New Research Shows Parents Can Cut Teen Crash Risk

Two new studies released in the October 2009 issue of Pediatrics conducted by The Young Driver’s Research Initiative (YDRI) at CIARP with funding from State Farm Insurance Companies® reveal a link between teen driver crashes and the way families communicate and approach rules about safety. Researchers found teens are half as likely to crash and far less likely to drink and drive, use a cell phone, or speed if their parents set clear rules, pay attention to where they’re going, who they’ll be with, and when they’ll be home in a supportive way. In addition, the researchers found teens that reported being the main driver of a car were twice as likely to have been in a crash than teens who said they share a car with other family members.

These findings are also part of Driving Through the Eyes of Teens, A Closer Look, a comprehensive report of recently published research providing evidence-based recommendations for teen driver safety practitioners and parents that may reduce teen crash risk. A guide has been created to help stakeholders most effectively use the report and associated new resources to improve the safety of teen drivers.

The study findings and report resonated with the media. "The Today Show," USA Today, the Associated Press, and U.S. News and World Report featured the findings, as well as tips to help teens and their families navigate the first year of independent driving.

Learn How to Use YDRI Data to Engage Parents Where You Live: Register Now for Webinar

Celebrate National Teen Driver Safety Week with a Webinar that will help you use the information from Driving Through the Eyes of Teens, A Closer Look to engage parents on this important issue. Report authors Ken Ginsburg, MD, MSEd, and Flaura Winston, MD, PhD, will walk Webinar participants through the comprehensive report, providing evidence-based recommendations for teen driver safety practitioners and parents that may reduce teen crash risk. They will describe the implications of their findings and suggested “calls to action” for teen driver safety practitioners, as well as introduce related resources created to help parents enhance their skills to help teens safely navigate the first years of driving. This free Webinar is hosted by Driver Education and Training Administrators (DETA), State Farm Insurance Companies®, and The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP).

The Webinar will be held on October 19 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. (EST) and will include a period for questions and answers. Register now.

New Resources Available To Help Families Navigate Teen Driving

To support the research report recommendations, the Center created practical resources for parents to enhance their skills to help teens safely navigate the first years of driving.

A new website features video and text from experts about how to communicate safety concerns to teenagers in a way that will make them more likely to accept potentially life saving rules and boundaries. The website provides answers to four important questions parents should consider: 1) Will their safety concerns be heard when their teen makes a decision? 2) Will their teen tell them what’s really going on? 3) Will their teen follow their rules and boundaries? 4) Are they prepared to handle the expected bumps in the road?

In addition, the Center created a set of downloadable fact sheets enhance parents’ skills to help teens safely navigate the first years of driving: Developing Driving Experience; Driving Lesson Timeline: A Coaching Guide for Parents; Driving Practice Log; Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL); Parenting Tips to Keep Teen Drivers Safe; Set House Rules and Reduce Crash Risks for Your Teen; and Teach Your Teen to Be a Smart Passenger.

Learn about new resources on teen driver safety in future issues of this newsletter. Visit www.chop.edu/youngdrivers for the resources available now.

Center Findings Highlight Importance of Child Restraint Lateral Testing

Findings from research funded by The Center for Child Injury Prevention Studies (CChIPS) and Wichita State University were recently presented at the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine’s Annual Meeting in Baltimore, MD. The study evaluated the performance of both rear facing and forward facing child safety seats in far-side impacts through a series of sled tests conducted at varying test speeds with both LATCH and seat belt attachment.

Although all of the child safety seats experienced significant lateral movement during the tests, one of the rear-facing seats disengaged from its base during testing. The CChIPS research, as well as similar testing by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), spurred the child seat manufacturer to recall the seat and supply parents...
with an improved design. According to Yogananth Ghati, MS, primary author of the research paper, further studies are needed to better evaluate the lateral performance of child safety seats. “Child safety seats are incredibly effective at preventing injuries to child occupants,” he says. “Implementing performance testing of child safety seats in the lateral direction like that conducted as part of our study will further improve the protection provided by these restraints in all crash conditions.”

Read the study abstract to learn more.

**CIRP Speaks to Youth at the Distracted Driving Summit**

They may not realize it, but today’s teens are already “leaders” in setting norms on occupant safety, according to Dennis Durbin, MD, MSCE, co-director of the Center for Injury Research and Prevention at CHOP. At the Distracted Driving Summit in Washington, DC, Dr. Durbin commended teens as the first generation of children to use belt-positioning booster seats, which are now widely accepted by younger families.

