



Teens in the Driver Seat®

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Contest promises cash prizes for best safety messages

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Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS) is sending out a call for the best peer-to-peer safety messages in Texas. Winners will see their work showcased nationwide, and they'll pocket a big check, too. Entries can be submitted either by individual teens or by schools or class groups.

Entries will be accepted in three categories:

1. video (both public service announcements [PSAs] and testimonials)
2. posters
3. overall TDS program documentation

Entrants should submit their video work on DVD. Poster entries will be accepted either on paper or in a PDF file by email to the webmaster at t-driver.com. TDS program entries should be submitted in a three-ring binder, and should include ample details of the plans, goals, activities and results of the program.

Entrants can exercise a lot of freedom in their work. The only requirement is that the video message, poster or TDS school



program must address the issue of safe driving by focusing on one or more of the five main driving dangers for young people:

1. driving at night
2. distractions (cell phones/texting and other teen passengers)
3. speeding
4. low seat belt use
5. alcohol

The entries must be the original work of the entrant, and they cannot contain any copyrighted or trademarked material. Entries will be judged upon — and cash awards will be based upon — originality, creativity and how closely the work follows the safety messages that are central to the TDS program.

Up to three awards will be given in each of the three categories:

1. **\$1,000** for first place
2. **\$500** for second place
3. **\$250** for third place

The cash awards are being provided by State Farm Insurance of Texas. Judges will select a group of finalists in each category and then post those entries on t-driver.com. Website visitors will have a chance to vote on the entries, and the judging panel will then select the award winners, based in part on the comments received online. Once prizes are awarded, the best entries will become part of future safety promotion efforts by TDS, and possibly a new television advertising campaign.

"TDS is all about peer-to-peer communication, and this contest will help us recognize and reward the best examples of that," said TDS Director Russell Henk. "We're thrilled that entries were rolling in even before the contest plans were finalized."

Entries must be postmarked by May 1, 2008. For more details and contest instructions, go to t-driver.com.

t-driver.com getting new look, new features

With traffic on the TDS website up more than 300 percent in the past year—recently averaging more than 5,000 visits per month—the TDS team is working to keep pace with growing interest and demand. The site will soon have a new look and new features, reflecting the feedback we have received from a large number of site users. Visitors to the site will continue to find powerful testimonials, downloadable program materials and all the other elements as before, but soon the site will be more interactive, more colorful and easier to navigate. The new site will launch later in March, and the team invites comments to the webmaster at t-driver.com.



Texas Association of Student Councils

Members of the Texas Association of Student Councils can now choose TDS as one of their high school's endorsed programs.

TASC endorses TDS

The wait is over! In January, Russell Henk received a letter from Texas Association of Student Councils (TASC) Director, J.J. Colburn, welcoming TDS to a prestigious list of student programs recognized by the TASC. It took three years, but our persistence has paid off.

The TASC, organized in 1937, is a nonprofit organization serving high school and middle school

student councils in Texas. The association is composed of roughly 1,300 schools in Texas and is governed by the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP). The goal of the TASC is to develop leadership skills and abilities in students, promote democracy as a way of life, and establish and uphold high standards for their local councils. TDS is a program whose goals parallel those of the TASC.

This year the TASC will host its annual conference in Arlington, Texas, April 17-19. Attendees will have a chance to learn more about TDS in the exhibitors arena. Be sure to visit us, and bring your friends!

Learn more about TASC at: www.tasconline.org.

FCCLA and TDS promote traffic safety

The Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) of Texas held their annual regional cluster meetings in February. Students and advisors who attended the regional meetings learned about new service learning opportunities in their region.

FCCLA is a nonprofit national career and technology student organization for both boys and girls in middle and high school. Their goal is to promote leadership in personal, family, work and societal issues through family and consumer sciences.

Regional coordinators for Teens in the Driver Seat presented the driving safety program to attendees. There is a strong link between our TDS program and an FCCLA program that they call FACTS, "Families Acting for Community Traffic Safety."

For any FCCLA member who missed out on the regional meetings, the Texas State FCCLA Conference will be held April 3-5 in Galveston. Attendees will have a chance to learn more about the TDS program.



TDS sends out special thanks to Sharon Pierce for her support in helping establish the new partnership between TDS and FCCLA.

