Safe Kids USA’s New Pre-Driver Program: Countdown2Drive (C2D)

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Safe passengers today. Good drivers tomorrow. | www.Countdown2Drive.org
INTRODUCTION TO SAFE KIDS USA’S NEW PRE-DRIVER PROGRAM: COUNTDOWN2DRIVE

Teen driving safety initiatives traditionally have targeted teens that are old enough to get a drivers license. Countdown2Drive (C2D) breaks new ground by targeting younger teens, at ages 13 and 14, to help prepare them to be safe passengers and drivers. C2D helps families establish safety guidelines and rules. Reinforcing these behaviors can protect young teens now, while creating a foundation to help them drive more safely later.

Major benefits of targeting “pre-drivers”:

- Providing an opening to begin a conversation and set rules about key safety topics – surveys show 13- and 14-year-olds already are talking about driving.
- Getting a graduated license is not far off for many young teens. In most states the licensing process can begin at 15 or even earlier, and teens can get a full license at 16.
- Many behaviors that increase teen driver safety are also behaviors that will increase young teens’ safety as passengers. These behaviors include always wearing a seat belt, reducing driver distraction, and checking in with parents at departure and arrival.
- By establishing parental rules and safety habits early, C2D may help teens reduce their crash risk during their first and most dangerous year of independent driving.
- Creating a passenger agreement can help prepare families to use a teen driver contract when they are ready to drive.

Countdown2Drive Passenger Agreement

A key component of the Countdown2Drive program is a customizable parent-teen Passenger Agreement. Parents and teens can use a webtool at Countdown2Drive.org to negotiate rules, rewards and consequences for safe passenger behavior. They can then print a copy of the Passenger Agreement to sign and keep handy in the home. As Safe Kids USA continues to reach out to develop partnerships with insurance companies, in time these agreements may offer families insurance benefits or discounts.

Breaking New Ground

Challenge: The idea of a driver safety initiative that targets pre-drivers is new. Parents and teens may not immediately see the need for a Passenger Agreement.

Opportunity: Once the concept is explained, most parents and teens are interested in having a Passenger Agreement.

- Motivators for parents: Teaching passenger and driver safety, responsibility and accountability.
- Motivators for teens: Preparing to drive, earning privileges and increasing parents’ respect and trust.
Because the idea of a driver safety initiative targeting pre-drivers is new, parents and teens may not immediately see the need for a Passenger Agreement. But our studies showed that once the concept is explained, most parents like it. Teens like the idea, too. In a 2010 nationwide survey, more than half of 13- and 14-year-olds said they would be interested in having a Passenger Agreement with their parents.

It is important to note, however, that what appeals to teens about the agreement is NOT that it could help increase their personal safety. In the survey, teens said the top motivators that would make them more interested in adopting a Passenger Agreement were:

- Being able to get their drivers permit or license sooner
- Earning privileges or rewards
- Receiving extra credit or recognition in school
- Being treated more as an adult by their parents as a result of the agreement
- Having input into the details of the agreement
- Knowing peers who have a similar agreement with their parents

For parents, top motivators for having a Passenger Agreement include:

- Expanding opportunities to talk about driving safety
- Teaching teens accountability and responsibility
- Having additional leverage if a rule is broken
- Having guidelines for talking about driving safety
- Feeling like it is something good parents do

FACILITATOR TIP: When talking about Countdown2Drive, community leaders can increase teen and parent interest in a Passenger Agreement by tapping into the above motivators rather than focusing exclusively on the safety benefits.

Are teens buckling up?
Some parents say they don’t need a Passenger Agreement about seat belts because their child always wears one when riding in a car. However, a 2010 nationwide survey of teens shows that teens’ self-reported seat belt use is lower than parents estimate, and slips between ages 13 and 14.

- My teen always buckles up: 94% of parents
- I always buckle up (self-report): 85% of 13-year-olds
- 79% of 14-year-olds

Countdown2Drive Rallies
Safe Kids coalitions can play a key role in raising awareness about and increasing the use of C2D Passenger Agreements. Holding a C2D Rally for groups of parents and/or teens provides an opportunity to explain the pre-driver initiative and the concept of Passenger Agreements. It also provides peer support. For both parents and teens, embarking on the agreement process in a group setting may increase the likelihood that they will follow through with creating a C2D Passenger Agreement and implementing it at home.
C2D RALLY PRE-PLANNING GUIDE

Ideally, your Countdown2Drive (C2D) Rally will include both parents and their teens, and your location will have computers with Internet access so participants can go online to create their own Passenger Agreement. We know it can be difficult to find a time and place that fits into both parents’ and teens’ busy schedules. Securing a location that has enough computers also may be tough. As a result, the C2D rallies can be organized for parents, teens, or both, and for locations with or without computers.

The steps below detail how to pre-plan for a Countdown2Drive Rally. For detailed instructions for the day of the Rally, see the C2D RALLY STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE on page 11.

STEP 1: Decide Who Your Participants Will Be

Our studies with parents and teens found that parents are the natural targets for this type of program. Parents are simply more likely to want to set rules for this issue than teens. But with some incentives and interesting approaches, teens can also get engaged. Our pilot coalitions found that teens were most interested in the chance to do this online.

Some coalitions have better ties with teens or parents. We encourage you to think about group settings where you may have the easiest access, especially for your first C2D Rally. Can you get parents and their 13- or 14-year-olds together in one place at the same time? Or do you want to target just a group of parents? Just a group of teens? Who you choose for your target audience will affect planning for many other aspects of your Rally.

FACILITATOR TIP: Even if you plan to have just one group, always be sure to have a back-up plan in case kids of other ages show up to your Rally. When coalitions piloted the program, some parents who submitted an RSVP brought along their young children and teens. You may want to have Buckle Up materials to entertain and provide age appropriate information for young children and be ready to talk to teens.

STEP 2: Choose a Location

Community Rally: Find a place with enough space to seat the number of participants you plan to invite. If you plan on inviting both parents and teens, make sure you have two separate breakout rooms available. If you choose a location with computers, it’s ideal to have enough stations with Internet access for each participant. Ensure the computers have an up-to-date web browser. Countdown2Drive.org will not work on an outdated web browser such as Internet Explorer 6. To be sure, just plan to test the website at one of their computers before you schedule the Rally.

Need ideas for computer-equipped locations? Check out your local public library, school media center, college or high school computer lab, teaching hospital or community center like the Boys and Girls Club. You also may be able to partner with after-school programs or summer camps held in local schools.

If your facility has wireless capabilities you can suggest that parents bring their own laptop computer.

FACILITATOR TIP: When considering your location options, make sure you have space for a small group to gather away from the computers. The Rally is about dialogue, so it’s not optimal to have your participants spending the hour at computer stations. Ideally, the group may sit together at a table or other group setting. If you are equipped with computers, you can move the group to the computer area toward the end of the event.
Considering a Dealership Location?
When selecting a dealership as a C2D location, make sure there is enough space to accommodate teens and/or parents. Traditionally, it has been a challenge to get the desired attendance at a dealership event. However with innovative planning and marketing, as with the Cub Scout Automotive Safety and Safest Generation Programs, we think the dealership can be an attractive location to the public.

Additional dealership activity ideas that could increase attendance:

- **C2D at Dealership Car Show/Tent Sale** — set up a booth with computers available to provide one-on-one programming with parents and/or teens
- **Service Center Visit** — ask a service mechanic to speak to the group on basic vehicle maintenance for new drivers

Considering a Plant Location?
Plant activity ideas, in conjunction with Safe KIds, that could increase attendance:

- **Family Day** — Incorporate C2D into a Plant Family Day for both 13- and 14-year-old teens and their parents
- **Employee Workshop** — Parents only

Considering a Community Setting?
Invite parents, educators and community partners to join you as you plan the Rally. Once you target a location, determine who can help you plan and promote the Rally to your target audience. Ideal locations may include: Summer and Sports Camps, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCA, and Middle Schools. Teens ages 13 and 14 attend activities, sports or summer camps within their community. Program/Camp directors are always looking for an innovative program to provide their participants.

### SEE ONLINE APPENDIX:
#### Dealership
- Dealership Introduction Letter
- Program Description for Dealers
- Thank You Letter
- Flyer Template
- Dealership Media Tool Kit:
  - Fact Sheet
  - Talking Points
  - Fill-in-the-blank Press Release (available online only)

### SEE ONLINE APPENDIX:
#### Plant
- Plant Introduction Letter
- Thank You Letter
- Flyer Template
- Fact Sheet
- Talking Points

### SEE ONLINE APPENDIX:
#### Community/Summer/Sports Camp
- Parent Invitation Letter
- Coach/Teacher Letter
- Community Partner Letter
- Flyer Template
- Media Tool Kit
  - Fact Sheet
  - Talking Points
  - Fill-in-the-blank Press Release (available online only)
Considering a Family Home or Church Location?

Parents who have attended a previous C2D Rally may be interested in sharing the information with other parents and teens within their community. This Rally can be personalized by being hosted in someone’s home or in a church setting. This Rally would be coordinated and facilitated by the parent that participated in an earlier C2D Rally. This comfortable and personal setting can help initiate conversation about teens as passengers, curfews and the building of trust within their group. Parents within the group may want to set common curfews and rules within their peer group to make the new rules easier for their young teens to follow.

STEP 3: Determine an Event Date and Time

If you are working with a school, library or community group, coordinate with their administrators to find a good date and time. Make sure your Rally will not conflict with other events your groups of parents and/or teens are likely to attend.

STEP 4: Register Your Rally

Safe Kids Coordinators:

Register your event on the SKBU website www.safekidsweb.org and go to the “Event Registry” tab. Once registered go to the “Event Registry” homepage and find the 5-digit event identifier number next to the event. This code must be written on the “Tipsheet” that is handed out to ALL participants. The participants will enter the 5-digit code when registering on the C2D website either at the event or later at home.

Dealership/Community/Parents:

Go to www.countdown2drive.org; click on “Coordinate Your Own Rally”; register to access the C2D materials and when ready, go back onto the site to register your Rally. When you register your Rally you will be given a 5-digit event identifier number to the event. This code must be written on the “Tipsheet” that is handed out to ALL participants. The participants will enter the 5-digit code when registering on the C2D website either at the events or later at home. This code merges parent and teen responses.

SEE ONLINE APPENDIX:
Family Home or Church Setting
- Letter to invite parents (from parent organizer to parent invitees)
- Fact Sheet
- Talking Points
STEP 5: Seek In-kind Sponsors to Provide Incentives and Refreshments

Local businesses like to be involved in the community. There are many in-kind donations you can seek. Some examples include:

- Local dealerships or plants may provide giveaways such as key chains or bumper stickers.
- A local grocery store might provide drinks and snacks.
- A radio station might provide music and news coverage.
- Local restaurants might provide coupons for teens that complete the program.
- Local merchants may want to advertise through your Rally.

How do you ask for these products? Send a letter making a specific request (for example, 30 coupons for participants). Be sure to let the potential sponsor know what they will get as a result. For example, you may want to include their logos on all promotional materials, and mention their sponsorship at the end of your news releases. A sample letter is included in the appendix.

STEP 6: Promote the Rally

Safe Kids USA has created template tools to promote your Rally locally. Promoting the Rally is critical to the program’s success because your promotion will determine how many people participate. Promotion of the event is twofold: to the attendees you hope to attract and to the media. The materials available in the online appendix will help you promote C2D with the media.

Depending on your location, you may want to consider outreach such as: coalition member email, company email, paycheck stuffer, etc. Flyer Templates are available in the online appendices.

While parents may be more likely to attend the C2D Rally because of the topic, teens may be more likely to complete a Passenger Agreement if you’re offering incentives. After all, we’re asking teens to help their parents negotiate new rules for them to follow. Consider some incentives to provide to teens who show they’ve completed the Passenger Agreement with their family.

STEP 7: Recruit Volunteers

The number of volunteers you will need depends on the number of parents and teens you invite. A good ratio is 1 volunteer for every 6 participants — this is just a recommendation to help ensure you have enough support. Volunteers can help set up, greet participants, and record the answers parents provide on flip charts (that you’ll need to report back to SKUSA), answer questions and clean up. If you are using computers, your volunteers should be comfortable with technology and familiar with the Countdown2Drive.org website so they can help parents and teens create their Passenger Agreement.
STEP 8: Selecting the Rally Leader – Prepare to Use a Different Approach

Safe Kids coalitions are cornerstones for safety education in their communities. For this Countdown2Drive program, however, we are asking our coalitions to take a different approach. The purpose of the Rally is less to teach, and more to listen. For many parents of teens, pre-driver safety could easily seem like just one more of the many things they are supposed to worry about. The C2D Rally aims to create a space for dialogue, where parents can share what they really think and feel. To lead a successful C2D Rally, the Rally leader will need to be more a facilitator than an educator.

When you are choosing your C2D Rally leader, look at the questions below to see who might be the best fit. Your strongest educator may not be your best choice for this Rally. You should be looking for someone who can follow as well as lead, who can listen without showing judgment, and who is able to encourage people to talk openly. In some coalitions, this might be the perfect opportunity to let someone new lead the event. Perhaps a colleague who cannot lead Buckle Up events because they are not certified technicians/instructors would make a good facilitator for a C2D Rally, which does not require certification.

Checklist for Rally Facilitators:

- Do you like to ask questions and listen to what other people have to say?
- Are you able to listen to something you disagree with or think is wrong, without correcting the speaker?
- Can you empower parents to make choices — even if they are different from what you think they should do?
- Can you encourage parents (or teens) to talk freely and frankly about passenger safety, even if you think their thoughts and opinions are wrong?
- Would you feel comfortable letting parents help each other discuss rules, without your direct guidance?

STEP 9: Review and Print Your Materials

NOTE TO FACILITATORS: Some of your materials are included in the online appendices and some are not in the appendices and will require your action. See below.

