian Football vs. Andrews @ Andrews, 6:30 p.m.

Freshmen Indian Football vs. Andrews @ Andrews

5:00 p.m.

JV Maiden Basketball vs. Tahoka @ Tahoka, 5:00 p.m.

Varsity Maiden Basketball vs. Tahoka @ Tahoka

6:30 p.m.

November 9

Varsity Indian Football vs. Andrews @ Seminole

7:30 p.m.

SHS Aqua Tribe @ Pecos High School

November 10

State Cross Country Meet @ Round Rock

SHS Aqua Tribe @ Pecos High School

JV Maiden Basketball vs. Plains @ Seminole, 5:00 p.m.

Varsity Maiden Basketball vs. Plains @ Seminole

6:30 p.m.

Varsity Indian Basketball vs. Odessa Permian (scimmage)

@ Odessa

November 13

Freshmen Maiden Basketball vs. Snyder @ Seminole

5:00 p.m.

JV Maiden Basketball vs. Snyder @

Seminole, 5:00 p.m.

Varsity Maiden Basketball vs. Snyder @

Seminole, 6:30 p.m.

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