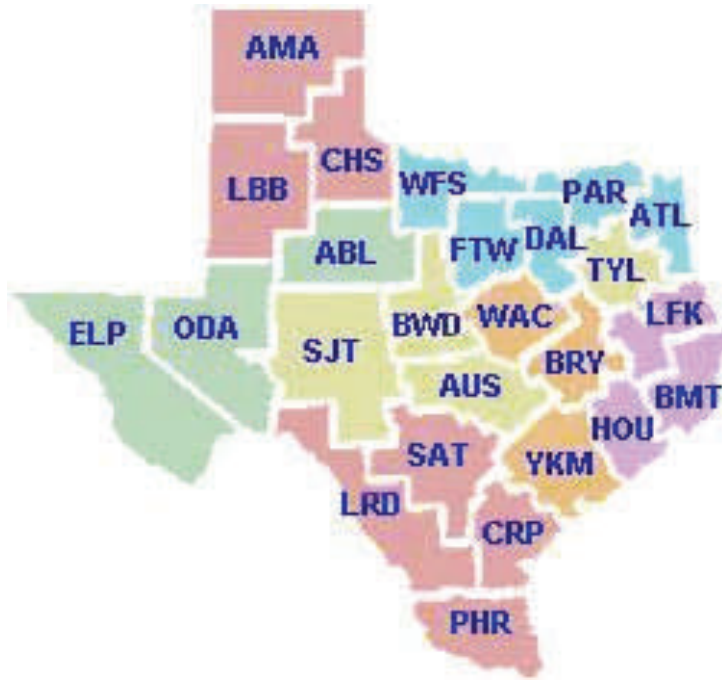
Learn more about Texas FCCLA at: www.texasfccla.org.

Did you know?

Spring break is one of the most dangerous time periods for teenage drivers.

Please, be aware of the main driving dangers during this vacation time!

2007-2008
TDS
Regional Contacts



Teens in the Driver Seat is the nation's first peer-to-peer driving safety program. TDS promotes peer education on the top five risks

associated with teen driving.

To learn more about TDS, visit t-driver.com

San Antonio - South Central & Panhandle - San Antonio (SAT), Laredo (LRD), Pharr (PHR), Corpus Christi (CRP), Amarillo (AMA), Lubbock (LBB) & Childress (CHS)

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Does your TDS group need assistance, have an update or know teens who want to start their own TDS group? Find your location on the map and contact your regional coordinator. Your coordinator is available via phone or email. For out-of-Texas contacts, please contact Russell Henk or Bernie Fette.

Are you on the TDS listserv? The listserv is a great way to get the most current information on changes to the website and general announcements. To join, email your request to the TDS webmaster at tdswebmaster@ttimail.tamu.edu.

What's going on in your area?

Austin/Tyler TDS Contact Rep. Tina Geiselbrecht

Active Schools 2007-2008:

Jack C. Hays H.S., Llano H.S., Mason H.S., Marble Falls H.S., Burnet 4H Clubs, Elkhart H.S. and Robert E. Lee H.S.

Newly Interested Schools:

Spring Hill H.S., Austin ISD, Lampasas H.S., Grange H.S. and Clarksville H.S.

- Jan. 24 a presentation was made to the Travis County Underage Drinking Prevention Task Force.
- The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and State Farm Insurance will make a public announcement in March of joint plans to address teen-driving dangers at all Austin ISD high schools.
- Elkhart H.S. dedicated the month of February to TDS activities.
- Robert E. Lee H.S. TDS members are working on posters and safety messages to be presented the week before spring break and prom.
- Feb. 8 a presentation was made to the Red River County Juvenile Issues Coalition.
- TTI and the Texas Department of State Health Services in Region 4-5, are developing a "Train the Trainer" program to train nurse managers to provide TDS information to local school districts.

Dallas/Fort Worth TDS Contact Reps. Christie Madsen and Chris Poe

Active Schools for 2007-2008:

Creekview H.S., Garland H.S., Lakeview Centennial H.S., Naaman Forest H.S., North Garland H.S., Rowlett H.S., Sachse H.S., South Garland H.S., Marcus H.S., Flower Mound H.S., Plano West Senior H.S., Forestburg H.S., Lewisville H.S., Pottsboro H.S., Brock H.S., Milsap H.S., Decatur H.S., Waxahachie H.S., Jacksboro H.S., Archer City H.S., Chico H.S. and Weatherford H.S.

