

Bike Wheels to Steering Wheels



A Parent's Guide for Youth 12-14

To Strengthen Traffic Safety in Families

Newton's Three Laws of Motion

First Law—An object at rest remains at rest, and An object in motion remains in motion at constant speed and in a straight line unless acted on by an unbalanced force.

Second Law—The acceleration of an object depends on the mass of the object and the amount of force applied.

Third Law—Whenever one object exerts a force on a second object, the second object exerts an equal and opposite force on the first.

Simply stated—

- ◆ The faster you go, the harder you hit
- ◆ Gravity forces in crashes increase the weight and propulsion of unsecured objects: i.e. people, backpacks, cell phones, coffee mugs, water bottles, purses, tools and sports equipment, suitcases, pens & pencils, toys, etc.
- ◆ People and things do not stop flying until stopped by forces equal or greater than a body or a thing.

Contents

Forward	2
Pre Frontal Cortex	3
How to Expand Boundaries and Privileges	4
Traffic Safety Walking Awareness Guidance	5
Traffic Safety Biking Awareness Guidelines	6
28 Traffic Safety Driving Awareness Q's	7
Parent Modeling	9
Preliminary Contract	11
Parent Agreement	13
Youth Agreement	14
Newton's Laws of Motion	
Resources	
Funding Support	

Forward

The Health and Safety of our children are the primary goals of every Parent.

Many reasearch studies today find American Adults and Children suffering from a number of early on-set diseases. One easy remedy for families is to ***increase body motion*** activities such as walking, hiking and biking.

Familes can give *strong* consideration and be encouraged to believe walking, riding bikes and using public transportation for youth is a sensible mode of transportation whenever possible.

Middle School years often find youth vulnerable for the first time to pressure outside the family.

Too often young teens believe they are old enough to care for themselves. They may have older siblings who also take risks. They may mistakenly believe ‘helmets’ are for sissies, remove safety belts before cars are stopped or do not sit in the back seat until driving age.

Parents of Middle School age youth may find themselves believing some core values are somehow ‘old fashion’. Feeling pressured, sometimes Parents allow the young teen privileges more suitable for a High School or College student.

Middle School creates a *perfect* opportunity in which to begin to teach through earth sciences how Newton's Three Laws of Motion apply to Traffic Safety. Skill-building traffic safety awareness can help Parents 'measure' Middle School student maturation and be an enormous asset when determining when and if a parent should grant the driving privilege to a high school youth.

Pre Frontal Cortex

The Pre Frontal Cortex of the brain does not begin to develop in a human being until around the age of 12-13 and reaches full maturity at mid-to late 20's. The Pre Frontal Cortex of the brain is primarily responsible for judgement, logic, reason and decision making skills.

Parents can use the measurement standard for 'personal integrity' which develops in the Pre Frontal Cortex to be **by how one conducts oneself while NO ONE is watching** to determine the progress of the maturation in the young teen.

Other measurements which may prove useful are:

- When the young teen is *dependable* about completing chores or school homework
- When the young teen is *dependable* about wearing and using safety equipment while playing sports or using a means of transportation which takes them faster than they can walk or run.

Examples:

1. Wears a safety belt correctly when riding in a vehicle
2. Rides in the *back seat* of a vehicle until age 15
3. Wears a bike helmet correctly (low on the forehead to just above the eyebrows with chin straps buckled) even for a short ride
4. Wears a ski helmet while skiing or snowboarding
5. Wears a helmet, elbow and knee pads to skateboard
 - When the young teen practices truthfulness under all circumstances and keeps agreements
 - When the young teen exhibits cooperation with Parents in lieu of arguing
 - When the young teen makes healthy choices to keep him/her self safe

How to Expand Boundaries and Privileges

Once some Pre Frontal Cortex maturity development can be determined, begin with extending a small privilege to the young teen and evaluate his/her success **before** expanding or granting the next privilege.

If the success is less than desired, return to the former boundary for a month or two, then try again.

It is advisable Parents pay particular attention to the prefrontal cortex development of driving age teens and provide plenty of driving practice well beyond the rudimentary requirements of the Oregon Graduated Driver's Licensing (GDL) Laws. For more information please contact "Trauma Nurses Talk Tough"- 503-413-4960 or www.legacyhealth.org/tntt

Traffic Safety Walking Awareness Guidance

Walking is good for everyone's health.

Be aware that children pay attention to only one thing at a time. When playing, they may forget about traffic. Too many drivers today run red lights as well as yellow lights, so pedestrians must be extra careful when crossing the street.

1. Always cross at a corner, preferably at a crosswalk when available and scan for cars while crossing
2. Always look both ways at least twice before crossing the street
3. Always walk while surrounded by vehicle traffic without headphones on ears
4. Always walk on sidewalks whenever possible
5. Always use the bus stop benches to sit on or wait in the canopied area
6. Never sit on the side of the road because car drivers can make mistakes or cars can have a mechanical failure and the bumper is exactly at head-height when a person is sitting on the side of a road
7. Always wear reflective clothing or light colored clothing whenever walking at dusk or later
8. It is important to be home **before** curfew because the number of drunk drivers increase on the roads past 10:00 PM.