Familiarize Yourself With Your State’s Laws

Visit the Governors Highway Safety Association website to find when teens can begin supervised driving in your state: http://www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/laws/license_laws.html

Print and make a copy for each participant.
Be sure you are familiar with your state’s laws for young drivers. Several states currently allow 14-year-olds (who may be your event attendees) to get their learner’s permit.

A Note About State Laws & Teens
In a handful of states, the minimum age to start the learner stage is 16. Some of our pilot locations noted that their 13-year-olds may have been too young for this type of event since driving was much farther off for them. So you may want to consider targeting 14-year-olds and their parents if you live in one of these states. (As of 2010, these states include: Connecticut, Delaware, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Washington, DC.) Remember too, that kids who are 13 and 14 are passengers in cars driven by teens. They need to be safe passengers regardless of the state driver age requirements.

Countdown2Drive Website
Your rally will be focused around the new website Countdown2Drive.org so it’s important that you are familiar with the rules and general information the website is promoting and encouraging.

Other Materials Needed
- Refreshments (optional)
- Sign-In Sheets (to collect contact information)
- Flipchart (2 flipcharts for parent and teen groups)
- Markers
- Clipboards (if tables or desks aren’t available)
- Pens/Pencils
- Copy of this Facilitator Guide to reference
- [Optional] Copy of scripts (see ONLINE APPENDIX)
- [Optional] Stopwatch to keep track of timed segments.

A Note About Computers
As noted above, one of the most interesting aspects of this program for teens, is the chance to do this online. Our goal is also to get families to create an online Passenger Agreement – and starting that process at the C2D rally is a key step. Just remember, it’s smart to always have a backup to the computers. Computers occasionally fail – we’ve all been at the mercy of a slow or down Internet connection, electrical failure or just some computer problem we can’t quite figure out. Always be sure to prepare for and have paper versions as a backup. And remember that having as many computers as possible for participants will really help when some families need more time than others, or if your location has a slow Internet connection. Remember to invite parents to bring their own laptops.
C2D RALLY STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

This step-by-step guide will help you conduct a Countdown2Drive (C2D) event for 13- and 14-year-old pre-drivers and/or their parents. The goal of the event is to help participants create a Countdown2Drive (C2D) Passenger Agreement governing expected passenger safety behaviors. Creating a C2D Passenger Agreement will help families reinforce behaviors that not only reduce teens’ traffic safety risks now, but also will help reduce risks after licensing, during their first and most dangerous year of independent driving. You will notice that there are Talking Points included for you to use under each step. (Optional facilitator scripts are also available — See Online Appendix on the Safe Kids Coalition Intranet.)

STEP 1: Set Up

Time: 1 hour

Handouts:
Have the following ready for distribution.

SEE ONLINE APPENDIX:
• Fact Sheet
• Talking Points
• Tipsheet for Parents and Teens
• Cost to Drive — Activity Sheet
• Countdown2Drive Worksheet
• Countdown2Drive Agreement Template
• Wallet Card
• Sign-In Sheet

CREATE YOUR OWN:
• State Law Sheet

Facilitator Tips:

• Arrive at your location at least an hour early
• Set out any refreshments
• Set up sign-in sheet by entrance
• Set up your flipchart(s) and make sure you have markers that work
• Place clipboards and pencils on chairs in group discussion area(s)
• Arrange seating so participants can see the flipchart. If you have a small group, you may want to arrange chairs in a U or seat participants around a table to encourage the flow of discussion.

Computers:

• Check the computers to make sure they are booted up and the Internet access is working
• Open the www.Countdown2Drive.org homepage on each computer
• Be sure your location has enough chairs for the group discussions and the computer work

Timing Is Everything:

• Parents and Teens Together: Allow up to 1.5 hours
• Parents Only: Allow 1 hour
• Teens Only: Allow 1 hour
• Computers can lengthen your program if you aren’t mindful of your time
STEP 2: Welcome (just before Rally begins)

Time: 2-3 minutes

Facilitator Tips:

- Greet your participants as they arrive and ask them to sign in.
- Invite them to enjoy refreshments if you have them.
- Ask them to sit down in the area you have prepared for the group discussions.
- Start promptly on time. Volunteers can help seat any latecomers.
- Begin by having group leaders introduce themselves and any volunteers on hand to help.

STEP 3: Introduction and Warm-Up

Time: 5-8 minutes

Handouts:

- State Law — GHSA printout of your state’s graduated driver licensing (GDL) laws

Facilitator Tips:

- Generate discussion about the issue and laws before distributing handout.
- If you are a parent, it always helps to add personal anecdotes so other parents know that you can relate to their concerns and struggles. Encourage empathy and a desire to work together to help address one of the most important safety issues for our community’s teenagers.

Talking Points:

- Ask the audience how many parents have a 13-year-old and then a 14-year-old.
- Ask if anyone knows the state laws around their teen preparing to get their permit or license.
- Share information and interesting facts about your state’s law and ask the following questions to generate dialogue:
  - Do you know at what age teens in your state can get a learners permit?
  - Do you know how long teens need to hold a permit? Do you know at what age they can get a license in our state?
- If teens in your state can begin the process at 13 or 14, ask if families have done anything to prepare.
- Ask parents to explain how they feel about their kids driving and what kinds of information they feel they may need. Then share how today’s event is designed to help guide them through the process and how parents can set rules now for their teen passengers that will in time help their teens be safer drivers. [Note that parents and teens may want to talk about the “driving” aspect, but as a facilitator, it is important for you to guide the conversations back to teens as passengers today.]
- Other questions you might ask: Do you know how long teens need to hold a permit? Do you know at what age they can get a license in our state?
- Distribute the state law document to take home.

Facilitator has a choice of showing the video or following the facilitator’s step-by-step presentation.

- VIDEO – Show video now for this section
- FACILITATOR LEAD (Use either the Talking Points or the Script — whichever the facilitator is more comfortable using.)
**TALKING POINTS**

Briefly explain the Countdown2Drive initiative:

- Most information available for families is for teen drivers. Safe Kids USA created a pre-driver program because they recognized that families aren’t sure what steps they can take to help their teens prepare to be safe passengers so they will be better drivers when they get their license.
- Teenagers’ first year of independent driving is their most dangerous.
  - Much more likely to crash
  - Risk of a fatal crash is at a lifetime high
- Research shows that parent involvement and rule setting can help teens reduce their crash risk during their first and most dangerous year of independent driving.
- Explain that we call 13- and 14-year-olds “pre-drivers” because they will begin the licensing process in just a year or two — reference your state’s age.
- Ask participants to share what kinds of things they think pre-drivers can do now that will make them better drivers later.

**STEP 4: Break Out Into Groups** (Do this ONLY if both Parents and Teens are participating)

Parents Only in your Rally — Skip to Step 5
Teens Only in your Rally — Skip to Step 5

Time: 2 minutes

Facilitator Tips:

- Please avoid sitting at tables where computers are already set up (Computer Rallies Only). Because you want to generate discussion, the set-up should enable participants to share among themselves.

**STEP 5: Open Dialogue Facilitated By the “Discussion Points”**

Time: 20 minutes

Handouts and Materials:

- Flip chart per room (note: may need 2 if you will break out parents and teens)
- Highlighters
- Pens/Pencils
- Clipboards if you don’t have desks/tables

Facilitator Tips:

- The point of this exercise is to quickly get the discussion flowing and to get participants to start thinking about safe passenger behaviors. To help set the appropriate tone and encourage participants’ ideas to flow, don’t agree or disagree with what participants suggest; it’s OK if some suggestions are off topic. If anyone suggests something that is unsafe, instead of telling them they are wrong, turn to the audience and ask: Does everyone agree that this is something that will help teens become better drivers or passengers? Also, be sure to keep an eye on the time. As the discussion gets flowing, it can be easy to go over the budgeted time. If you have to interrupt or stop the discussion, just let participants know you have a lot of ground to cover and want to be sure to get them out on time.
Discussion Points: (Both for Parent and Teen Groups) (Use Flip Chart to Record Summary of Discussion)

- Think about when you first heard of this event. Tell me a bit about what you hoped you’d learn.
- Parents Only: What is your biggest concern about your teen riding in a car today [Note to facilitator: this is not to learn about their fears when their teen is driving, but now as passengers. This information can help you be sure to provide actionable information on what parents can do now - setting these rules in the C2D Passenger Agreement.]
- What does it mean to be a safe passenger?
- What does it mean to be a safe driver?
- Who is the teen allowed to ride with (friend, friend’s parent, friend’s older sibling)?
- At what age has your family planned for your teen to begin to drive?
- Share some of your family’s current rules for your teen in the car now as a passenger.
- Has your family already set some rules your teen will eventually follow as a driver? (Maybe you already have rules for an older teen who is driving)?
- Has your family set any consequences for disregarding the rules?
- Does your family offer any rewards for following the rules?
- Can you share some of the safety practices that you perform everyday (seat belts, no distracted driving, etc.) that protect you when in a vehicle?
- What behaviors do you think could result in a crash and/or incident?

Facilitator Tips:
- Teens seem to be most interested in the rewards and consequences, and gaining the trust and respect of their parents rather than the safety aspects. So if you are working with a group of only teens, be sure to plan for most of your time around these areas.
- Several pilot coalitions found that some parents of 13- and 14-year-olds said they were the only drivers of their teens. Because they are with them every time they ride in a car, some parents did not immediately see the value of setting rules. If you experience this feedback, you might consider sharing that teens are entering a time with a lot of quick changes. They may be entering high school, joining new clubs/sports teams or making new friends. The C2D Passenger Agreement can help parents start a conversation, identify concerns, set expectations and share experiences.

Break Out Session Wrap Up — 5 minutes
- Review discussion points and summarize comments on the flip chart
- Set the stage for the next phase the group session. (Only for both parent and teen Rallies)

Both Parents and Teen Participants — Move to Step 6A.
Parent Participants Only — Skip to STEP 6B.
Teen Participants Only — Skip to STEP 6B.

Step 6A: GROUP SESSION — Parents and Teens Together

Time: 15 minutes

Handouts:
- C2D Worksheet

Facilitator Tips:
- Step 6 is a critical part of the C2D Rally. It is your chance as a facilitator to educate parents and teens about key traffic safety behaviors that will be part of the C2D Passenger Agreement in this step. Our studies showed that safety is a secondary motivator for families considering a Passenger Agreement — that is, it’s important, but not what makes them actually commit to doing one. That’s why much of our event and webtool emphasize other motivators for creating a Passenger Agreement (teaching responsibility, earning respect, trust, etc.). However, the safety underpinnings obviously are why C2D Passenger Agreements are important. Here is your chance to explain them. It’s time to introduce the Countdown2Drive website they will
be using at the conclusion of the Rally or, if no computers/not enough computers are available, at home.

- Bring both flipcharts together to summarize the “Discussion Points” – OPEN DISCUSSION
- Start a dialogue with both teens and parents to summarize their viewpoints.

Talking Points:
- You have come up with some great ideas and hopefully have shared some new ideas with folks here.
- Safe Kids developed a new idea to help families: A C2D negotiated Passenger Agreement between parents and their teen.
- How many of you are familiar with teen driving contracts?
  - They are designed to promote behaviors that reduce the crash risk of new drivers
  - They include a lot of the same behaviors you have on your list for safe passenger behaviors — meaning actions teens can take today would also help make them safer drivers in a couple years.
  - Our goal is to help families start reinforcing those behaviors now, rather than waiting until teens are getting their license.
- Pilot Program Developing C2D
  - Safe Kids got input from parents and teens through surveys and focus groups across the country.
- Parent Perspective
  - C2D Passenger Agreement was a good idea
  - C2D Passenger Agreement would teach teens responsibility and accountability.
  - Wanted rules that worked for their family.
  - Believed the rules don’t mean a lot if they are not enforced.
- Teen Perspective
  - Liked the idea of the C2D Passenger Agreement
  - Would use the C2D Passenger Agreement to earn respect from their parents.
  - Liked the idea of earning rewards for sticking to the Passenger Agreement.
  - Wanted to have a say in creating the Passenger Agreement with their parents.
- Pass out the C2D Worksheet to help get families on their way to creating their own agreement.
- Ask participants to:
  1. Circle the rules, rewards and consequences they like
  2. X out the ones they don’t like
  3. Put a question mark by ones they have questions about
- Give participants a few minutes to do the worksheet

Step 6B: Parents Only/Teens Only

Time: 15 minutes

Handouts:
- C2D Worksheet

Facilitator Tips:

- Step 6 is a critical part of the C2D Rally. It is your chance as a facilitator to educate parents and teens about key traffic safety behaviors that will be part of the C2D Passenger Agreement in this step. Our studies showed that safety is a secondary motivator for families considering a Passenger Agreement – that is, it’s important, but not what makes them actually commit to doing one. That’s why much of our event and webtool emphasize other motivators for creating a Passenger Agreement (teaching responsibility, earning respect, trust, etc.). However, the safety underpinnings obviously are why C2D Passenger Agreements are important. Here is your chance to explain them. It’s time to introduce the Countdown2Drive website they will be using at the conclusion of the Rally or, if no computers/not enough computers are available, at home.
PASS OUT THE C2D WORKSHEET

Ask participants to:
1. Circle the rules, rewards and consequences they like
2. X out the ones they don’t like
3. Put a question mark by ones they have questions about
4. Give participants a few minutes to do the worksheet

TALKING POINTS:

• You have come up with some great ideas and hopefully have shared some new ideas with folks here.
• Safe Kids developed a new idea to help families: A C2D negotiated Passenger Agreement between parents and their teen.
• How many of you are familiar with teen driving contracts?
  • They are designed to promote behaviors that reduce the crash risk of new drivers.
  • Include a lot of the same behaviors you have on your list for safe passenger behaviors — meaning actions teens can take today would also help make them safer drivers in a couple years.
  • Our goal is to help families start reinforcing those behaviors now, rather than waiting until teens are getting their license.