Newly Interested Schools:

Cedar Hill H.S., Community H.S., Billy Ryan H.S., Centennial H.S., Hebron H.S., Killough Lewisville

H.S., The Colony H.S., John Horn H.S., Valley View H.S., Coppell H.S., Highland Park H.S., Aledo H.S., Vernon H.S., Bridgeport H.S. and Clark H.S.

- Jan. 24 a presentation was made at the Texas Institute of Transportation Engineers (TexITE) Winter Meeting.
- The Garland Youth Council is hosting a "Teens in the Driver Seat Expo" March 8 at the Firewheel Town Center. The event will showcase TDS teams from Garland H.S., Sachse H.S. and Lakeview Centennial H.S.
- TDS material was displayed at TxDOT's booth at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo.
- TDS will have a booth at the April 4 Flower Mound Concert in the Park.
- The Garland Youth Council has established a section for TDS on its website: garlandyouthcouncil.org.

El Paso TDS Contact Reps. Jeff Shelton and Llubia Corella

Active Schools for 2007-2008:

Chapin H.S., Irvin H.S., Ramon Telles Academy, Sunset H.S., Americas H.S., El Dorado H.S., Mission Early College H.S., Montwood H.S., Riverside H.S., El Paso H.S., Franklin H.S., Jefferson H.S., Socorro H.S. and Odessa H.S.

Newly Interested Schools:

Burges H.S., Radford H.S., KEYS Academy H.S., Bethel Temple H.S., Bowie H.S., Coronado H.S., Immanuel Christian School, Del Valle H.S. and Ysleta H.S.

- El Paso ISD (EPISD) has an internal media department with a show entitled "School Zone." Feb. 22 they dedicated a show to TDS. Students from Irvin H.S. and a TDS representative participated in the show.
- Irvin H.S. planned a "Click It" day and "Don't Become a Statistic" day to reinforce the TDS messages.
- Montwood H.S. TDS team members learned about some of the effects and consequences of drinking and driving in December, from a role-playing exercise in cooperation with Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD).
- Students selected to be part of the "Mayor's 100 Teens" have been assigned numerous high schools to assist in establishing TDS.

Houston TDS Contact Rep. Lori Gray

Active Schools 2007-2008:

Burkeville H.S., North Shore Senior H.S. and Sweeny H.S.

Newly Interested Schools:

Cypress Woods H.S. and Atascocita H.S.

- A Sweeny H.S. TDS team member wrote a paper and created a presentation about TDS in one of her classes.
- A meeting was held with "Communities and Schools" (a United Way nonprofit agency that provides assistance to at-risk students and schools in the Houston area) Jan. 29.

Lubbock/Amarillo/San Antonio/Laredo

TDS Contact Reps. Russell Henk and Kathy Montemayor

Active Schools 2007-2008:

Coronado H.S., Estacado H.S., Lubbock H.S., Pampa H.S., Bandera H.S., Cigarroa H.S., Nixon H.S., Martin H.S., Early College H.S., Del Rio H.S., Carrizo Springs H.S., Brackett H.S., Douglas MacArthur H.S., Monterey H.S. and Crystal City H.S.

Newly Interested Schools:

O'Connor H.S., Videll M. Trevino School of Communications and Fine Arts H.S., Eagle Pass H.S., Southwest H.S. and La Joya H.S.

- Pampa H.S. is planning a TDS activity prior to prom and graduation along with a press event.
- Bandera H.S. is planning a safe driving week, including a pep rally and seat belt pledge.
- Feb. 4 a presentation was made at the regional meeting of teen teams for the Laredo area.

BCS/Yoakum, Waco TDS Contact Reps. Bernie Fette and Jen Bordeaux Ross

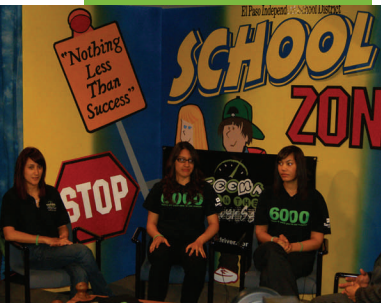
Active Schools 2007-2008:

Connally H.S., Normangee H.S., West H.S. and Louise H.S.

