# A GUIDE FOR PEER LEADERS NO CATING FOR TRAFFIC SAFETY









Supporting youth making a difference in their community.

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# INTRODUCTION

The mission of Teens in the Driver Seat is to save lives and prevent injury among youth through education, empowerment, and peer-led outreach. Car crashes are a leading cause of injury and death for young people in America.

Through peer-led programs, like Teens in the Driver Seat, Peer Leaders are empowered to learn effective ways to be safety ambassadors and advocate for safer access to school.

The goal of this guide is to help Peer Leaders start thinking about the next steps for outreach and advocacy in their community, by identifying traffic issues or concerns and creating a plan for improvement.



"There is absolutely nothing like being able to know you made a difference in a group of people's lives." – Lucas Ransen Teen Advisory Board Member

# WHAT IS A PEER LEADER?

A PEER LEADER IS SOMEONE WHO CHOOSES TO HAVE POSITIVE SOCIAL INFLUENCE ON THEIR PEERS BY ENCOURAGING SAFE BEHAVIORS LIKE ALWAYS WEARING A SEAT BELT OR DRIVING DISTRACTION-FREE.

PEER LEADERS ALSO EDUCATE OTHERS ABOUT A CAUSE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITY AND EMPOWER OTHER YOUTH TO BE ADVOCATES.

Research shows that young adolescents (teens) are highly attuned to social risks, which often affect their decisions. This can have a positive or negative effect. <sup>1</sup>



Positively, teens tend to have a social influence on their peers, which has a much bigger impact than an adult or parent.



Negatively, teens tend to take more risks when they are around their peers.

TAKE YOUR LEADERSHIP TO ANOTHER LEVEL BY BECOMING A TRAFFIC SAFETY AMBASSADOR WHO FIGHTS FOR SAFER ACCESS TO SCHOOL.

<sup>1.</sup> Molleman L, Ciranka S, vanden Bos W. 2022 Social influence in adolescence as a double-edged sword. Proc. R. Soc. B289: 20220045. https://doi.org/10.109

# **ABOUT THE GUIDE**

THIS GUIDE CONTAINS HELPFUL STEPS TO SUPPORT TEEN LEADERS IN ADVOCATING FOR SAFER ACCESS TO SCHOOL.

WE WILL GUIDE YOU THROUGH THREE STEPS
THAT CONTAIN VARIOUS EXERCISES AND
TEMPLATES TO MAKE YOUR ADVOCACY
PROJECT DEPLOYABLE.





2. PLAN IT



3. CHANGE IT



This icon symbolizes an exercise or activity sheet for students to fill out.





# **BACKGROUND**



BEST TIME TO COMPLETE

This guide may be completed during student council meetings, leadership meetings or other organization planning meetings. This will take approximately two meeting sessions to complete.

Please make ample time to ensure that your process is uninterrupted and conclusive.

# WHAT YOU WILL NEED:



# **ANY TDS REPORTS**

(Annual Survey, Zero Hero Reports, Walkability Tour report)



# COMPUTER OR LAPTOP



PEERS TO HELP YOU PLAN & IMPLEMENT

# 1. COUNT IT



After completing a Zero Hero Activity (Seat Belt, Distracted Driving, or Distracted Walking) or a Walkability Tour, summarize your findings.

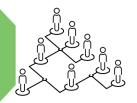
		DATA REVIEW			
1.	Which Activity did you complete? (Check all that apply)	<ul><li>□ Zero Hero Seat Belt</li><li>□ Zero Hero Distracte</li><li>□ Zero Hero Distracte</li><li>□ Walkability Tour</li></ul>	d Driving		
2.	What did you learn? Summarize your findings.				
3.	Was there a positive checkers change to behavior?	nange or negative	□ POSITIVE	□ NEGATIVE	
4.	How would you present school/community?	t your findings to a	dvocate for a safe	r 	
<b>5</b> .	Brainstorm some safe	ty solutions with yo	our team.		

# 2. PLAN IT

Time to make an Action Plan!
You've summarized your data and identified some problem areas.
Now it's time to plan who you're going to reach out to and with
what information.



Advocacy and outreach can include many stakeholders, for example, your school's administration, the parent teacher association, the school board, your city council, and more.



It's important to involve these stakeholders to create buy-in and positively impact decision-making for your school.





WE'VE DEVELOPED AN EXERCISE TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY THOSE KEY PLAYERS.

# **ACTIVITY**



# FIND YOUR KEY PLAYERS

Do some online research to find the key players or decision makers you want to inform about any safety problems, then make a plan to contact them or attend and present at meetings.