STEP 7: Introduce the C2D Web site www.Countdown2Drive.org

Time: 25 minutes with computers; 15 minutes without computers

Handouts:
• Tipsheet with 5 digit code inserted by facilitator
• C2D Agreement Template
• Wallet Cards

WITH COMPUTERS

Facilitator Tips:

There are 4 options for using the computers — feel free to use whatever works best for you, depending on the number of available computers.

1. Each participant has their own computer, where they can set up their own C2D Passenger Agreement.
2. Set up small groups (ideally no more than 3) per computer. (If you have both parents and teens at
the Rally, make sure to group only teens or only parents together. It’s not ideal to have a parent looking over their teen’s shoulder as they answer the online questions. Remember the webtool lets them negotiate together at the end, so it’s important for each to answer how they feel.) Each group will select one member to create an agreement as an example of the kind of agreement they can do with their own families.

3. Another option may be if you are set up in a school or other area where you can bring teens in for continuous computer.

4. Attendees bring their own computers.

Talking Points:

- Show participants where they can record their login and password on the Tipsheet.
- Explain that the C2D website is set up so parents and teens can work separately, then the website combines their answers so they can later negotiate the final C2D Passenger Agreement.
- Let them know that they don’t have to worry about finishing the Passenger Agreement during the event. They can continue the process online at home.
- Make sure participants have the C2D homepage open.
- Ask participants to press the yellow “Get Started” arrow on the homepage.
- Ask them to fill out the information to create a login and password.
- When participants have all logged in, briefly explain the steps for creating the C2D Passenger Agreement online:
  - Participants will answer a series of questions.
  - Once they have completed and submitted the questionnaire, they will need to wait for their parent or teen to finish their own questionnaire. C2D will send the parent or teen an email to encourage them to get started.
  - When both parent and teen have completed their questionnaires, C2D will email them a customized draft agreement based on their answers.
  - For the last step, parent and teen will sit together at the computer to negotiate a final Passenger Agreement that works for their family. (Note: Due to time limitations at your Rally, this part should be completed later when they are at home.)
- Ask if there are any questions, and encourage the participants to get started.
- While participants are working on their agreements, volunteers can circulate and answer any individual questions.
- When the 25 minutes are up, tell participants it’s time to stop.
  - If they are done, remind them to click the SUBMIT button.
  - If they are not done they can click the “Save and Exit” button.
- Remind them to make sure they’ve recorded their login and password on their Tipsheet to take home.
- This program was designed so the parent and teen can customize it to meet their family’s needs.
- After you’ve negotiated your Passenger Agreement, you can go back to the website and update the Passenger Agreement as you see fit.
- The Wallet Card has been provided for you to take this opportunity to fill in your user name and password for future use.
- The Tipsheet has the event number that needs to be entered for each parent and teen in order to merge the parent and teen electronic passenger agreement.

WITHOUT COMPUTERS

Time: 15 minutes

Handouts:

- Tipsheet with 5 digit code inserted by facilitator
- C2D Agreement Template
- Wallet Cards
Facilitator Tips:

If your group includes both parents and teens (and you have enough time), encourage parents and teens to fill out their Templates separately and then sit together and review areas where their contract is similar, and areas that will need negotiation. They can use a blank Template and highlighters to create a final Passenger Agreement.

- If participants don’t have time to finish at the Rally, encourage them to take a blank Template home or go online at Countdown2Drive.org to finish the Passenger Agreement.

Talking Points:

- Discuss the C2D Website www.countdown2drive.org. If you have Internet and a computer available you can have the website up on a screen.
- Briefly review the Tipsheet’s suggestions for negotiating and enforcing the Passenger Agreement at home.
- Pass out highlighter markers. If you have both parents and teens participating, make sure parents’ markers are a different color than the teens’.
- Explain that participants will use the Template to create a Passenger Agreement. But they can finish the process online at home if they have computer access.
- Explain that the five rules at the top are the basic part of the Passenger Agreement. These rules address five major areas of risk for teen passengers and drivers.
- Many parents and teens want additional rules. These additional rules address other risks, help make parents feel more comfortable about allowing teens to ride with other drivers, and give teens opportunities to build their parents’ respect and trust.
- Parents should pledge to help their teens develop safe driving and passenger habits.
- Note that the agreement also includes rewards and consequences. These are not mandatory. But in our surveys, teens said they liked the ideas of earning rewards. And many parents believed the agreement needed to include consequences so teens would take it seriously.
- Ask participants to read through the Agreement Template and highlight the rules, parent pledges, consequences and rewards they want for their family. They can also write in their own.
- While participants are working on their Agreement Templates, volunteers can circulate and answer any questions.
- After 15 minutes, tell participants it’s time to stop.
- This program was designed so the parent and teen can customize it to meet their family’s needs.
- After you’ve negotiated your Passenger Agreement, you can go back to the website and update the Passenger Agreement as you see fit.
- The Wallet Card has been provided for you to take this opportunity to fill in your user name and password for future use.
- The Tipsheet has the event number that needs to be entered for each parent and teen in order to merge the parent and teen electronic passenger agreement.
STEP 8: Wrap Up

Handouts:
• Cost to Drive Activity Sheet

Thank you for coming to the Countdown2Drive program. We hope that this will open discussion within your family on how to be safe passengers and in the future safe drivers. We hope that you are leaving with some additional information and the start of a set of rules that you can feel comfortable discussing with your family and friends.

As we continue to share this program with families across the country, we’d love the opportunity to talk with you again after you’ve implemented your Passenger Agreement. After you complete your online agreement, you’ll receive an email with a link to a short questionnaire. We sincerely hope you’ll help us build the program by providing your feedback.

We also hope you’ll share what you have learned with others. The Countdown2Drive website has easy links to share the website with others or you can email the Passenger Agreement with another caregiver by the click of a button.

Some parents have even wanted to host a C2D event in their house, church or community group. If you’re interested, go to www.countdown2drive.org and on the homepage under “Resources” you will see “Coordinate Your Own Rally”.

It’s up to all of us to work together to make sure our teens are safe passengers today and will be safe drivers tomorrow.
Dear Community Partner:

Safe Kids Buckle Up, a program of Safe Kids Worldwide, is launching a new initiative targeted to young teens who are 13-14 and their parents to address the issue of being safe passengers today and safer drivers in the near future. The first year of driving is the most dangerous and we want families to begin to talk about the problems new drivers face long before the teen obtains a driving permit.

Our program is called Countdown2Drive (C2D) and we invite you to take a look at it (www.Countdown2Drive.org) to see how we will encourage families to set rules that have both rewards and penalties for the teen. Using an Agreement that the parent and the teen complete individually and then merge electronically, we hope to raise issues that will be discussed prior to the time when the teen is ready to drive. Teens can drive at age 14 in nine states and at age 15 in 33 states, so it’s important to start talking about driving safety early. Additionally, young teens often begin to ride more frequently in cars with teen drivers and we want to be sure they are safe passengers now.

Safe Kids USA has a long history of working with community partners. Our past work with the Urban League, NAACP and La Raza has provided valuable resources in minority communities. Our Safe Kids Buckle Up program has checked 1.3 million car seats, reached 21 million families, hosted 67,000 events and distributed 466,620 car seats to families in need. We have expanded our programs beyond the car seat age and now also work with older kids (through age 14) who spend less time with parental supervision and more time with peers.

Safe Kids USA has a wide network of local coalitions stretched across the United States and in 16 countries. Our local Safe Kids coalition works through our lead agency, _________________, where we share the mission to prevent unintentional injuries to children. We want to work with you to reach the teens in our community.

Please contact us at _________________ to let us know of your interest in this project. We value our partners and will work hard to help the teens you serve as they navigate this new road to independence safely.

10/11/10

INSERT SAFE KIDS COALITION OR CHAPTER LOGO HERE

For parents and teens alike, out of sight will likely mean out of mind. Help remind your family about the rules you have agreed to by printing out your Passenger Agreement and posting it in prominent place. It can be the refrigerator, next to the family computer, on a mirror – any place where you and your teen are likely to see it every day.

Share It.

Enforcement is always easier if your teen’s friends have the same rules. Spread the word about the Passenger Agreements. Share the C2D website on Facebook and tell your friends that you have signed an agreement. If your teen attends a community group or church, see if the youth leader would be interested in organizing a Countdown2Drive night for teens and their parents to negotiate agreements.

Change it up.

Your teen is changing fast, and your Passenger Agreement may need to change to keep up. The rules, rewards and consequences that work now for your teen may no longer be relevant in a few months. Mark your calendar now to review the agreement with your teen in six weeks. Then look over the agreement again each time your child earns a six-month or one-year reward (or more frequently as needed).

COMES TO OUR COUNTDOWN2DRIVE EVENT!

Date: __________________________
Time: __________________________
Location: ________________________
Phone Number: __________________
Website: _________________________

Countdown2Drive is a web-based program designed to bring parents and young teens (13- and 14-year-olds) together to talk about the key safety issues teens will face when riding as a passenger or as they prepare to drive.

• Teenagers need to be smart, safe passengers before they become good drivers.

• Parents and teens negotiate rules, rewards and consequences to build trust and respect necessary for safe passenger behavior.

• Teens ages 13 and 14 can build trust and respect with their parents by completing a Countdown2Drive Passenger Agreement.

TIPS FOR PARENTS AND TEENS

Safe passengers today. Good drivers tomorrow.

| www.Countdown2Drive.org |

My Countdown2Drive Event Code and Login

EMAIL: __________________________
PASSWORD: _________________________
RALLY CODE: ________

COME TO OUR COUNTDOWN2DRIVE EVENT!

Date: __________________________
Time: __________________________
Location: ________________________
Phone Number: __________________
Website: _________________________
Dear Dealer:

For 14 years, General Motors and the General Motors Foundation have partnered with Safe Kids Worldwide in the Safe Kids Buckle Up program. Together we have worked to serve families with the transportation safety needs of their children. Through 2010, our partnership has checked over 1.3 million car seats, held over 67,000 events and provided information to 21 million families. None of this would have been possible without the in-kind and financial support of GMF, GM and dealers.

We are now gearing up to meet the needs of teens ages 13 and 14. In nine states, teens as young as 14 can obtain a learner’s permit and in 33 states teens as young as 15 can drive so we want to get these teens ready to drive and drive safely! Our latest research shows that young teens are thinking a lot about driving. On the other hand, their parents are not.

Our new program, Countdown2Drive (C2D), helps parents and young teens negotiate a Passenger Agreement. The C2D Passenger Agreement helps families establish rules and expectations for behaviors that increase young teens’ safety as passengers and will also help increase their safety when they begin to drive. Things like using seat belts, having a curfew, getting good grades, looking at the state laws, etc., are just some of the things to be discussed well before the teen has a permit to drive. We hope that this C2D negotiated Passenger Agreement will help parents see their teen in a new light as they adopt more mature attitudes and behaviors. We hope that teens will see their parents in a new light as they offer the teen opportunities to prove themselves as “more mature.” Certainly, driving requires maturity and some of these kids will be driving in short order.

Our Countdown2Drive Passenger Agreement is web based but can also be done with paper and pencil. We are exploring sponsors and potential users such as insurance companies as future partners.

Safe Kids ______________ would like to work with your dealership to reach out to this age group and their parents just prior to them getting behind the wheel of a car. Here are some ways we could work together to help 13- and 14-year-olds and their parents start thinking about gearing up to drive:

- Car Show Rally — Invite the community’s 13- and 14-year-old teens and their parents to attend a car show at your dealership and have our coalition members provide C2D programming
- Tent Sale — Set up a booth and have our coalition members present and provide one-on-one sessions with parents and/or teens on site
- Service Center Visit — Have one of your service mechanics speak to a group of teens on basic vehicle maintenance such as oil changes, tire pressure and brakes which are all somewhat foreign to this age group of kids and then have coalition members provide C2D programming to teens and/or parents

We are planning to have a meeting with teens (parents) on ______________ and welcome your support. You are more than welcome to attend the local community-based rally as an interested business and sponsor to Safe Kids. We can talk about ways to work together to outreach to this new audience as they prepare to purchase and maintain vehicles in the near future.

Thank you for all your time and we look forward to partnering with your dealership. We know this new endeavor will help parents and teens prepare for their next big challenge, driving.

Signed,
Coalition Coordinator

10/11/10
COUNTDOWN 2: DRIVE
Safe passengers today. Good drivers tomorrow.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Countdown2Drive is a web-based program designed to bring parents and young teens (13 and 14) together to talk about the key safety issues teens will face when riding as passengers or as they prepare to drive. Research shows that as kids age they are less likely to wear seat belts and are more likely to engage in risky behaviors that may impact their safety on the road. Countdown2Drive highlights 5 safety non-negotiables for the parent and teen to discuss so there is no confusion as the teen spends increasing time away from the parent and more time with peers:

- Always wear a seat belt
- Never distract the driver
- Never ride with a driver who has been drinking or taking drugs
- Never ride with drivers who have too little experience
- Avoid drivers they know are unsafe

Countdown2Drive seeks to build a trust relationship between parents and teens through this web-based education program.

You can view the Countdown2Drive materials at www.countdown2drive.org. Safe Kids USA programs across the country will provide opportunities for parents alone, teens alone or parents and teens together to talk about safe passenger and driving tools necessary to keep teens safe as they ride with teen drivers and later become one. They will develop a Passenger Agreement that both parent and teen will follow. You may be asked to host an event or to participate in a special event such as a visit to the service department where a manager may talk to a group of kids about what is required to maintain a vehicle to be safe. Teens as young as age 14 can drive in 9 states and age 15 in 33 states, so it is not too early to begin teaching about road safety with this group of kids. We welcome your participation in this community education campaign.