Newly Interested Schools:

Robinson H.S., A&M Consolidated H.S., Brenham H.S., Teague H.S., Killeen H.S. and Gatesville H.S.

- Dec. 20 Connally H.S. and West H.S. hosted a press conference at Connally H.S.



TDS was the featured topic on the EPISD show "School Zone."

Is your school or student group currently doing something new and exciting? Call or email your TDS representative, and you could be featured in the next newsletter!

To inform the public about TDS, TDS staff participated in the Superior Health Plan—Health Fair Walk 2008 in El Paso in January.



New PSAs heading your way!

New TV and radio PSAs will be airing across Texas soon! Keep your eyes and ears open from March 24 to June 23. Let us know which one is your favorite! Think you can do better—be sure to submit your contest idea!

Do you know of a school or student group that would be interested in joining forces with *Teens in the Driver Seat*? Email or call the local representative for a presentation or more information on TDS.

The Director's Corner

With only the second edition of our TDS newsletter, it has been an exciting time to reflect on the continued growth of the TDS program! With spring break vacation quickly upon us, we need to be aware that we are entering the three deadliest months (March through May) for teen drivers on Texas roads. It is even more important for us to continue our great work together to combat the number one killer of teens in our state and nation. If you have not started a TDS program at your school, now is the perfect time to do so. If you have already gotten started, now is the time to shift into overdrive. Is there anything we can do to help your progress? If so, don't hesitate to ask your local TDS representative.

The prizes for the statewide contest are a nice new feature to reward your hard work. We hope you enjoy this new aspect of the program as an added bonus to the already rewarding feeling of making a real, life-saving difference in your community. Thanks again to State Farm for making this possible!

Look for our next edition in early May—before your summer break. Now is the time to begin planning your fall programs. Our staff is available to help you all year—even during summer vacation!

Stay motivated and stay safe!

My best to you,
Russell

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Pictured above: Russell Henk

Pictured below: Bernie Fette



NEWSWORTHY NOTES

Students at two McLennan County high schools are going head to head in a challenge to improve safety on the road. Teen leaders at Connally and West High Schools hosted a press conference at Connally High School Dec. 20 to announce the recent survey findings on driving awareness and behavior for their peers. Both schools' survey results showed a higher awareness of risky driving behavior in comparison to the statewide survey results released in October 2007. However, even though the students at West and Connally are more aware of the driving dangers, the driving behavior for these students is largely consistent with other students across the state:

- Fewer than 3% of students understand that driving at night is unsafe, but roughly one-third of them routinely drive after 10 p.m.
- One-fourth of students recognized that having too many passengers is dangerous, but roughly one-third say that they travel that way frequently.
- More than half of the students realize that it's dangerous to use a cell phone behind the wheel, but roughly one-fourth of them do so anyway.

The students say they know they can be safe drivers, and the students at both high schools outlined their plans to raise their peers' awareness to ultimately change their behavior.

"Our two schools have been rivals for a long time, but the competition we are taking part in today is much more important than any athletic competition we have ever been a part of," says Brandt Roessler, a student from West High School. "This time we are competing to save lives."

Both high schools will be resurveyed in the spring of 2008. The school that shows the largest positive change in awareness will receive a plaque for their success and a pizza party, courtesy of State Farm Insurance of Texas.

Read the entire story and view survey results at tti.tamu.edu/infofor/media/topics/teen_driving/news_release.htm



West High School senior Brandt Roessler outlines their high school's TDS action plan.



Calendar

March 7—FCCLA Region II meeting, Wichita Falls, Texas

March 8—Garland Youth Council hosts Teen Traffic Safety Fair at Firewheel, Garland, Texas

April 3-5—FCCLA Texas state meeting, Galveston, Texas

April 9-12—National Service Learning Conference, Minneapolis, Minnesota

April 17-19—Texas Association of Student Councils Conference, Arlington, Texas

May 22-24—Texas Driver Traffic Safety Education Association Conference, San Antonio, Texas

June 25-28—National Association of Student Councils Conference, Justin, Texas

July 27-30—American Driver Traffic Safety Education Association Conference, Fort Worth, Texas

August—TTI/TDS hosts Teen Traffic Safety Summit, San Antonio, Texas

September 26-28—Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) and Texas Association of School Board (TASB) annual conference, Dallas, Texas