Find the name, email, and phone numbers of the following key stakeholders for your county, city, and/or district. Depending on the size of your district and town you may not find all the representatives listed below.

# TIP:

Search for your district's website and find the About Us,
Directory, or Contact Us page to find the information. Do a
similar search at the county and city levels.

# 1. FIND YOUR KEY PLAYERS ACTIVITY

# Fill the blanks



SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME:	
-	

CONTACT	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Principal			
PTA Organization President			
School District Board President			
Superintendent			
Assistant to the Superintendent			

# CITY & COUNTY OF SCHOOL:

CONTACT	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
City Council Aid			
City Mayor			
County Clerk			

# 2. NOTE ANY UPCOMING MEETINGS

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# 3. CONTACT YOUR KEY PLAYERS

# **Meeting Request email template:**





My name is (name) from (high school name) in your district. I am contacting you on behalf of the students at (school name) to propose action to ensure safer pedestrian safety.

[Include a personal story or tell your representative why the issue is important to you and how it affects you, your family members, and your community. Choose up to three of the strongest points that support your position and state them clearly.]

[Tell your representative about the problems you see on your campus and ask for an opportunity to meet or present at the next forum.]

[Be sure to include your name and contact information in your email.]

Sincerely,

Your name

# TIPS FOR GETTING INVOLVED AT OR SPEAKING AT MEETINGS

In your preparations check these tips off the list.

	Keep communication simple, clear, concise and o the point.
	Jse facts (TDS reports) to back up your conclusions or ecommendations.
	Be straightforward and do not assume they understand what you do.
S	Summarize your conclusions, recommendations, and
r	equests on a one-page handout that you can distribute
O	or leave behind.
	Be a good listener, even if the official disagrees with your position.
	Follow up with answers to any questions or requests for additional information.

# 5 TIPS TO COMMUNICATING WITH LOCAL & ELECTED OFFICIALS

# 1. INTRODUCE YOURSELF

- Name & Leadership Title
- Name of school district/county
- Use a firm handshake

# 2. STATE YOUR REASON FOR CONTACT

- Concerns about safety
- Concerns about bill
- Concerns about other issues

# 3. EXPLAIN WHAT THE OFFICIAL CAN DO FOR YOU

- Propose action
- Recommend change

# 4. CONCLUDE

• Thank the official for their response to the urgent matter and offer out a handshake.

# 5. FOLLOW-UP

 Send a follow-up email thanking them for the meeting, sending any handouts, and asking for a response to action.



# **Example of an Elevator Speech\***

team at High School.	
2. Share about TDS - Teens in the Driver Seat is a fun, educational program for us to teach	
our peers about safe driving behavior, like always wearing a seatbelt. As a TDS member,	
I've made it my goal to do traffic safety outreach on our campus.  3. Explain the problem - Car crashes are a leading cause of injury and death for teens, but	
many crashes are preventable if we try to stick to safe behaviors in the car.	
4. Call-to-Action/Open-ended question - Will you pledge to put your phone on do-not-	
disturb while you're driving or put it in the back seat on silent so it's not tempting to use while on the roads?	
*For more help see TDS media talking points	

1.Introduce yourself - My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a member of the Teens in the Driver Seat

# MEDIA TALKING POINTS

# **Interview Best Practices**

Well Dressed & Groomed

Stay Composed

Don't Pick Your Nose



Say, "Teens in the Driver Seat"

Wear TDS Logo

Stand natural

Talk with energy

Avoid "um" "ugh" "hmm"

It's OK to say I don't know

**WHO** 

 I'm a member of the Teens in the Driver Seat team at XYZ High School. WHY

 Car crashes are a leading cause of death for teens nationwide. I want to make a difference in my community.

### **WHAT**

- Teens in the Driver Seat is a fun, educational program for us to teach our peers about safe driving behavior, like always wearing a seatbelt.
- We use the Teens in the Driver Seat toolkit to spread the safety message, like hanging posters, doing trivia, or making morning announcements with safety reminders.

# **WHEN**

- Our team does activities year-round to keep safe driving & riding in a car top of mind.
- I always remind my friends and family to buckle their seat belt.

### **WHERE**

- We conduct outreach on our campus and in our community. We'll do educational
  activities at lunch or at sporting events. Wherever we can reach our peers.
- TDS education also includes access to digital resources, including videos & social media.

### **HOW**

- Teens in the Driver Seat is a free program thanks to the support from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
- We can earn rewards for conducting traffic safety activities and outreach on our campus thanks to \_\_\_\_\_\_, who are our regional sponsors. (Fill in your state sponsor(s))

# **NOTES PAGE**