10/11/10
Dear ____________:

Safe Kids __________ would like to take this opportunity to thank you for partnering with our coalition on ____________. The Countdown2Drive program is designed to make teens safer passengers today and good drivers tomorrow. Your partnership with Safe Kids __________ was essential in getting the word out to parents and teens that they need to start thinking about driving when still a passenger. The safety habits young teens develop as passengers will serve to decrease their risk during their most dangerous year of driving: the first year. Parents and caregivers will be encouraged to take advantage of “teachable moments” to improve safety knowledge and behavior.

Since the inception of Safe Kids Buckle Up, more than 21 million people have been exposed to events and community outreach efforts nationally. Certified child passenger safety technicians working through Safe Kids coalitions have examined 1.3 million child safety seats at 67,000 events and the program has donated 466,620 seats to families in need. Safe Kids USA, GM Foundation, dealerships, coalitions, volunteers and non- and for-profit organizations all come together to protect children and families from unintentional injuries and fatalities when in and around a vehicle. Thank you for being one of these vital partners that are making a difference and potentially saving a life.

Safe Kids Buckle Up has other programs that your dealership might be interested in sponsoring, which include:

Car Seat Check Up Events: Safe Kids coalitions nationwide, in partnership with dealerships and plants as well as other community organizations, host events open to the public that teach families to use child safety seats and safety belts correctly.

Child Safety Seat Inspection Stations: Safe Kids coalitions conduct checkups at 506 permanent locations with regular hours.

Technical Child Passenger Safety Training: Safe Kids coalitions conduct sessions ranging from two-hour awareness classes to 32-hour certification courses.

Educational Workshops: Coalitions teach community members and dealership and plant staff the basics of properly restraining children.

Automotive Safety Patch Program: Coalitions lead local Cub Scout packs and their families through a series of interactive vehicle safety stations set up at Chevrolet dealerships. Scouts earn the official Automotive Safety Patch once they successfully complete all five activities.

Safest Generation: A program for pre-teens that encourages safety practices while riding in a vehicle such as sitting in the back, proper seat belt usage, avoiding trunk entrapment and how to be a good passenger.

Thank you again. We couldn’t have done it without you and your staff’s support.

Sincerely,

10/11/10

INSERT SAFE KIDS COALITION OR CHAPTER LOGO HERE
Countdown2Drive is a web-based program designed to bring parents and young teens (13- and 14-year-olds) together to talk about the key safety issues teens will face when riding as a passenger or as they prepare to drive.

- Teenagers need to be smart, safe passengers before they become good drivers.
- Parents and teens negotiate rules, rewards and consequences to build the trust and respect necessary for safe passenger behavior.
- Teens ages 13 and 14 can build trust and respect with their parents by completing a Countdown2Drive Passenger Agreement.

**COME TO OUR COUNTDOWN2DRIVE EVENT!**

Date:
Time:
Location:
Phone Number:
Website:

**INSERT SAFE KIDS COALITION OR CHAPTER LOGO HERE**

**INSERT LEAD AGENCY LOGO HERE**

**INSERT DEALERSHIP LOGO HERE**
FACT SHEET

TEEN PASSENGERS

1. Adolescent and teen passengers are more likely to die if a teen driver is behind the wheel. Starting at ages 12-14, a child passenger’s risk of dying in a crash involving a teen driver doubles, and the risk continues to rise for each teen year.¹

2. Most teens (60%) know inexperience heavily influences safety, but only 15% correctly view peers as inexperienced drivers.²

3. In crashes involving drivers younger than 18, the greatest risk factors for death for passengers ages 8-17 were drivers younger than 16, restraint non-use and high speed roads (>55 and 45-54 mph).³

4. Sixty-three percent of teenage passenger deaths in 2008 occurred in vehicles driven by another teenager. Among deaths of passengers of all ages, 19% occurred when a teenager was driving.⁴

5. As children get older, their seat belt use rates tend to decline.⁵

6. Compared with other age groups, youths 16-24 have the lowest seat belt use rate. In 2008, 80% of teens in this age group wore seat belts. The national use rate is 83%.⁶

7. In 2005, 10% of high school students reported they rarely or never wear seat belts when riding with someone else.⁷

8. Parents tend to overestimate their teen’s seat belt use rate.⁸

9. Males have a lower seat belt use rate (81%) than females (86%) based on U.S. data in 2008.⁹

10. Teens as young as 13 are already thinking about driving.¹⁰

11. In 9 states kids as young as 14 can obtain a learners permit (Alaska, Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota).¹¹

12. In 33 states, kids as young as 15 can begin the driving process.¹²

13. Teens expressed interest in reaching an agreement with their parents about their transportation arrangements.¹³

² Ibid.
⁵ Ibid.
⁷ Safe Kids Worldwide Internal Research; Salter-Mitchell; March 2010
⁹ Ibid.
¹¹ Ibid.
¹² Ibid.
¹³ Safe Kids Worldwide Internal Research: SalterMitchell; March 2010
TEEN DRIVERS

1. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teenagers. They account for more than one in three deaths in this age group.14
2. In 2008, about 2,739 teen drivers in the U.S. ages 15-20 were killed and more than 228,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes.15
3. Crash risk is particularly high during the first year that teenagers are eligible to drive.16
4. New drivers have elevated crash risks, especially for teens younger than 18. Young drivers are at greater risk for injury and death because they lack judgment that comes with maturity and skill that comes with practice.17
5. The crash rate per mile driven is twice as high for 16-year-olds as it is for 18- to 19-year-olds.18

PARENTS OF TEEN PASSENGERS AND DRIVERS

1. Anticipatory guidance about teen passenger risks should begin by age 11.19
2. Teens with involved parents are twice as likely to wear seat belts, are half as likely to speed and are 30% less likely to use a cell phone while driving.20
3. Involved parents who set rules and monitor their teens’ driving behavior in a supportive way can lower their teens’ crash risk by half.21
4. Parents have considerable influence over their teens’ use of a cell phone while driving. When asked to choose people who would be able to influence their use of a cell phone while driving, 66% of teens said their parents would.22
5. Parents agreed that a Passenger Agreement for the 13- or 14-year-old needs to have rewards for compliance and penalties for non-compliance.23
6. Parents view their teen’s most important milestones at ages 13 and 14 as getting through high school, dating and driving/riding with teen drivers.24

21 Ibid.
7. Twenty percent of parents have discussed riding with teen drivers and driving with their 13- and 14-year-olds.²⁵
8. Twenty-four percent of parents ranked riding as a passenger with a teen driver as the #1 risk to their 13- or 14-year-old.²⁶
9. Thirty-one percent of parents with a 14-year-old or a driver less than 18 in the household consider teen drivers as the #1 risk.²⁷

²⁴ Ibid.
²⁵ Ibid.
²⁶ Ibid.
²⁷ Ibid.
TALKING POINTS

- Countdown2Drive is a program developed to ensure that young teen passengers are safe today in vehicles and safe drivers when they reach driving age in their state.
- Every state has different laws and requirements about when and how teens become licensed to drive.
- Research was conducted in March/April 2010 with focus groups of teens ages 13 and 14 and parents of teens of these ages. Additionally, a national online parent survey was conducted with 1,051 parents. Also, questions were posed on the national online teen omnibus survey (Harris Interactive YouthQuery) with 119 thirteen-year-olds and 121 fourteen-year-olds.
- Parents are held in high regard by their teen and hold the key to assuring their young teen’s safety. They can require seat belt use, prohibit cell phone use, limit the drivers their teen rides with and consider a variety of other measures to be sure their teen is as protected today as when they were in a car seat.
- Use of a negotiated agreement between teen and parent can clearly expose all the issues important to both parent and teen.
- Parents must ensure that any driver their young teen rides with has sufficient maturity and experience to safely transport their teen.
- Safe Kids Worldwide has developed a Passenger Agreement to reach young teens and their parents to enable them to talk about the driving process in advance of receiving the learners permit. Our goal is to open the door to discussion about issues that may impact the young driver’s first year of driving, the most dangerous year. Traffic safety discussions should occur early in the teen’s life and often as they ride in vehicles without their parents and as they prepare to drive.
- There is an insurance component being built into this program in hopes that an incentive will draw attention to the issue of being a safe passenger and later, a safe driver.

From the Bright Futures Section on Adolescence: 11-14 Year Visits publication from the American Academy of Pediatrics, here is information provided to physicians who care for young teens:

- To build a strong protective bond, parents must set clear boundaries for their teen. This includes having clear family rules, limits and expectations.
- The year or two prior to licensure can be used to teach the young teen about driving situations and may enable them to acquire driving knowledge, skills and abilities at a time when they are eager to learn.
- Research shows that teens whose parents set clear boundaries are less depressed, more likely to delay risk-taking behaviors and more successful academically than teens whose parents are more rigid and authoritarian in nature.
- Arguments with parents are common for the young teen.
- Teens are moving towards independence but this is a new role for them.
- Parents of young teens need to monitor behavior to be sure teens are safe as they become more independent.
- Mood swings with the young teen are not uncommon.
- Teens often challenge rules.
- Pre-teens and young teens think about their ability to drive long before their parents do.
- Pre-teens and young teens may already have driven a vehicle before they are permitted or licensed to do so.


10/11/10
General Motors Foundation is working with Safe Kids USA as they develop a new program to outreach kids 13-14 with vehicle safety messages, as they are currently passengers and soon to be drivers. This pre-driver program called Countdown2Drive (C2D) gets the attention of the 13- and 14-year-old and his or her parent at a time when teens are interested in driving and waiting for the day when they can obtain a permit. Most parents of teens this age have not yet considered their teen as a driver. This program gives them an opportunity to increase awareness and plan family guidelines and rules to be sure the teen is safe now as a passenger and in the future as they prepare to be drivers. Our research showed that many young teens, unknown to their parents, had already driven by the time they were 11 or 12. In 9 states, teens can drive at age 14. In 33 states, they can drive at 15. Starting early to plant the seeds of safety is something kids and their parents understand. We hope you will want to bring this program to your employees and their families when you have your next safety day or health fair. We invite you to learn more about Countdown2Drive so you can help your employees start a dialog at home to be sure their teens are as protected as possible through the difficult teen years. More teens will die in car crashes than in any other way. We want to avoid that tragedy for the employees at your workplace.

Countdown2Drive is a web-based program designed to bring parents and young teens (13 and 14) together to talk about the key safety issues teens will face when riding as a passenger or as they prepare to drive. Research shows that as kids age they are less likely to wear seat belts and are more likely to engage in risky behaviors that may impact their safety on the road. Countdown2Drive highlights 5 safety non-negotiables for the parent and teen to discuss so there is no confusion as the teen spends increasing time away from the parent and more time with peers:

- Always wear a seat belt
- Never distract the driver
- Never ride with a driver who has been drinking or taking drugs
- Never ride with drivers who have too little experience
- Avoid drivers they know are unsafe

C2D seeks to build a trust relationship between parents and teens through this web-based education program.

You can view the Countdown2Drive materials at [www.countdown2drive.org](http://www.countdown2drive.org). Safe Kids USA programs across the country will provide opportunities for parents alone, teens alone or parents and teens together to talk about safe passenger and driving tools necessary to keep teens safe as they ride with teen drivers and later become one. They will develop a Passenger Agreement that both parent and teen will follow.

Our staff and coalition members are here to help you introduce this new safety program to your employees and their families. We welcome your participation in this community education campaign and will do everything possible to provide you the tools you will need to make this available. General Motors has been a proud supporter of Safe Kids USA programs since 1997. Contact us at ________________.

10/11/10
Date

Dear ______________:

Safe Kids ______________ would like to take this opportunity to thank you for partnering with us on our Countdown2Down initiative. The Countdown2Drive program is designed to make safer teen passengers today and good drivers tomorrow. Your partnership with Safe Kids ______________ was essential in getting the word out to parents and teens that driver safety starts with passenger safety. The safety behaviors developed now can carry over to the most dangerous year of driving: the first year. Parents and caregivers will be encouraged to take advantage of “teachable moments” to improve safety knowledge and behavior.

Since the inception of Safe Kids Buckle Up, more than 21 million people have been exposed to events and community outreach efforts nationally. Certified child passenger safety technicians working through Safe Kids coalitions have examined 1.3 million child safety seats at 67,000 events and the program has donated 466,620 seats to families in need. Safe Kids USA, GM Foundation, dealerships, coalitions, volunteers and non- and for-profit organizations all come together to protect children and families from unintentional injuries and fatalities when in and around a vehicle. Thank you for being one of these vital partners that are making a difference and potentially saving a life.

Safe Kids Buckle Up has other programs that your dealership might be interested in sponsoring, which include:

**Car Seat Check Up Events:** Safe Kids coalitions nationwide, in partnership with dealerships and plants as well as other community organizations, host events open to the public that teach families to use child safety seats and safety belts correctly.

**Child Safety Seat Inspection Stations:** Safe Kids coalitions conduct checkups at 506 permanent locations with regular hours.

**Technical Child Passenger Safety Training:** Safe Kids coalitions conduct sessions ranging from two-hour awareness classes to 32-hour certification courses.

**Educational Workshops:** Coalitions teach community members and dealership and staff the basics of properly restraining children.

**Automotive Safety Patch Program:** Coalitions lead local Cub Scout packs and their families through a series of interactive vehicle safety stations set up at Chevrolet dealerships. Scouts earn the official Automotive Safety Patch once they successfully complete all five activities.

**Safest Generation:** A program for pre-teens that encourages safety practices while riding in a vehicle such as sitting in the back, proper seat belt usage, avoiding trunk entrapment and how to be a good passenger.

Thank you again. We couldn’t have done it without you and your staff’s support. Our hope is that your employees will benefit from this program.

