



Title: **Illinois Insurance Association promotes campaign for safe teen driving**  
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## Illinois Insurance Association promotes campaign for safe teen driving

Springfield, IL—The Illinois Insurance Association (IIA) will observe National Teen Driver Safety Week from October 15-21. Partnering with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the IIA endorses the national “5 to Drive” campaign, an initiative to teach young drivers safe habits behind the wheel. “Teens can get around safely when they follow the rules of the road and make the choice not to drive distracted or impaired,” said Kevin Martin, IIA’s Executive Director. “The Illinois Insurance Association and its members are committed to promoting initiatives that improve safety on Illinois roadways, and supporting teen drivers is a critical part of that mission.” Even as fatalities among teen drivers decreased by 53 percent between 2005 and 2014, motor vehicle crashes remain the leading cause of death among teenagers. In 2015, almost 2,000 teen drivers of passenger vehicles were involved in fatal traffic accidents. An estimated 99,000 drivers between the ages of 15 and 19 were injured in motor vehicle collisions. “The NHTSA’s ‘5 to Drive’ campaign offers parents and caregivers tips for talking with their teens about

risky driving behaviors that can have devastating consequences,” Martin said. “IIA encourages families to use these resources to help our newest drivers safely navigate Illinois’ roadways.” At [www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving](http://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving), the NHTSA provides detailed information and statistics on teen driving and five basic rules that can help save lives: 1. No drinking and driving. In 2014, one in five teen passenger vehicle drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking, despite being too young to legally purchase or possess alcohol. Driving under the influence of any impairing substance, including illicit or prescription drugs, can have deadly consequences. 2. Buckle up. Seat belts save lives, and it’s important for teen drivers and their passengers – in both the front and back seats – to buckle up on every trip. In 2014, 59 percent of passengers who died in crashes involving teen drivers were not wearing seat belts at the time of the accident. When the driver was unrestrained, the percentage of passengers who were not buckled up jumped to almost 86 percent. 3. Don’t drive distracted. Illinois has worked to reduce the number of distracted driv-

ing accidents by enacting a ban on the use of all hand-held devices while driving. Violators of this law face fines of \$75 or more. Illegal use of an electronic device while driving can include texting but also checking email, using apps, programming a GPS and talking on a hand-held phone. Distracted driving isn’t limited to electronic device use. Other passengers, audio and climate controls in the vehicle and even eating and drinking can impair a driver’s focus. In 2014, 10 percent of teen drivers involved in fatal crashes were reportedly distracted at the time of the crash. 4. Stop speeding before it stops you. Speeding is a critical risk factor for all drivers, especially teens. In 2014, almost one-third of teen passenger vehicle drivers involved in a fatal crash were speeding at the time. 5. No more than one passenger at a time. According to data analyzed by the NHTSA, teen drivers were two-and-a-half times more likely to engage in a potentially risky behavior when driving with one teenaged peer compared to when they were driving alone. That likelihood tripled when a teen driver was traveling with multiple passengers.