

It's National Teen Driver Safety Week

October 25, 2019

Sometimes, in the middle of the tsunami of information we're all immersed in, you see a single fact that both stops you in your metaphorical tracks, and makes something important very, very clear. In this case, it's two:

- a) The single biggest cause of death among teenagers is unintentional injury.
- b) Around 75% of those are motor vehicle accidents.

This is National Teen Driver Safety Week. This is an extraordinarily important topic, because as a group, teenagers are incredibly dangerous behind the wheel. The crash rate of drivers between the ages of 16-17, for example, is almost 5 times that of drivers in the 30-39, 40-49, and 50-59 age range. Burying a teenager due to a fatal crash (or any reason) is every parents' worst nightmare. If you have teenage drivers in your household, what can you do to keep them safe behind the wheel? Here are a few ideas:

- Talk to them, seriously and factually, about the dangers and consequences of driving under the influence of anything. Without moralizing or exaggerating, make the point that the consequences of driving drunk or high can be disastrous, and that the blood alcohol level as a teen driver must be zero.
- Model good behavior. You know what it is – show your kids firsthand what being a good driver really means.
- Learn and understand your state's GDL (Graduated Driver Learning) program. The restrictions on teen drivers such as night driving and passenger limits, driving while using the phone, or the importance of a seat belt are a lot easier to enforce if you know what they are.
- Don't blindly rely on drivers' education classes to teach your teen good driving! Get involved, integrate it into a broader GDL curriculum, and consider additional training from something like the Skip Barber Racing School Teen Safety and Survival program. Driver's education classes are good, but a day of hands-on instruction from professional drivers targeted directly at teens can be a literal lifesaver.

There is nothing more important than making sure your teenager makes it to his or her destinations safely as a new driver. There just isn't.

If your child is involved in a car accident, it is important that you seek an attorney with experience representing individuals involved in motor vehicle accidents. **Rosen Hagood** has a long history of representing injured individuals, including young adults, and are here to assist you.