Sincerely,
Countdown2Drive is a web-based program designed to bring parents and young teens (13- and 14-year-olds) together to talk about the key safety issues teens will face when riding as a passenger or as they prepare to drive.

- Teenagers need to be smart, safe passengers before they become good drivers.
- Parents and teens negotiate rules, rewards and consequences to build the trust and respect necessary for safe passenger behavior.
- Teens ages 13 and 14 can build trust and respect with their parents by completing a Countdown2Drive Passenger Agreement.
- Plant employees with 13- and 14-year-olds will appreciate the opportunity to guide them to be safer passengers now and better drivers in the future.

COME TO OUR COUNTDOWN2DRIVE EVENT!

Date:
Time:
Location:
Phone Number:
Website:
FACT SHEET

TEEN PASSENGERS

1. Adolescent and teen passengers are more likely to die if a teen driver is behind the wheel. Starting at ages 12-14, a child passenger’s risk of dying in a crash involving a teen driver doubles, and the risk continues to rise for each teen year.¹
2. Most teens (60%) know inexperience heavily influences safety, but only 15% correctly view peers as inexperienced drivers.²
3. In crashes involving drivers younger than 18, the greatest risk factors for death for passengers ages 8-17 were drivers younger than 16, restraint non-use and high speed roads (>55 and 45-54 mph).³
4. Sixty-three percent of teenage passenger deaths in 2008 occurred in vehicles driven by another teenager. Among deaths of passengers of all ages, 19% occurred when a teenager was driving.⁴
5. As children get older, their seat belt use rates tend to decline.⁵
6. Compared with other age groups, youths 16-24 have the lowest seat belt use rate. In 2008, 80% of teens in this age group wore seat belts. The national use rate is 83%.⁶
7. In 2005, 10% of high school students reported they rarely or never wear seat belts when riding with someone else.⁷
8. Parents tend to overestimate their teen’s seat belt use rate.⁸
9. Males have a lower seat belt use rate (81%) than females (86%) based on U.S. data in 2008.⁹
10. Teens as young as 13 are already thinking about driving.¹⁰
11. In 9 states kids as young as 14 can obtain a learners permit (Alaska, Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota).¹¹
12. In 33 states, kids as young as 15 can begin the driving process.¹²
13. Teens expressed interest in reaching an agreement with their parents about their transportation arrangements.¹³

² Ibid.
⁶ Ibid.
⁸ Safe Kids Worldwide Internal Research: Salter-Mitchell; March 2010
¹⁰ Ibid.
¹² Ibid.
¹³ Safe Kids Worldwide Internal Research: SalterMitchell; March 2010
TEEN DRIVERS

1. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teenagers. They account for more than one in three deaths in this age group.\(^{14}\)
2. In 2008, about 2,739 teen drivers in the U.S. ages 15-20 were killed and more than 228,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes.\(^{15}\)
3. Crash risk is particularly high during the first year that teenagers are eligible to drive.\(^{16}\)
4. New drivers have elevated crash risks, especially for teens younger than 18. Young drivers are at greater risk for injury and death because they lack judgment that comes with maturity and skill that comes with practice.\(^{17}\)
5. The crash rate per mile driven is twice as high for 16-year-olds as it is for 18- to 19-year-olds.\(^{18}\)

PARENTS OF TEEN PASSENGERS AND DRIVERS

1. Anticipatory guidance about teen passenger risks should begin by age 11.\(^{19}\)
2. Teens with involved parents are twice as likely to wear seat belts, are half as likely to speed and are 30% less likely to use a cell phone while driving.\(^{20}\)
3. Involved parents who set rules and monitor their teens’ driving behavior in a supportive way can lower their teens’ crash risk by half.\(^{21}\)
4. Parents have considerable influence over their teens’ use of a cell phone while driving. When asked to choose people who would be able to influence their use of a cell phone while driving, 66% of teens said their parents would.\(^{22}\)
5. Parents agreed that a Passenger Agreement for the 13- or 14-year-old needs to have rewards for compliance and penalties for non-compliance.\(^ {23}\)
6. Parents view their teen’s most important milestones at ages 13 and 14 as getting through high school, dating and driving/riding with teen drivers.\(^{24}\)


\(^{21}\) Ibid.


7. Twenty percent of parents have discussed riding with teen drivers and driving with their 13- and 14-year-olds.\textsuperscript{25}
8. Twenty-four percent of parents ranked riding as a passenger with a teen driver as the #1 risk to their 13- or 14-year-old.\textsuperscript{26}
9. Thirty-one percent of parents with a 14-year-old or a driver less than 18 in the household consider teen drivers as the #1 risk.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
**TALKING POINTS**

- Countdown2Drive is a program developed to ensure that young teen passengers are safe today in vehicles and safe drivers when they reach driving age in their state.
- Every state has different laws and requirements about when and how teens become licensed to drive.
- Research was conducted in March/April 2010 with focus groups of teens ages 13 and 14 and parents of teens of these ages. Additionally, a national online parent survey was conducted with 1,051 parents. Also, questions were posed on the national online teen omnibus survey (Harris Interactive YouthQuery) with 119 thirteen-year-olds and 121 fourteen-year-olds.
- Parents are held in high regard by their teen and hold the key to assuring their young teen’s safety. They can require seat belt use, prohibit cell phone use, limit the drivers their teen rides with and consider a variety of other measures to be sure their teen is as protected today as when they were in a car seat.
- Use of a negotiated agreement between teen and parent can clearly expose all the issues important to both parent and teen.
- Parents must ensure that any driver their young teen rides with has sufficient maturity and experience to safely transport their teen.
- Safe Kids Worldwide has developed a Passenger Agreement to reach young teens and their parents to enable them to talk about the driving process in advance of receiving the learners permit. Our goal is to open the door to discussion about issues that may impact the young driver’s first year of driving, the most dangerous year.
- Traffic safety discussions should occur early in the teen’s life and often as they ride in vehicles without their parents and as they prepare to drive.
- There is an insurance component being built into this program in hopes that an incentive will draw attention to the issue of being a safe passenger and later, a safe driver.

From the Bright Futures Section on Adolescence: 11-14 Year Visits publication from the American Academy of Pediatrics, here is information provided to physicians who care for young teens:

- To build a strong protective bond, parents must set clear boundaries for their teen. This includes having clear family rules, limits and expectations.
- The year or two prior to licensure can be used to teach the young teen about driving situations and may enable them to acquire driving knowledge, skills and abilities at a time when they are eager to learn.
- Research shows that teens whose parents set clear boundaries are less depressed, more likely to delay risk-taking behaviors and more successful academically than teens whose parents are more rigid and authoritarian in nature.
- Arguments with parents are common for the young teen.
- Teens are moving towards independence but this is a new role for them.
- Parents of young teens need to monitor behavior to be sure teens are safe as they become more independent.
- Mood swings with the young teen are not uncommon.
- Teens often challenge rules.
- Pre-teens and young teens think about their ability to drive long before their parents do.
- Pre-teens and young teens may already have driven a vehicle before they are permitted or licensed to do so.

Dear Parent,

I am sending this letter because you or your teen has been invited to a Countdown2Drive event. I wanted to tell you about the program and let you know what to expect.

As kids hit the teen years, the biggest risks they face come from riding or driving in cars. Nothing kills more teens than car crashes. That’s why Safe Kids USA has created Countdown2Drive, an innovative new traffic safety program for 13- and 14-year-olds and their parents.

Although driving may seem a long way off at this age, it’s really only a few short years, or even months, away. Moreover, young teens are increasingly likely to ride with older teens that have a license. Both driving and riding in cars, especially if an inexperienced driver is at the wheel, is risky for teenagers.

The good news is there are habits teens can develop to help keep them safe both as passengers and drivers. And that’s what Countdown2Drive is all about.

Countdown2Drive helps families negotiate a customized Passenger Agreement that sets clear expectations for how teens should behave when they are riding in a car. The Agreement gives your teen a chance to earn your trust, and can help you worry less when you are not there to supervise.

At the Countdown2Drive event, you or your teen will begin the process of negotiating your custom Passenger Agreement. Both parent and teen need to participate to create the Passenger Agreement. If only one of you will be attending, be sure to follow up to make sure your teen has signed up on Countdown2Drive.org.

Countdown2Drive is a brand new program, and I realize you may have lots of questions. I look forward to seeing you or your teen at the event at [insert time, date and location]. Meanwhile, please feel free visit Countdown2Drive.org to find out more. Or you can contact me at [insert contact information].

Sincerely,

[name of event coordinator]
[title of event coordinator]

10/11/10
Safe Kids ______________ invites you to learn about and use our NEW Countdown2Drive (C2D) program for kids 13-14 who may be in your activity group or camp. C2D is a web-based program (although it can also be done without computers) designed to bring young teens (13 and 14) together to talk about the key safety issues they will face when riding as a passenger or as they prepare to drive.

Research shows that as kids get older they are less likely to wear seat belts and are more likely to engage in risky behaviors that may impact their safety on the road. Countdown2Drive helps families set clear expectations that can reduce teens' risks. Once teens have started in the program, their parents are also invited to participate via the web. Countdown2Drive highlights 5 safety non-negotiables for the parent and teen to discuss so there is no confusion as the teen spends increasing time away from the parent and more time with peers:

- Always wear a seat belt
- Never distract the driver
- Never ride with a driver who has been drinking or taking drugs
- Never ride with drivers who have too little experience
- Avoid drivers they know are unsafe

C2D seeks to build a trust relationship between parents and teens through this web-based education program.

You can view the Countdown2Drive materials at www.countdown2drive.org. Safe Kids USA programs across the country will provide opportunities for parents alone, teens alone or parents and teens together to talk about safe passenger and driving tools necessary to keep teens alive as they ride with teen drivers and later become one. They will develop a Passenger Agreement that both parent and teen will design and follow. Your activity group or camp may be the ideal place for our coalition coordinator to come and work with the teens as they anticipate the day when they can drive. Teens as young as age 14 can drive in 9 states, and age 15 in 33 states so it is not too early to begin teaching about road safety with this group of kids. We welcome your participation in this community education campaign.

Please contact me at _____________ to make arrangements should you want to be involved in this program.

10/11/10
Dear Community Partner:

Safe Kids Buckle Up, a program of Safe Kids Worldwide, is launching a new initiative targeted to young teens who are 13-14 and their parents to address the issue of being safe passengers today and safer drivers in the near future. The first year of driving is the most dangerous and we want families to begin to talk about the problems new drivers face long before the teen obtains a driving permit.

Our program is called Countdown2Drive (C2D) and we invite you to take a look at it (www.Countdown2Drive.org) to see how we will encourage families to set rules that have both rewards and penalties for the teen. Using an Agreement that the parent and the teen complete individually and then merge electronically, we hope to raise issues that will be discussed prior to the time when the teen is ready to drive. Teens can drive at age 14 in nine states and at age 15 in 33 states, so it’s important to start talking about driving safety early. Additionally, young teens often begin to ride more frequently in cars with teen drivers and we want to be sure they are safe passengers now.

Safe Kids USA has a long history of working with community partners. Our past work with the Urban League, NAACP and La Raza has provided valuable resources in minority communities. Our Safe Kids Buckle Up program has checked 1.3 million car seats, reached 21 million families, hosted 67,000 events and distributed 466,620 car seats to families in need. We have expanded our programs beyond the car seat age and now also work with older kids (through age 14) who spend less time with parental supervision and more time with peers. We hope you will join us in this effort.

Safe Kids USA has a wide network of local coalitions stretched across the United States and in 16 countries. Our local Safe Kids coalition works through our lead agency, _________________, where we share the mission to prevent unintentional injuries to children. We want to work with you to reach the teens in our community.

Please contact us at _________________ to let us know of your interest in this project. We value our partners and will work hard to help the teens you serve as they navigate this new road to independence safely.

10/11/10
Countdown2Drive is a web-based program designed to bring parents and young teens (13- and 14-year-olds) together to talk about the key safety issues teens will face when riding as a passenger or as they prepare to drive.

- Teenagers need to be smart, safe passengers before they become good drivers.
- Parents and teens negotiate rules, rewards and consequences to build the trust and respect necessary for safe passenger behavior.
- Teens ages 13 and 14 can build trust and respect with their parents by completing a Countdown2Drive Passenger Agreement.

COME JOIN SAFE KIDS AND [INSERT GROUP NAME HERE]!

Date:
Time:
Location:
Phone Number:
Website:
FACT SHEET

TEEN PASSENGERS

1. Adolescent and teen passengers are more likely to die if a teen driver is behind the wheel. Starting at ages 12-14, a child passenger’s risk of dying in a crash involving a teen driver doubles, and the risk continues to rise for each teen year.1

2. Most teens (60%) know inexperience heavily influences safety, but only 15% correctly view peers as inexperienced drivers.2

3. In crashes involving drivers younger than 18, the greatest risk factors for death for passengers ages 8-17 were drivers younger than 16, restraint non-use and high speed roads (>55 and 45-54 mph).3

4. Sixty-three percent of teenage passenger deaths in 2008 occurred in vehicles driven by another teenager. Among deaths of passengers of all ages, 19% occurred when a teenager was driving.4

5. As children get older, their seat belt use rates tend to decline.5

6. Compared with other age groups, youths 16-24 have the lowest seat belt use rate. In 2008, 80% of teens in this age group wore seat belts. The national use rate is 83%.6

7. In 2005, 10% of teenage passenger deaths in 2008 occurred in vehicles driven by another teenager. Among deaths of passengers of all ages, 19% occurred when a teenager was driving.7

8. Parents tend to overestimate their teen’s seat belt use rate.8

9. Males have a lower seat belt use rate (81%) than females (86%) based on U.S. data in 2008.9

10. Teens as young as 13 are already thinking about driving.10

11. In 9 states kids as young as 14 can obtain a learners permit (Alaska, Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota).11

12. In 33 states, kids as young as 15 can begin the driving process.12

13. Teens expressed interest in reaching an agreement with their parents about their transportation arrangements.13

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2 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
8 Safe Kids Worldwide Internal Research: Salter-Mitchell; March 2010
10 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Safe Kids Worldwide Internal Research: Salter-Mitchell; March 2010
TEEN DRIVERS

1. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teenagers. They account for more than one in three deaths in this age group.  
2. In 2008, about 2,739 teen drivers in the U.S. ages 15-20 were killed and more than 228,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes.
3. Crash risk is particularly high during the first year that teenagers are eligible to drive.
4. New drivers have elevated crash risks, especially for teens younger than 18. Young drivers are at greater risk for injury and death because they lack judgment that comes with maturity and skill that comes with practice.
5. The crash rate per mile driven is twice as high for 16-year-olds as it is for 18- to 19-year-olds.

