



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Idaho SDE marks Teen Driver Safety Week with PSA, tips for parents**

(BOISE) – For most young Idahoans, the teenage years bring new independence and flexibility via a driver’s license or permit. That license also brings new risk and responsibility – and the State Department of Education urges teens and families to take those considerations to heart.

For National Teen Driver Safety Week, the SDE issued a video public service announcement on [Rules of the Road for Teen Drivers](#) and posted detailed tips on “Talking to Teens about Safe Driving” on the SDE’s [Driver Education web page](#). Gov. Brad Little signed a proclamation declaring National Teen Driver Safety Week, Oct. 20-26.

“Teen drivers ages 15 to 19 represent less than 6 percent of the licensed drivers in Idaho, but they are involved in more than one out of every five crashes in the state,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra said. “It is essential that parents and educators communicate to our young drivers the importance of staying focused behind the wheel and wearing seat belts. Texting while driving, speeding, alcohol consumption and driving with passengers in the vehicle make the road more dangerous, and we are determined to reach teenagers with that message.”

Other sobering statistics:

- From 2013 through 2017, teen drivers in Idaho were involved in accidents that led to 138 deaths and 1,154 serious injuries.
- Nearly half of surveyed Idaho high school students admit they have texted or emailed while driving a vehicle.

Parents are urged to take every possible opportunity to sit down with their teenagers, discuss the importance of driving safely and make sure they know driving is a privilege that can be revoked if the

rules are violated. Just as importantly, parents are encouraged to model the driving behavior they want to see in their teens, including:

**Don't drive impaired:** Never drive while affected by alcohol or drugs, including marijuana and other illegal substances, prescription medications and over-the-counter medication that might impair driving.

**Buckle up:** Whether you are the driver or a passenger, front seat or back, always wear your seat belt. That applies to taxis and ride-sharing services, too.

**No cell phones:** Texting while driving is a widely publicized risk and still is common practice. Also dangerous are answering a phone call, checking phone messages or using mobile apps while driving. Pull over safely before using your phone while behind the wheel.

**Obey all speed limits:** Avoiding excessive speed is a critical issue for all drivers, but it is particularly important for teens who lack the experience to react to changing circumstances on the road.

**Limit passengers and other distractions:** Distracted driving is a major cause of serious accidents, and studies show that your teen's risk of a fatal crash increases with every passenger in the vehicle. Other common distractions include eating or drinking while driving or adjusting controls in the vehicle.

**Know the rules:** Get familiar with Idaho's nighttime driving restrictions, passenger restrictions and graduated driver license rules.

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**Video PSA:** Media members are encouraged to use the broadcast-quality, 30-second version of the "Rules of the Road for Teen Drivers" PSA at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/superintendent/public-service-announcements.html>