Traffic Safety Biking Awareness Guidelines

The American Academy of Pediatrics tells us that “learning to ride a bike is a developmental milestone in the life of a child. The bicycle, a child's first vehicle, is a source of pride and a symbol of independence and freedom. Yet all too often children are seriously injured, or even killed, when they fail to follow basic bicycle safety rules. A Myth and Facts page is available at www.aap.org/family/tbikmyth.htm

Bicycling is fun and traffic safety awareness is paramount. For a person moving faster than they can run or walk, certain precautions are necessary.

Begin with a good bike helmet, a well-maintained bike and keep shoe laces and long pants contained away from the pedals, spokes and gears.

Familiarize yourself with laws affecting cars and bikes and:

- a. Follow all the traffic signals, signs and laws
- b. Drive in bike lanes when available, never on sidewalks where you might hit a pedestrian
- c. Know and use appropriate hand signals
- d. Always drive on the right side with traffic
- e. Special skills and knowledge are required for driving a bike at night and inappropriate for this age group

28 Traffic Safety Driving Awareness Questions

The following initial list is useful to begin building driving awareness with youth. As youth awareness skills build, Parents will additionally expand the list to include a number of other observations to bring to attention. *(Keep this page in the vehicle as a teaching aid. Use back of page to include additional questions)*

1. What is the FIRST thing we do **before** we start the car? *(buckle your safety belt)*
2. Why is it important to sit in the back seat of the car until reaching the age of 15? *(200MPH airbags damage developing internal organs)*
3. Why is it important to behave in the car? *(so you do not distract the driver)*
4. What is the meaning of each signal light? *(red—stop; yellow—stop safely; green—go cautiously)*
5. Why is it important to use the turn indicator? *(to communicate accurate information to other drivers)*
6. Why should hands be positioned on the steering wheel with an airbag at 3 & 9 or 4 & 8 ? *(the airbag deploys at 200mph and can break thumbs if positioned at 10 & 2)*
7. Why is it important to wait 3 seconds at a Stop Sign? *(it takes that long for observation information to reach the brain and then to conscious thought)*
8. Why is it important to keep the volume low on the radio? *to hear sirens, car distress noises & prevent early hearing loss)*
9. What action is to be taken if we hear or see an emergency vehicle with flashing lights? *(move to the right as soon as it is safe to do so and STOP)*
10. Why do we wait for pedestrians in the crosswalk or at corners before continuing to drive? *(so they will be safe and we do not hit them)*
11. How often do car mirrors need to be checked while driving? *(every 20 seconds)*
12. Why do we follow every traffic law consistently? *(so every other driver can 'depend' on us)*

13. Why is it especially important to drive the speed limit in a neighborhoods and school zones? *(to protect children, the elderly & pets)*

14. Why is it important to wear safety belts correctly? *(to avoid a broken back, neck or head injuries)*

15. Why do we keep our eyes on the road? *(because we must watch other driver's behavior and keep our own car on the road)*

16. Why do we leave 4 seconds worth of space between our car and the car in front of us? *(to give ourselves a cushion for avoiding or stopping safely without hitting the car in front of us)*

17. Why don't we talk on a cell phone, read a book, or groom while driving? *(because cell phone use in a car is responsible for 30% of fatal crashes and reduces by 50% your ability to perform the number of required skills needed at all times to drive safely. Reading or grooming while driving means we are not looking at the road—distraction is a MAJOR contributor to fatal and injury crashes)*

18. Why do we keep a back pack either sitting on the seat safety belted or on the floor of the car? *(If worn, the weight of a back pack can break your back when in a crash or if the vehicle stops suddenly or it can fly around and hit you in the head if it is unsecured—so can an unsecured pet or other unsecured objects in the car)*

19. Why do we keep our safety belt secured until arriving at our destination? *(Because it can only keep you safe when it is worn correctly and kept secured until reaching a final destination when the vehicle has come to a complete stop)*

Additional questions when the teen reaches driving age and moves to front seat:

20. Did you see that car didn't signal to tell us where he wanted to move his car?

21. Did you see that driver didn't wait for the pedestrian?

22. Did you see that driver speed up to go through the yellow light?

23. Did you see that driver didn't use the turn indicator before he moved the car?

24. Did you see that car up ahead has begun to brake?

25. Did you see that pedestrian did not use the crosswalk?

26. Did you see the little child on the sidewalk, in the driveway, etc?

27. Did you see that car signal then make a different maneuver?

28. Do you hear or see the emergency vehicle—where is it—what do we do and how do we do it safely?

Parent Modeling

Most parents do not realize driving lessons for their children began with the first trip home from the hospital after birth.