PARENTS OF TEEN PASSENGERS AND DRIVERS

1. Anticipatory guidance about teen passenger risks should begin by age 11.
2. Teens with involved parents are twice as likely to wear seat belts, are half as likely to speed and are 30% less likely to use a cell phone while driving.
3. Involved parents who set rules and monitor their teens’ driving behavior in a supportive way can lower their teens’ crash risk by half.
4. Parents have considerable influence over their teens’ use of a cell phone while driving. When asked to choose people who would be able to influence their use of a cell phone while driving, 66% of teens said their parents would.
5. Parents agreed that a Passenger Agreement for the 13- or 14-year-old needs to have rewards for compliance and penalties for non-compliance.
6. Parents view their teen’s most important milestones at ages 13 and 14 as getting through high school, dating and driving/riding with teen drivers.

21 Ibid.
7. Twenty percent of parents have discussed riding with teen drivers and driving with their 13- and 14-year-olds.  
8. Twenty-four percent of parents ranked riding as a passenger with a teen driver as the #1 risk to their 13- or 14-year-old.  
9. Thirty-one percent of parents with a 14-year-old or a driver less than 18 in the household consider teen drivers as the #1 risk.

24  Ibid.  
25  Ibid  
26  Ibid.  
27  Ibid
TALKING POINTS

- Countdown2Drive is a program developed to ensure that young teen passengers are safe today in vehicles and safe drivers when they reach driving age in their state.
- Every state has different laws and requirements about when and how teens become licensed to drive.
- Research was conducted in March/April 2010 with focus groups of teens ages 13 and 14 and parents of teens of these ages. Additionally, a national online parent survey was conducted with 1,051 parents. Also, questions were posed on the national online teen omnibus survey (Harris Interactive YouthQuery) with 119 thirteen-year-olds and 121 fourteen-year-olds.
- Parents are held in high regard by their teen and hold the key to assuring their young teen’s safety. They can require seat belt use, prohibit cell phone use, limit the drivers their teen rides with and consider a variety of other measures to be sure their teen is as protected today as when they were in a car seat.
- Use of a negotiated agreement between teen and parent can clearly expose all the issues important to both parent and teen.
- Parents must ensure that any driver their young teen rides with has sufficient maturity and experience to safely transport their teen.
- Safe Kids Worldwide has developed a Passenger Agreement to reach young teens and their parents to enable them to talk about the driving process in advance of receiving the learners permit. Our goal is to open the door to discussion about issues that may impact the young driver’s first year of driving, the most dangerous year. Traffic safety discussions should occur early in the teen’s life and often as they ride in vehicles without their parents and as they prepare to drive.
- There is an insurance component being built into this program in hopes that an incentive will draw attention to the issue of being a safe passenger and later, a safe driver.

From the Bright Futures Section on Adolescence: 11-14 Year Visits publication from the American Academy of Pediatrics, here is information provided to physicians who care for young teens:

- To build a strong protective bond, parents must set clear boundaries for their teen. This includes having clear family rules, limits and expectations.
- The year or two prior to licensure can be used to teach the young teen about driving situations and may enable them to acquire driving knowledge, skills and abilities at a time when they are eager to learn.
- Research shows that teens whose parents set clear boundaries are less depressed, more likely to delay risk-taking behaviors and more successful academically than teens whose parents are more rigid and authoritarian in nature.
- Arguments with parents are common for the young teen.
- Teens are moving towards independence but this is a new role for them.
- Parents of young teens need to monitor behavior to be sure teens are safe as they become more independent.
- Mood swings with the young teen are not uncommon.
- Teens often challenge rules.
- Pre-teens and young teens think about their ability to drive long before their parents do.
- Pre-teens and young teens may already have driven a vehicle before they are permitted or licensed to do so.

Dear Parent:

Safe Kids Buckle Up, a program of Safe Kids USA, in launching a new initiative targeted to young teens who are 13-14 and their parents to address the issue of being safe passengers today and safer drivers in the near future. The first year of driving is the most dangerous and we want families to begin to talk about the problems new drivers face long before the teen obtains a driving permit.

Our program is called Countdown2Drive (C2D) and we invite you to take a look at it (www.Countdown2Drive.org) to see how we will encourage families to set rules that have both rewards and penalties for the teen. Using an Agreement that the parent and the teen complete individually and then merge electronically, we hope to raise issues that will be discussed prior to the time when the teen is ready to drive. Teens can drive at age 14 in nine states and at age 15 in 33 states, so it’s important to start talking about driving safety early. Additionally, young teens often begin to ride more frequently in cars with teen drivers and we want to be sure they are safe passengers now.

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Safe Kids has a wide network of local coalitions stretched across the United States and in 16 countries and Safe Kids _________________ is one of these coalitions. Our lead agency is _________________ and we share a mission to protect children in our community from unintentional injuries. Part of my job involves child safety issues so our mission dovetails nicely with the C2D program. We can help you plan your at home C2D meeting as you outreach your friends and family.

Please contact us at _________________ to let us know of your interest in this project. We value our partners and will work hard to help your teen as he or she navigates this new road to independence safely.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

10/11/10
FACT SHEET

TEEN PASSENGERS

1. Adolescent and teen passengers are more likely to die if a teen driver is behind the wheel. Starting at ages 12-14, a child passenger’s risk of dying in a crash involving a teen driver doubles, and the risk continues to rise for each teen year.1
2. Most teens (60%) know inexperience heavily influences safety, but only 15% correctly view peers as inexperienced drivers.2
3. In crashes involving drivers younger than 18, the greatest risk factors for death for passengers ages 8-17 were drivers younger than 16, restraint non-use and high speed roads (>55 and 45-54 mph).3
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2 Ibid.
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• Every state has different laws and requirements about when and how teens become licensed to drive.
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• Teens often challenge rules.
• Pre-teens and young teens think about their ability to drive long before their parents do.
• Pre-teens and young teens may already have driven a vehicle before they are permitted or licensed to do so.

Date

Dear ____________:

Safe Kids ____________ is very excited to roll out a new teen pre-driver program called Countdown2Drive within our community and needs your assistance. Countdown2Drive (C2D) helps 13- and 14-year-olds and their parents negotiate a Passenger Agreement that helps increase young teens’ safety as passengers and will also decrease their risks when they begin to drive. The agreement helps families set expectations for behaviors like using seat belts, having a curfew, getting good grades, looking at the state laws, etc., well before the teen has a permit to drive. We hope that this C2D negotiated Passenger Agreement will help parents see their teen in a new light as they adopt more mature attitudes and behaviors. We hope that teens will see their parents in a new light as they offer the teen opportunities to prove themselves as more mature.

C2D works with both teens and parents. We want parents to understand what kids will face as they prepare to drive and we want kids to recognize that their parents probably have great fears for their safety as they approach driving age. Our goal is to be sure the teen is as safe as possible now (using seat belts, not distracting a driver, and not riding with someone who has been drinking or using drugs) in the hopes that they will carry these safety behaviors into their first year of driving.

Safe Kids ____________ is a non-profit organization that is funded by grants, donations and our lead agency, ____________. We rely on professional volunteers to help us educate and promote injury prevention in children ages 0-14. In order to attract the teen audience we need help from sponsors to provide in-kind items and funding to purchase necessary supplies, like refreshments and volunteer recognition gifts to reward the teens for participating. We are expecting ____________ teens/parents and are hoping you can provide ____________. We would be happy to promote you as a sponsor and supporter of the event. If we need to make an official request to your corporate office, please provide me with their contact information and any special requirements necessary.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to working with you in the very near future.

Sincerely,

10/11/10
Dear ______________:

Safe Kids ______________ would like to take this opportunity to thank you for partnering with our coalition on _______________. The Countdown2Drive program is designed to make safer passengers today and good drivers tomorrow. Your partnership with Safe Kids ______________ was essential in getting the word out to parents and teens that driver safety starts with passenger safety. The safety behaviors developed now can carry over to the most dangerous year of driving: the first year. Parents and caregivers will be encouraged to take advantage of “teachable moments” to improve safety knowledge and behavior.

Since the inception of Safe Kids Buckle Up, more than 21 million people have been exposed to events and community outreach efforts nationally. Certified child passenger safety technicians working through Safe Kids coalitions have examined 1.3 million child safety seats at 67,000 events and the program has donated 466,620 seats to families in need. Safe Kids USA, GM Foundation, dealerships, coalitions, volunteers and non- and for-profit organizations all come together to protect children and families from unintentional injuries and fatalities when in and around a vehicle. Thank you for being one of these vital partners that are making a difference and potentially saving a life.

Your donation of ______________ helped us tremendously to make the program a success. If you are interested in being a Safe Kids member, please let me know and I will send you the information about our next meeting.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

10/11/10
FACT SHEET

TEEN PASSENGERS

1. Adolescent and teen passengers are more likely to die if a teen driver is behind the wheel. Starting at ages 12-14, a child passenger’s risk of dying in a crash involving a teen driver doubles, and the risk continues to rise for each teen year.1

2. Most teens (60%) know inexperience heavily influences safety, but only 15% correctly view peers as inexperienced drivers.2

3. In crashes involving drivers younger than 18, the greatest risk factors for death for passengers ages 8-17 were drivers younger than 16, restraint non-use and high speed roads (>55 and 45-54 mph).3

4. Sixty-three percent of teenage passenger deaths in 2008 occurred in vehicles driven by another teenager. Among deaths of passengers of all ages, 19% occurred when a teenager was driving.4

5. As children get older, their seat belt use rates tend to decline.5

6. Compared with other age groups, youths 16-24 have the lowest seat belt use rate. In 2008, 80% of teens in this age group wore seat belts. The national use rate is 83%.6

7. In 2005, 10% of high school students reported they rarely or never wear seat belts when riding with someone else.7

8. Parents tend to overestimate their teen’s seat belt use rate.8

9. Males have a lower seat belt use rate (81%) than females (86%) based on U.S. data in 2008.9

10. Teens as young as 13 are already thinking about driving.10

11. In 9 states kids as young as 14 can obtain a learners permit (Alaska, Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota).11

12. In 33 states, kids as young as 15 can begin the driving process.12

13. Teens expressed interest in reaching an agreement with their parents about their transportation arrangements.13

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2 Ibid.


6 Ibid.


8 Safe Kids Worldwide Internal Research: Salter-Mitchell; March 2010


10 Ibid.


12 Ibid.

13 Safe Kids Worldwide Internal Research: Salter-Mitchell; March 2010
TEEN DRIVERS
1. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teenagers. They account for more than one in three deaths in this age group.14
2. In 2008, about 2,739 teen drivers in the U.S. ages 15-20 were killed and more than 228,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes.15
3. Crash risk is particularly high during the first year that teenagers are eligible to drive.16
4. New drivers have elevated crash risks, especially for teens younger than 18. Young drivers are at greater risk for injury and death because they lack judgment that comes with maturity and skill that comes with practice.17
5. The crash rate per mile driven is twice as high for 16-year-olds as it is for 18- to 19-year-olds.18

PARENTS OF TEEN PASSENGERS AND DRIVERS
1. Anticipatory guidance about teen passenger risks should begin by age 11.19
2. Teens with involved parents are twice as likely to wear seat belts, are half as likely to speed and are 30% less likely to use a cell phone while driving.20
3. Involved parents who set rules and monitor their teens’ driving behavior in a supportive way can lower their teens’ crash risk by half.21
4. Parents have considerable influence over their teens’ use of a cell phone while driving. When asked to choose people who would be able to influence their use of a cell phone while driving, 66% of teens said their parents would.22
5. Parents agreed that a Passenger Agreement for the 13- or 14-year-old needs to have rewards for compliance and penalties for non-compliance.23
6. Parents view their teen’s most important milestones at ages 13 and 14 as getting through high school, dating and driving/riding with teen drivers.24

20 Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), 2009. Research Institute, National Young Driver Survey, Teen Driver Source URL: http://www.teendriverssource.org/more_pages/page/why_your_teen_needs_you/for_parents
21 Ibid.
7. Twenty percent of parents have discussed riding with teen drivers and driving with their 13- and 14-year-olds.25
8. Twenty-four percent of parents ranked riding as a passenger with a teen driver as the #1 risk to their 13- or 14-year-old.26
9. Thirty-one percent of parents with a 14-year-old or a driver less than 18 in the household consider teen drivers as the #1 risk.27
TALKING POINTS

• Countdown2Drive is program developed to ensure that young teen passengers are safe today in vehicles and safe drivers when they reach driving age in their state.
• Every state has different laws and requirements about when and how teens become licensed to drive.
• Research was conducted in March/April 2010 with focus groups of teens ages 13 and 14 and parents of teens of these ages. Additionally, a national online parent survey was conducted with 1,051 parents. Also, questions were posed on the national online teen omnibus survey (Harris Interactive YouthQuery) with 119 thirteen-year-olds and 121 fourteen-year-olds.
• Parents are held in high regard by their teen and hold the key to assuring their young teen’s safety. They can require seat belt use, prohibit cell phone use, limit the drivers their teen rides with and consider a variety of other measures to be sure their teen is as protected today as when they were in a car seat.
• Use of a negotiated agreement between teen and parent can clearly expose all the issues important to both parent and teen.
• Parents must ensure that any driver their young teen rides with has sufficient maturity and experience to safely transport their teen.
• Safe Kids Worldwide has developed a Passenger Agreement to reach young teens and their parents to enable them to talk about the driving process in advance of receiving the learners permit. Our goal is to open the door to discussion about issues that may impact the young driver’s first year of driving, the most dangerous year. Traffic safety discussions should occur early in the teen’s life and often as they ride in vehicles without their parents and as they prepare to drive.
• There is an insurance component being built into this program in hopes that an incentive will draw attention to the issue of being a safe passenger and later, a safe driver.

