



## NATIONAL SAFETY COMMISSION ALERTS

### Safety is No Accident

Wednesday, June 20, 2007

#### 'ROOKIE DRIVER' MAGNET IDENTIFIES TEEN DRIVERS TO IMPROVE SAFETY

Teen Drivers at Huge Risk Behind the Wheel

Parents no longer have to feel helpless when it comes to safeguarding their teenagers as they begin driving. Parents can now increase other drivers' awareness of their teen driver by marking their vehicle with a 'rookie driver' car magnet that lets other drivers know when there is a new driver behind the wheel.

While the risk of accident for all teens is great, it is most dangerous for 15- and 16-year-old drivers. National Institute for Highway Safety data reveals they are 9 times more prone to be involved in a fatal crash than the overall driving population. Statistics prove that over 1,000,000 teenagers are involved in auto crashes every year in the United States. The Institute places driver inexperience atop the list of leading causes.

"By addressing the common culprit of driver inexperience, we can help reduce the teen driving toll," says Corinne Fortenbacher, president of RookieDriver.Net. "Identifying a teen's driver status allows experienced drivers to anticipate common new driver mistakes. We know to be more cautious and forgiving when we realize a teenager is new to the road."

According to an AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety study, there have been improvements in teen driving laws across the nation. Most states require teens to attend a driving school specifically created for student drivers. More stringent reforms include a longer period of the learner permit phase, execution of graduated driver's license programs, peer passenger limits, and restricted night driving privileges.

According to Fortenbacher, these reforms have helped reduce teen driving accidents, but to make sure these numbers continue to decrease, more can be done.

Until we reduce the number of teen crashes, she adds, the safety of all drivers is jeopardized. "Many parents agree that the standardized 'rookie driver' symbol is a simple way to help increase awareness during the most dangerous driving period of their kids' lives, and an additional way to help reduce the heartbreaking No. 1 killer of teenagers," she said.

Along with motor vehicle safety, driver education helps ensure the safety of young Americans. Whether they're getting their Learner's Permit or a Motorcycle License, America's Driver License

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