

# Teens in the Driver Seat

## Media Interviews

### Best Practices

- Be well dressed and groomed
- Wear a Teens in the Driver Seat polo or t-shirt
- Remember you could be on camera at any time, stay composed (aka “don’t pick your nose.”)
- DO NOT SAY: “um” “ugh” “hmm” “aaa”
- DO SAY: “Teens in the Driver Seat”
- Stand natural in interviews. If you talk with your hands, then talk with your hands.
- Talk with a little bit more energy than you’re used to.
- Practice with friends until you feel comfortable with what you want to say.

### Talking Points

#### Topics:

#### Too Many Teens Are Dying & Injured

1. Car crashes kill more young people than any other cause, accounting for nearly half of all teen deaths in America each year.
2. About 2,700 U.S. teens (ages 13-19) die each year in a car crash; that’s the equivalent of a school bus loaded with teenagers crashing once every week for an entire year.
3. For every American teen killed in a car crash, about 100 more are injured.

#### Top 5 Risks to a Teen Driver

4. Combined with a lack of driving experience, the top five dangers are: distractions, driving at night, speeding, low seat belt use, and impaired driving.

#### Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) in the U.S.

5. Young people can legally start to drive as young as age 15 in the U.S. These young drivers and their parents are encouraged to follow Graduated Driver Licensing laws which allow young drivers to safely gain driving experience before obtaining full driving privileges.
6. In the U.S., 37 states and D.C. ban all cell phone use by novice drivers. 47 states and D.C. restrict the number of passengers during the intermediate stage of GDL.

#### Teens in the Driver Seat® Peer-to-Peer Model

7. Decades of research documents the strong influence that adolescents have on one another. The Teens in the Driver Seat® program believes teens are a key part of the solution.

8. Teens in the Driver Seat® saves lives and prevents injury among youth through education, empowerment, and peer-led outreach. Their mission is to ensure that America's youth live long and healthy lives through safe practices on our transportation system.

#### Creating a Campus Safety Culture

9. Started in 2002, Teens in the Driver Seat® is the first peer-to-peer program for teens that focuses solely on traffic safety throughout the entire year and addresses all major risks for this age group.
10. Schools adopt Teens in the Driver Seat® conducting peer-led outreach year-round creating a campus safety culture.
11. Based on teen driver self-reported data, cell phone use at Teens in the Driver Seat® program schools have dropped, and seat belt use has gone up significantly.

#### TDS Boilerplate

Started in 2002, Teens in the Driver Seat® is the first peer-to-peer program for teens that focuses solely on traffic safety throughout the entire year and addresses all major risks for this age group.

Teens help shape the program and are responsible for implementing it; Texas A&M Transportation Institute provides the science, guidance, project resources, and facilitates a wide variety of contests, outreach, and leadership awards for the program's top students and teams. Over 1,300 schools have implemented the Teens in the Driver Seat® program, reaching over one million teens. Over the past 10 years, the program has been deployed in 39 states at various points in time.

For more information visit, [www.t-driver.com](http://www.t-driver.com).

**Teens in the Driver Seat social media handle is @teensdriverseat on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter**

#### TTI Boilerplate

The Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI), established in 1950, seeks solutions to the problems and challenges facing all modes of transportation. The Institute works on over 700 research projects with over 200 sponsors in the United States and abroad at all levels of government and in the private sector. TTI is recognized as one of the finest higher-education-affiliated transportation research agencies in the nation. Teens in the Driver Seat is administered and managed by the Youth Transportation Safety (YTS) program at TTI.

For more information visit, [www.tti.tamu.edu](http://www.tti.tamu.edu).

**Texas A&M Transportation Institute social media handle is @ttitamu on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.**

### **Branding Specifications**

- Teens in the Driver Seat® must include registered trademark
- Use “Car Crash” versus “Accident” in all language
- Use all white logo with colored or dark background
- Use black and white logo with white background
- RE: Imagery
  - o TDS best practice is for imagery to be positive in nature, for example showing safe practices like wearing a seat belt properly and driving with two hands on the steering wheel.
  - o Attached are some program marketing photos you may use that may help translate the peer-to-peer nature of the program.

### **Most Commonly Covered in Interview**

#### **WHO**

- I participate in the Teens in the Driver Seat program at my school.
- I am a member of the Teen Advisory Board.
- My school is a member of the Teens in the Driver Seat program.

#### **WHAT**

- Teens in the Driver Seat is a fun, educational program for peer leaders who spread the safe driving message on their campus.
- School groups 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**

- Teams/Students do activities year-round to keep safe driving and riding in a car top of mind.

#### **WHERE**

- Teens conduct outreach on their campus and in our community. We educate our peers on different traffic safety topics at lunch or at sporting events. (Explain your event/activity)
- TDS has digital resources as well so peers can learn on their mobile devices or computers at school with online learning games and social media contests.

#### **WHY**

- Car crashes are one of the leading cause of injury and death for teens nationwide. We want to prevent injury and death of some of our youngest road users.

#### HOW

- Teens in the Driver Seat is a free program thanks to the support from the Texas Department of Transportation and the Houston-Galveston Area Council. (Area specific – please contact your TDS regional representative to find out who supports your state)
- Schools can win rewards for the more traffic safety outreach they do thanks to our regional sponsors. (Area specific)