From the Bright Futures Section on Adolescence: 11-14 Year Visits publication from the American Academy of Pediatrics, here is information provided to physicians who care for young teens:
• To build a strong protective bond, parents must set clear boundaries for their teen. This includes having clear family rules, limits and expectations.
• The year or two prior to licensure can be used to teach the young teen about driving situations and may enable them to acquire driving knowledge, skills and abilities at a time when they are eager to learn.
• Research shows that teens whose parents set clear boundaries are less depressed, more likely to delay risk-taking behaviors and more successful academically than teens whose parents are more rigid and authoritarian in nature.
• Arguments with parents are common for the young teen.
• Teens are moving towards independence but this is a new role for them.
• Parents of young teens need to monitor behavior to be sure teens are safe as they become more independent.
• Mood swings with the young teen are not uncommon.
• Teens often challenge rules.
• Pre-teens and young teens think about their ability to drive long before their parents do.
• Pre-teens and young teens may already have driven a vehicle before they are permitted or licensed to do so.

Dear Volunteers:

Safe Kids _______________ needs volunteers to help with the Countdown 2Drive Program on
_______________ at _______________.

Young teens are thinking about a lot of things these days: high school, dating, driving, friends and many
other things parents may not even know about. We want to be sure that teens are as safe as possible in a
car to get through the teen years and make it into adulthood uninjured and safe. We know caregivers and
parents can’t always protect teens during adolescence as they begin to spend more and more unsupervised
time with peers. Therefore, teens must learn to protect themselves and the sooner the better.

Our program, Countdown2Drive, is a way for families to talk about and set boundaries around how to be
safe in a car. The C2D program is designed for parents and teens ages 13 or 14 to negotiate rules that will
help teens stay safe as they begin riding more frequently in cars with drivers other than their parents. A
few things will make them safer on every ride, such as using a seat belt, not distracting the driver, and
never riding with a driver who has been drinking or using drugs. These safe passenger behaviors also set
the stage to help teens become safer drivers a few short months or years from now. The first year of
driving is the most dangerous so we want teens to approach it with wide-open eyes and some skills. If you
can help us get these messages across at our event, you can help improve the safety of teens many times
over.

We need and welcome your help at our event.

Sincerely,

10/11/10
Safe Kids __________ would like to take this opportunity to thank you for partnering with us on our Countdown2Down initiative. The Countdown2Drive program is designed to make safer teen passengers today and good drivers tomorrow. Your volunteer work with Safe Kids __________ was essential in getting the word out to families that they need to start setting boundaries and rules when their teen is still a passenger. The safety behaviors developed now can carry over to the most dangerous year of driving: the first year. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to take advantage of “teachable moments” to improve safety knowledge and behavior.

Since the inception of Safe Kids Buckle Up, more than 21 million people have been exposed to program events and community outreach efforts nationally. Certified child passenger safety technicians working through Safe Kids coalitions have examined 1.3 million child safety seats at 67,000 events and the program has donated 466,620 seats to families in need. Safe Kids USA, GM Foundation, dealerships, coalitions, volunteers and non- and for-profit organizations all come together to protect children and families from unintentional injuries and fatalities when in and around a vehicle.

Thank you for being one of these vital partners that are making a difference and potentially saving a life.

Sincerely,

10/11/10
**Parents**

*Three easy ways to help your teen follow the rules.*

**Post it.** For parents and teens alike, out of sight will likely mean out of mind. Help remind your family about the rules you have agreed to by printing out your Passenger Agreement and posting it in prominent place. It can be the refrigerator, next to the family computer, on a mirror – any place where you and your teen are likely to see it every day.

**Share It.** Enforcement is always easier if your teen's friends have the same rules. Spread the word about the Passenger Agreements. Share the C2D website on Facebook and tell your friends that you have signed an agreement. If your teen attends a community group or church, see if the youth leader would be interested in organizing a Countdown2Drive night for teens and their parents to negotiate agreements.

**Change it up.** Your teen is changing fast, and your Passenger Agreement may need to change to keep up. The rules, rewards and consequences that work now for your teen may no longer be relevant in a few months’ time. Mark your calendar now to review the agreement with your teen in six weeks. Then look over the agreement again each time your child earns a six-month or one-year reward (or more frequently as needed).
My Countdown2Drive Event Code and Login

| RALLY CODE: __________________________ | EMAIL: ____________________________ | PASSWORD: __________________________ |
| ______________________________________ | ____________________________________ | ____________________________________ |

(5 digit code given to you by the Rally leader)

Teens
How to get the most out of your Passenger Agreement.

Stick to it. This is it – your chance to earn your parent’s respect. By following the rules of your Passenger Agreement, you can show your parent you have what it takes to ride – and eventually drive – in cars on your own. And if you blow it? Say you’re sorry and promise not to do it again – and then don’t. One time might be a mistake. Two times is the start of a habit. And three times shows you don’t really care. So stick to the rules and earn your parent’s trust. And start the countdown to your own driving experience.

Share it. Now that you know crashes are the No. 1 killer of teenagers – teen passengers as well as teen drivers – do your part to help keep your friends safe. Share the C2D website on Facebook to get them interested (bragging on the rewards you are earning might help). Once you all have Passenger Agreements, you can help remind each other to follow the rules.

Change it up. What’s a cool reward today may no longer interest you in six months. And a year from now you might be thinking about bigger steps, like getting a permit or a license. If your Passenger Agreement has lost its zing, let your parent know it’s time for a new one.

Safe Kids Worldwide
Use this worksheet to help pre-drivers prepare for the costs of driving.

**ROUTINE MAINTENANCE.** Cars need check-ups just like people do.

Using the local newspaper, find the costs for the following vehicle-related items that your car will need to maintain its youth:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintenance Item</th>
<th>Frequency of Replacement</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Tires</td>
<td>Condition and product specific: Depends on wear and tear and climate</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tire Rotation</td>
<td>Every 6,000 miles or according to vehicle owner’s manual</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tune Ups</td>
<td>1 per year or vehicle manufacturer’s recommendation</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil Changes</td>
<td>Every 3,000-5,000 miles</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windshield Wipers</td>
<td>Condition and product specific: Replace with loss of sufficient water removal</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights and bulbs</td>
<td>Condition and product specific: Replace immediately upon loss of power</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GASOLINE.** Depending on how frequently you drive, the make and model of your vehicle, and conditions of the road, you could be spending all your lunch money on feeding your car!

Browse www.fueleconomy.gov for gas prices in and around your area. Click on Save Money > Gasoline Prices > Find the Cheapest Gas. Then click on your state on the map and follow the links to find prices in your area.

Do gas prices change from city to city where you live?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gas Prices Where I live</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price per gallon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most expensive gas</td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least expensive gas</td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VEHICLE.** They come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and conditions. What fits your budget?

Check the classifieds in your local newspaper to estimate the price of the following vehicle types and the estimated MPG (miles per gallon):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BIG CAR</th>
<th>SMALL CAR</th>
<th>PICK-UP TRUCK</th>
<th>SUV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Price</td>
<td>Price</td>
<td>Price</td>
<td>Price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MPG</td>
<td>MPG</td>
<td>MPG</td>
<td>MPG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**INSURANCE.** Did you know safe drivers pay less?

Ask your parents to pull out your family’s insurance papers and talk to your insurance provider about the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does it cost per year to insure your family car(s)?</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does insuring your family car(s) cost per month?</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What will it cost to add you to the policy when you are ready to drive?</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What discounts are available for safe habits?</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on these numbers, how much would you pay for insurance each month? $_____________

Will you need to get a job to cover these (and other) costs? Yes / No

Are there any other discounts that your insurance provider can offer? ____________________________

**STATE REQUIREMENTS.** After passing your licensing requirements, you may feel you’ve paid enough dues, but there are a few more steps you need to follow through on before hitting the road.

Call or visit your local Department of Motor Vehicles website and research the process, fees, and documentation needed for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements in my state</th>
<th>Process (In person, by mail, online?)</th>
<th>Annual Fee</th>
<th>Documents Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle registration</td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle inspection</td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This worksheet contains a list of rules, commitments, rewards and consequences that could be part of a Passenger Agreement. Go through the list and mark each item as follows:

- Circle the item if you like it or think it’s useful
- Put an X through the item if you don’t like it or think it’s not useful
- Put a question mark if you need more information

### Rules for Teens

I will always wear my seat belt.

I will take care never to distract the driver.

I will never ride with a driver who has been drinking or taking drugs.

I will not ride with drivers who have too little experience.

I will avoid drivers that I know are unsafe.

I will always tell my parent where I’m going, who I’m with, and what time I’ll be home. I will check in by text or by phone every time I arrive at a destination or leave to go somewhere else.

I will obey my curfew and call if I might be late. I will not ask a driver to hurry to get me home on time.

I will not accept a ride unless I have my parent’s permission first. My parent will let me know which drivers I can ride with routinely.

I will maintain or improve my grades.

I will always tell my parent how many passengers will be in the car before I accept a ride with a teen driver.

If I’m in a crash, I will call my parent right away.

I will be a helpful passenger. If the driver wants help, I will watch traffic, offer to text or call, change the music, read a map or otherwise help so the driver can keep their eyes on the road.

I will not drink alcohol or take illegal drugs.
Commitments for Parents

I am committed to your safety. If you feel unsafe accepting a ride, I expect you to call me. In return, I will come get you or find another ride for you — no questions asked.

I will be a good role model. I pledge to follow the rules of the road and teach you good driving through my example.

I will help you learn to be a safe driver. When we are in the car, I will talk to you about safe driving and point out good and bad examples on the road.

I will help guide you through the licensing process. I will help you set dates and prepare for your tests. After you get your permit, I will make sure you get the on-the-road training you need.
Rewards for Teens

Each month I follow the agreement, I can earn:

• More TV / video game time
• More computer time
• Control of TV remote one evening a week
• The chance to choose the music whenever I ride in the car
• A “get-out-of-a-chore” coupon

After six months of following the agreement, I can earn:

• A new book or a magazine subscription
• A later curfew
• Money and permission to go out to dinner with a friend
• A clothing gift card
• An iTunes gift card
• More freedom to spend time with friends on the weekend

Each year I follow the agreement, I can earn:

• Movie or concert tickets
• An outing to a theme park or sporting event of my choice
• Contributions to a savings account that will pay for car expenses when I am older
• My parent will set the date when I can get my learner’s permit or license
Consequences

If I break the agreement one time:

- I will lose a reward for that month

If I break the agreement multiple times:

- I will lose all rewards for that month
- I will lose screen time (TV, games, computer)
- I will lose use of my cell phone for a period of time
- I will have an earlier curfew for a few months
- I will be grounded
- I will be assigned additional chores

If I routinely break the agreement and fail to take it seriously:

- I will lose all rewards until I start following the agreement.
- I will not be allowed to ride in cars unless my parent is driving.
- I will have to wait an additional three months to get my learner’s permit or driver’s license.
Nothing kills more teenagers than car crashes. That’s why parents increasingly are setting clear ground rules with their teenagers even before they start driving. As kids get older, they ride more often with drivers besides their parents — including other teens who may not have a great deal of driving experience. Teenagers need to be smart passengers. And parents need to know they can trust them.

By setting clear expectations, your Countdown2Drive (C2D) Passenger Agreement can help reinforce key behaviors that keep teens safe as passengers now — and as drivers later. For parents, it means you can worry less. For teens, it’s a chance to earn the trust and respect your parents will need to allow you to ride — and eventually drive — in cars on your own.

Use this template to create your own customized C2D Passenger Agreement.

**RULES: Part 1**

*The first five rules tackle five major risk areas. These rules are included in all C2D Passenger Agreements.*

- **I will always wear my seat belt.** *A seat belt is the easiest way to protect yourself in a crash. Using a lap/shoulder belt can reduce the risk of dying in a car crash by almost half.*

- **I will take care never to distract the driver.** *Driver distraction is a top reason for crashes. It’s not just cell phones - passenger behavior can also be very distracting to the driver.*

- **I will never ride with a driver who has been drinking or taking drugs.** *Using alcohol and other drugs changes the way drivers make decisions and respond to emergencies.*

- **I will not ride with drivers who have too little experience.** A driver must have their license for at least _________ before I can accept a ride. This rule does not apply to the following drivers: ________________________________________________________________________.

  *Most teen crashes are the result of “rookie” mistakes. Teens need time and practice to gain driving experience.*

- **I will avoid drivers that I know are unsafe.** Unsafe drivers can make you feel scared and put you in danger if they speed, pass cars when they shouldn’t or make sudden moves that impact the safety of others.
RULES: Part 2

Experts recommend adding the rules below as well. Read them over and check the boxes or use a highlighter to mark the ones that work for your family. Use the blank lines to write in any additional rules you’d like to include in your Passenger Agreement.

☐ I will always tell my parent where I’m going, who I’m with, and what time I’ll be home. I will check in by text or by phone every time I arrive at a destination or leave to go somewhere else. Teens who have a specific destination and who check in regularly with their parents are more likely to have their parent’s trust and build communication skills.