Increasing Safety in Families *REQUIRES* *PARENTAL* awareness and involvement.

Parents' message to kids if we...

- a. Use radar detectors...we teach them to disregard laws and that the point is to NOT GET CAUGHT
- b. Buy food to eat in the car while we continue to drive....we teach them a dangerous habit, especially if the food is fumbled and eyes are drawn away from the task at hand.
- c. Improperly wear safety belts....we not only run the risk of our own injury, perhaps compromising the family economics and emotional security, but also the injury to a youngster, changing every family member's life *forever*.
- d. Make "Quick Stops".....we teach them to also roll through stop signs and endanger other children, pets, elderly people and other drivers.
- e. Attend events with our kids, have a couple of alcoholic drinks and then put them into the car with us....we teach them to drink and drive.

f. Drive while we talk on the cell, are in a hurry, when we are mad, tired or upset or mentally drafting grocery lists...we teach kids driving is an insignificant and superfluous activity instead of a serious obligation with enormous responsibility and a privilege.

g. Never walk, hike, and bike or use public transportation to a destination...we teach kids **body motion** is unimportant and dismiss public transportation as an alternative.

h. Never wear appropriate sport or other safety equipment...we teach kids *risking* the brain or body safety of a Parent and family *stability* is acceptable.

Preliminary Contract

Contract Agreements can be useful for a couple of reasons. 1. It can help define expectations and eliminate any confusion. 2. If a person has trouble keeping a preliminary agreement it may be that it is written in such a way that it does not meet the appropriate maturity or experience level of the youth or there may be other underlying reasons: i.e. alcohol or drug use (an addict cannot keep a contract agreement). Contracts agreements may be a good barometer to measure skills and maturity.

Young Teens can follow rules for responsible walking, biking and riding in vehicles—but first they have to know what the rules are. Use the contract agreement to identify issues and spell out your family rules, agreements and the consequences for breaking the agreements. “When” and “Then” statements can be useful when designing contract agreements and other family policy building.

- It is suggested that parents and youth review the guidelines together
- It is suggested that parents and youth share similar guidelines with the families of friends and other family members so that ALL people connected with one another have *uniform* expectations and consequences
- Feel free to make copies of the pre-signed contract agreement and give one to each of the young teen’s friends Parents.

Parent and discussing contract agreement ideas and terms.

Remember: Include any family members, nieces, nephews and neighbors and family friends with children of similar ages.

It is further suggested that it be a *family rule* that **everyone** who plans to transport your child in a vehicle come into the house to be greeted as a matter of good manners and to assess:

- if the driver has been drinking or drugging
- if the driver is running late
- if the driver is under the influence of extreme emotions such as anger, sadness, grief or exuberance
- if the driver has recently been ticketed for a moving violation
- if YOU feel comfortable with the driver taking responsibility for the safety of your family member

Agreement

We the undersigned agree to the following expectations.

Parent

1. I will wear my safety belt correctly when riding in or driving a vehicle.
2. I will follow all walking, biking and driving laws.
3. I will always wear appropriate safety equipment.
4. I will never drive:
 - a. While angry with my child in the car or when suffering other extreme emotions
 - b. Impaired by alcohol or other drugs
 - c. Modeling that traffic laws are unimportant
 - d. Distracted
5. I will never ride in a vehicle with someone who has been using alcohol or other drugs or suffering from extreme emotions.
6. I will make every effort to reinforce safe choices for myself and my family as an example that I can be relied upon to follow our family rules and policies.

Parent (s) Signature

Youth Signature

Agreement:

We the undersigned agree to the following expectations:

Youth

1. I will wear my safety belt correctly whenever riding in a vehicle.
2. I will follow all walking, biking and driving laws.
3. I will always wear appropriate safety equipment, including helmets when appropriate.
4. I will make decisions that keep me safe.
5. I will reinforce my integrity by conducting myself appropriately at all times.
6. I will never get into a car with someone who has been using alcohol or other drugs or a driver who is unsafe because he/she:
 - Is angry
 - Is late for an appointment
 - Is mad at me
 - Doesn't think traffic laws are important
 - Is distracted

If for any reason I should break my agreement, I understand my privileges will be suspended by my Parents until I can be relied upon again to follow our family rules and policies.

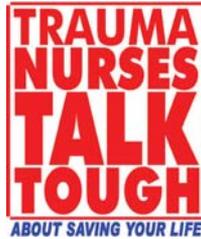
Parent(s) Signature

Youth Signature

Notes

Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics
2006 Safe Ride News Publications



2004 National Safety Council

Youth Activity Award of Merit Recipient



“Trauma Nurses Talk Tough”

2801 N. Gantenbein Ave.

Rm. 2007

Portland, OR 97227

503-413-4960

www.legacyhealth.org/tntt

**Program developed through a grant from the
Transportation Safety Division of the Oregon
Department of Transportation and the National Highway
Traffic Safety Administration Section 163 Funds**

Rev. 11/06