“Ten years ago, none of us involved in this work could have imagined that booster seat use would so quickly become normal. That is why I think you may hold the key to changing what’s considered ‘normal’ before the wheel ‘10 years from now. It’s protecting them from a new hazard that is more than doubling the rate of child deaths in car crashes,“ Dr. Durbin said. “Booster seats are an old idea that can make a big difference!”

Spearheaded by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, the summit gathered transportation safety experts to address the dangers of text-messaging and other distractions behind the wheel, a leading cause of teen driving-related crashes.

**Researching Dating Violence**

The Philadelphia Collaborative Violence Prevention Center (PCVPC) at CIRP recently received its first grant related to dating violence. Awarded by The University of Pennsylvania Center for Public Health Initiatives, the grant will be used to develop a brief, evidence-based screening tool for adolescent dating violence (Adolescent RADAR). The tool will be based on input from adolescent health specialists, experts on adolescent dating violence, adolescents (another concurrent study), and the validated RADAR tool established by the Massachusetts Medical Society to assess for adult domestic violence.

**CChIPS Celebrates Fifth Anniversary**

The Center for Child Injury Prevention Studies (CChIPS) has entered its fifth year of conducting research as one of only 40 National Science Foundation University Cooperative Research Centers (UCRC) in the country and the only NSF Center devoted to injury prevention research. The CChIPS current research portfolio includes nine studies, all involving how children are injured in motor vehicle crashes and ways that these injuries can be prevented.

On hand to mark this milestone at the fall semi-annual CChIPS meeting were its Industry Advisory Board (IAB) members. These members contribute research dollars to support the CChIPS mission and include: Britax Child Safety Inc; Donels Juvenile Group; the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA); Nissan Technical Center North America Inc.; State Farm Insurance Companies®; TK Holdings Inc.; Toyota Motor North America Inc.; Volkswagen of America Inc., and Honda R & D Americas Inc. In addition to hearing early findings from the current research studies, the IAB members considered next year’s research portfolio and participated in a panel discussion from manufacturers moderated by NHTSA on current proposed methods for testing child restraints in side impacts. Learn more about CChIPS.

**Center Receives Grant for Traumatic Stress Research**

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) recently awarded a two-year, $275,000 grant to the Injury Center to predict posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) risk in children after acute traumatic events. The grant will be used to build a network and data registry to create predictive tools. Nancy Kassam-Adams, PhD, principal investigator and the Center’s associate director for behavioral research, will be working with colleagues at Kent State University, Summa Health System, and The University of Queensland on this research project. In prospective studies of children’s and parents’ reactions to traffic crashes and other medical emergencies, Center researchers found that most families experience at least a few acute stress disorder (ASD) symptoms within the first month after injury. Six months later, 1 in 6 still has clinically significant symptoms. To learn more, visit AfterTheInjury.org, the Center’s award-winning website devoted to helping children and their families recover after an injury.

**Recent Presentations from the Injury Center**


**In the News**

Joel Fein, MD, MPH, director and principal investigator of the Philadelphia Collaborative Violence Prevention Center (PCVPC), recently shared his views with The Philadelphia Daily News on how PCVPC is working to reduce teen violence in the city. Read the article.

**Center Engineer Elected to AAAM Board**

Kristy Arbogast, PhD, the Center’s director of engineering, was recently elected to the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine (AAAM) Board of Directors. AAAM is a professional multidisciplinary organization dedicated entirely to motor vehicle crash injury prevention and control. It was founded in 1957 by the Medical Advisory Committee to the Sports Car Club of America.

**Support Our Center**

The dedicated doctors, researchers, and outreach professionals at the Center for Injury Research and Prevention at CHOP are fighting to save the lives of children of all ages. But we need your help. To make a secure, on-line donation, please visit The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia Foundation Donation Page and select “Center for Injury Research and Prevention” in the drop-down menu. You also may telephone the CHOP Foundation at 267-426-6500. For more information on our research and programs, please visit www.chop.edu/injury.

**The Center for Injury Research and Prevention**

- The Center for Injury Research and Prevention (www.chop.edu/injury)
- Keeping Kids Safe in Crushes-English language (www.chop.edu/carseat)
- Cómo Mantener a los Niños Fuera de Peligro Durante los Choques – Spanish language (www.chop.edu/asientos_infantiles)
- Keeping Young Drivers Safe (www.chop.edu/youngdrivers)
Recent Publications from the Injury Center