☐ I will obey my curfew and call if I might be late. I will not ask a driver to hurry to get me home on time. Your crash risk rises at night – and speeding to get home on time makes it worse. Meeting curfew keeps your parents from worrying and shows you are responsible.

☐ I will not accept a ride unless I have my parent’s permission first. My parent will let me know which drivers I can ride with routinely. The risk of dying in a crash – as a passenger – rises in the teen years. It’s important for parents to know who is at the wheel.

☐ I will maintain my grades. Working towards earning at least a B average shows you are responsible – and could mean a discount on insurance when you’re ready to drive. Teen drivers with higher GPAs are less likely to get traffic tickets.

☐ I will always tell my parent how many passengers will be in the car before I accept a ride with a teen driver. Just one teen passenger doubles the risk a teen driver will get into a fatal crash; three or more passengers quadruples the risk.

☐ If I’m in a crash, I will call my parent right away. Even if it’s minor, a crash can have serious health, legal and financial consequences. Your parents need to know so they can help you decide what’s best to do next.

☐ I will be a helpful passenger. If the driver wants assistance, I will watch traffic, offer to text or call, change the music, read a map or otherwise help so the driver can keep their eyes on the road. Distracted driving is a leading case of crashes for drivers of all ages.

☐ I will not drink alcohol or take illegal drugs. You already know it’s against the law. Avoiding alcohol and drugs shows you are responsible and trustworthy. It means you are clearheaded to make smart choices when you are riding in a car without your parent.

☐ Other (please list):

☐ Other (please list):
Parent Commitments

The commitments below can help teens stick to their Passenger Agreement. Read through the options and check the boxes or use a highlighter to mark the ones that work for your family. Use the blank lines to write in any additional commitments you’d like to include.

☐ I am committed to your safety. If you feel unsafe accepting a ride, I expect you to call me. In return, I will come get you or find another ride for you — no questions asked.

☐ I will be a good role model. I pledge to follow the rules of the road and teach you good driving through my example.

☐ I will help you learn to be a safe driver. When we are in the car, I will talk to you about safe driving and point out good and bad examples on the road.

☐ I will help guide you through the licensing process. I will help you set dates and prepare for your tests. After you get your permit, I will make sure you get the on-the-road training you need.

☐ Other (please list): ____________________________________________

☐ Other (please list): ____________________________________________
Rewards

Most teens say what they want most from sticking to a Passenger Agreement is the chance to earn their parent’s trust and respect. But rewards never hurt. Read through the options and check the boxes or use a highlighter to mark the ones that work for your family. Use the blank lines to write in any additional rewards you’d like to include.

Each month I follow the agreement, I can earn:

- [ ] More TV / video game time
- [ ] More computer time
- [ ] Control of TV remote one evening a week
- [ ] The chance to choose the music whenever I ride in the car
- [ ] A “get-out-of-a-chore” coupon
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________

After six months of following the agreement, I can earn:

- [ ] A new book or a magazine subscription
- [ ] A later curfew
- [ ] Money and permission to go out to dinner with a friend
- [ ] A clothing gift card
- [ ] An iTunes gift card
- [ ] More freedom to spend time with friends on the weekend
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________

Each year I follow the agreement, I can earn:

- [ ] Movie or concert tickets
- [ ] An outing to a theme park or sporting event of my choice
- [ ] Contributions to a savings account that will pay for car expenses when I am older
- [ ] My parent will set the date when I can get my learner’s permit or license
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________
Consequences

Teens and parents are more likely to take the C2D Passenger Agreement seriously if they agree to some consequences for not following the rules. Read through the options and check the boxes or use a highlighter to mark the ones that work for your family. Use the blank lines to write in any additional consequences you’d like to include.

If I break the agreement one time:

- [ ] I will lose a reward for that month
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________

If I break the agreement multiple times:

- [ ] I will lose all rewards for that month
- [ ] I will lose screen time (TV, games, computer)
- [ ] I will lose use of my cell phone for a period of time
- [ ] I will have an earlier curfew for a few months
- [ ] I will be grounded
- [ ] I will be assigned additional chores
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________

If I routinely break the agreement and fail to take it seriously:

- [ ] I will lose all rewards until I start following the agreement.
- [ ] I will not be allowed to ride in cars unless my parent is driving.
- [ ] I will have to wait an additional three months to get my learners permit or drivers license.
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________
- [ ] Other (please list): ____________________________

Review your selections to make sure you both feel comfortable with the contract. Once all terms are agreeable make it official by signing on the lines below. Once signed, consider putting it on the refrigerator or another place where your family is likely to see it often. That way, you’ll have a frequent reminder of the rules, consequences and rewards you have agreed to.

We Agree

| SIGNATURE OF TEEN | DATE | SIGNATURE OF PARENT | DATE |

Safe passengers today. Good drivers tomorrow. | www.Countdown2Drive.org
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Before you facilitate your Countdown2Drive Rally, read through the scripts below to get an idea of how the flow of conversation might go. You might want to practice them out loud a few times to get comfortable with the material. On the day of the Rally, however, don’t worry about sticking to the scripts exactly — they are just a tool to help you prepare. They are not meant to be memorized or read aloud.

These scripts accompany the C2D Rally Step-By-Step Guide.

**STEP 1: Set Up**
No script.

**STEP 2: Welcome**
After you greet and seat your participants, introduce yourself and other group leaders and volunteers.

```
Hello, my name is _________ and I am here today to introduce Countdown2Drive, a brand-new Safe Kids program. We have several people on hand today to help. ________ and ________ can you please stand up so everyone can see you? If you have any questions during the Rally, these are your go-to people.
```

**STEP 3: Introduction and Warm-up**

Let’s start by finding out a little bit about you.

[If talking to teens:] How many of you are 13? 14?

[If talking to parents:] How many of you have a 13- or 14-year-old?

Great! Countdown2 Drive is a new program for teens in this age group, who will be driving in a few months or a few years. Have any of you taken any steps to get ready for the driving process?

Can anyone tell me what age you have to be before you can get a learners permit? What about your drivers license?

That’s right, in our state teens can get a permit at age ____ and then a drivers license at age ____.

[Hand out the printouts of your state GDL laws].

Here is a list of our state graduated drivers licensing laws for you to take home.

One thing that can help families plan for teens’ growing independence is Countdown2Drive. This new program from Safe Kids helps families set rules and expectations for behaviors that will help 13- and 14-year-olds be safe passengers. These same behaviors will also help them be better drivers when the time comes.
Let me tell you a little more about Countdown2Drive. C2D is for 13- and 14-year-olds. We call this age group “pre-drivers” because they may be just a year or two away from beginning the licensing process. In our state, teens can get a learners permit as early as age _____. C2D is designed to help pre-drivers prepare now so they will be better drivers when they get their license. As you may know, teenagers’ first year of independent driving is their most dangerous. During that first year of driving, teens are much more likely to crash, and their risk of a fatal crash is at a lifetime high.

Research shows that parent involvement and rule setting can help teens reduce their crash risk during that first year of independent driving. And there are things that 13- and 14-year-olds can start practicing now. What kinds of things do you think pre-drivers can do now that will make them better drivers later?

STEP 4: Break Out Into Groups

No script.

STEP 5:  Open Dialogue Facilitated by the “Discussion Points”

Although there are a key things to touch on in this step — such as families’ concerns and current household rules around teens riding and driving in cars — the main point of this step is to get your participants thinking and talking about passenger safety. This lays the groundwork for Step 6, when you will begin looking at the components of the Passenger Agreement.

Think about when you first heard of this event. Tell me a bit about what you hoped you’d learn today.

[For parents]: Parents, what is your biggest concern about your teen riding in a car. Do you worry when they ride with drivers besides yourself?

[For teens:] Do your parents ever worry when you ride in cars when they are not driving? Is there anything you worry about as a passenger in cars?

What does it mean to be a safe passenger?

What does it mean to be a safe driver?

Who is allowed to drive you/your teen? Can you/your teen ride with older siblings, a friend with a drivers license, or the parents of friends?

When do you/does your teen plan to get a drivers license?

Does anyone in here have rules around how teens should behave as a passenger?

Has your family already set some rules that you/your teen will eventually follow as a driver? Maybe you already have rules for an older teen who is driving?

Has your family set any consequences for disregarding the rules?

Does your family offer any rewards for following the rules?
Can you share some of the safety practices that you perform everyday that protect you when in a vehicle? What about seat belts? Distracted driving? Anything else?

What behaviors do you think could result in a crash and/or incident?

**STEP 6A and 6B: Components of the C2D Agreement**

Whether your group has just parents, just teens, or parents and teens together, you will cover the same points during this step. Just vary the tone to match your audience.

You have come up with some great ideas here for helping 13- and 14-year-olds prepare to be safe passengers and better future drivers. As you’ll see in a minute, Countdown2Drive (C2D) has created a list of behaviors that’s a lot like this one. And out of that list grew a new idea: A C2D negotiated Passenger Agreement between parents and their teens.

Some of you may be familiar with teen driving contracts. Has anyone heard of them or used one? Teen driving contracts are designed to promote behaviors that reduce the crash risk of new drivers. These contracts include a lot of the same behaviors you have on your list. So some of the same behaviors will help keep teens safe as passengers and later as drivers. With C2D, our goal is to start reinforcing those behaviors now, rather than waiting until teens are getting their license.

When we first started developing C2D, we got input from parents and teens through surveys and focus groups. Parents told us they thought a C2D Passenger Agreement was a good idea and would help teach teens responsibility and accountability. But they wanted rules that worked for their family. They also said that rules don’t mean a lot if they are not enforced.

The teenagers we talked to also liked the idea of the C2D Passenger Agreement. They said it was a chance to earn respect from their parents. They also liked the idea of earning rewards for sticking to it. But they wanted to have a say in creating the Passenger Agreement with their parents.

Let’s take a look at some of the rules, rewards and consequences that parents and teens helped us developed. We’d like to hear what you think.

[Hand out the Agreement Worksheet]

**STEP 7: Introduce the C2D Web site www.Countdown2Drive.org**

You can introduce the C2D website in two ways. If your location has computers, you will help participants log in and get started. If your location does not have computers, use the Agreement Template handout to help them craft an agreement. Whether or not you have computers, be sure to encourage participants to go online when they get home and finish the process. Hand out Tipsheets and Wallet Cards with the event number recorded. Remind participants to write down their login and password as well.

**Locations with computers**

Now we are going to experiment with creating a C2D Passenger Agreement. While we are working at the computers, just raise your hand if you have a question and one of our volunteers will help. To get started, make sure you have the C2D homepage open on your computer.

From here on out, the web tool is pretty self-explanatory. The site is set up so that parents and teens can work separately, then the website combines your answers so you can
negotiate the C2D Passenger Agreement together. Don’t worry if you don’t finish today – you can log back in and finish up once you get home.

Let’s get started. Go ahead and press the “Start” button on the homepage. That takes us to the login page. Now go ahead and create a login and password. Be sure to write down your login and password on your Tipsheet so you can remember it later.

Everybody logged in? Here’s how the website works. You’ll be asked a series of questions. Once you’ve answered them all, you’ll need to wait for your parent [or teen] to finish their own questionnaire. The Countdown2Drive website will send an email to encourage them to get started.

When both of you have completed your questionnaires, the website will create a customized draft agreement based on both of your answers. Then parent and teen can sit down at the computer and login together to negotiate a final Passenger Agreement that works for your family.

Any questions? OK, let’s begin.

[Circulate and answer any questions. After 25 minutes is up:]

Our time is up for now. If you’ve complete your questionnaire, click the SUBMIT button. Otherwise click “Save and Exit.”

Check that you’ve recorded your login and password, and don’t forget to bring your Tipsheet with you. This also has helpful information about what to do after you’ve created and printed your final C2D Passenger Agreement. Safe Kids has also provided a Wallet Card you can use to fill in your user name and password for future use.

Locations without computers

Now we are going to experiment with creating a C2D Passenger Agreement using these Templates. Some of you may finish tonight. Others may not. When you get home, you can go online at www.Countdown2Drive.org to create a custom version.

You’ll see that there are five rules at the top of the Passenger Agreement. All Passenger Agreements include these rules — they address five major areas of risk for teen passengers and drivers.

But many parents and teens want additional rules. These additional rules can help parents worry less and feel more comfortable about allowing teens to ride with other drivers. They also give teens opportunities to build their parents’ respect and trust.

In addition, some families want parents to pledge to help their teens develop safe driving habits. The contract also includes possible rewards and consequences families can use. These are not mandatory. But in our surveys, teens said they liked the ideas of earning rewards. And many parents believed the contract needed to include consequences so teens would take it seriously.

For the next few minutes, we’re going to read through the Template Agreement. Highlight the additional rules, parent pledges, consequences and rewards that you think will work for your family.
[While participants are working on their Passenger Agreements, volunteers can circulate and answer any questions.]

[After 10 minutes is up, begin again.]

OK, we’re going to stop here and talk a little big about negotiating your Passenger Agreement.

[If your group includes both parents and teens]

Teens, make sure you are sitting next to your parent. Make sure you have a blank Agreement Template and write “Final” at the top. Then start highlighting the areas where your Template and your parent’s Template are the same. Then talk about the areas where they are different. If you have a lot of differences, you may need some time to work out your final document.

[If your group only has parents or only has teens]

Now that you have tips for negotiating, you can take a blank Agreement Template home to your family. Work together with your parent/teen to fill it out at home. Or you can both go online to finish the Agreement at www.Countdown2Drive.org.

Countdown2Drive was designed so parents and teens can customize their Passenger Agreement to meet their family’s needs. After you’ve negotiated your Passenger Agreement, you can go back to the website and update the Passenger Agreement as you see fit.

Be sure to take home your Wallet Card and Tipsheet, and to record your user name and password for future use. The Tipsheet also has an event number that needs to be entered when you get started online.