Prevention Works

Vol. 30 No. 2 Northern NJ SAFEKIDS/Safe Communities Fall 2026
www.preventionworks-nj.org

New Jersey Graduated Driver License Law

As a new academic year begins, a new class of novice drivers will be entering our roadways. The Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws are recognized as the single most effective tool for keeping young drivers safe and reducing teen driver crashes, injuries and deaths.

New Jersey has some of the most effective laws in the country, so to celebrate 10 years of Kyleigh's Law and 20 years of the GDL, we're asking NJ to #StickToIt.



The Laws Have Worked

Teen fatal crashes have decreased over the past decade. The GDL has reduced teen driving fatalities by 50% since it was implemented.

Research found that if the decal had not been implemented, about 3,200 additional new drivers would have been involved in a police-reported crash in the subsequent two years.

What are the rules and why do they work?

Time Rules

No driving between 11:01 p.m. and 5:00 a.m for anyone with a permit or probationary license under 21.

WHY? Because 16 and 17-year old drivers are 3 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash at night than during the day.

Passenger Rules

No more than one passenger besides parent/guardian for anyone with a permit or probationary license under 21.

WHY? Passengers significantly increase a teen driver's crash risk – one passenger increases risk by 50%, and three passengers increase risk by 400%.

Decals

Decal must be displayed on top left corner of front and back license plates for anyone with a permit or probationary license under 21.

WHY? This decal helps law enforcement keep teens safe and encourage other drivers to be alert for novice drivers.

It has proven to be an effective tool in several other countries.

No Devices

No use of cell phones (hand-held or hands-free).

WHY? Studies have shown that among teen drivers, use of a device while driving, even for 1-2 seconds, causes a 3-6x increase in crash risk.

Seat Belts

Seat belts must be worn at all times.

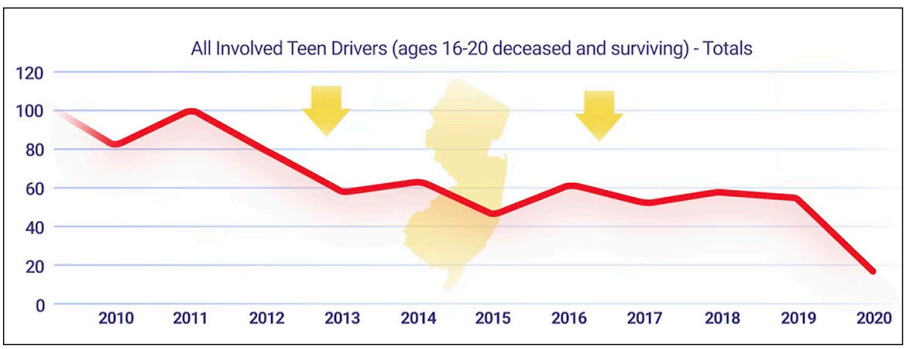
Plea Bargin – 0 Point Ban

GDL holders face a fine of $100 for each violation and municipal prosecutors are banned from offering 0 point plea agreements.

The GDL law is only effective if understood and consistently followed by our teen drivers. Parents and teen communities need to understand the law and a commitment to it.

Impact Teen Driving is a program geared at informing both teens and parents about the GDL and assisting novice drivers gain the experience they need.

If you are interested in a teen driver presentation for your community contact karenjean.feury@atlantichealth.org



Child Passenger Safety

Plan to have your child's safety seat (infant seat) installed in your vehicle at least three weeks before the due date of your baby.

You can visit one of our Car Seat Inspection Stations for assistance. Our 7 Car Seat Inspection Station Schedules can be found at this site.
https://preventionworks-nj.org

Follow these steps to assist with proper use of a Car Seat.

- Read the manufacturer's instructions for your car seat.
- Face the child safety seat in the proper direction
- Infant seats always face backwards. Baby rides in a semi-reclining position facing the rear of the car.
- Convertible seats face backwards in a semi-reclining position for infants under 30 pounds and under 2 year of age, and forward in an upright position for toddlers.
- Secure your child snugly in the car seat.
- Always buckle the seat's harness system securely to hold your child safely in the seat. Allow no more than

Continued on next page



Fire Safety

Home fires can start and spread quickly, so just a little bit of planning can make a big difference. Make sure to create a home fire escape plan and practice it regularly with your family.

Hard Facts About Fire Safety

- In 2017, 268 children died in home fires.
- Nearly eighty-seven percent of all fire-related deaths are due to home fires, which spread rapidly and can leave families as little as two minutes to escape once an alarm sounds.
- Fires are not just a problem in the United States. In 2017, more than 27,000 children around the world died due to a fire or burn.
- Working smoke alarms reduce the chances of dying in a reported home fire by fifty percent.

Working smoke alarms reduce the chances of dying in a fire by nearly 50 percent.

Top Tips for Fire Safety

1. Check smoke alarms. Make sure there is a working smoke alarm on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and near sleeping areas. Test smoke alarms every month and replace them every 10 years or when the battery is low.

2. Create and practice a fire escape plan. Create a home fire escape plan with two ways out of every room. Choose a place to meet outside that is a safe distance away from your home.

3. Practice a home fire drill at least twice a year. Practice a home fire drill with your family during the day and at night. Practice escaping in under two minutes. Sometimes that is all the time you will have to get out of the house safely.

4. If there is a fire, leave home immediately. If there is a lot of smoke, get low and crawl out of the house as quickly as possible. Call 911 after you are a safe distance away from your home.

Continued from previous page

one finger-width of slack between your child's collarbone and the harness strap.

- Secure the child car seat with a seat belt.
- Anchoring the seat properly with a seat belt is critical. A seat that is not buckled securely to the car can tip over, slide sideways or, in a crash, be ejected from the car.
- Check your instruction manual to find out how to route the seat belt properly and fasten it tightly.

As your child ages, parents and caregivers should adhere to the following guidelines for determinant which restraint system is best suited to protect children based on age and size.

- For the best possible protection keep infants in the back seat, in rear-facing child safety seats, up to the height or weight limit of that particular seat.
- When children outgrow their rear-facing seats they should ride in forward-facing child safety seats, in the back seat, until they reach the upper weight or height limit of the particular seat (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds.)
- Once children outgrow their forward-facing seats (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds), they should ride in booster seats, in the back seat, until the vehicle seat belts fit properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually when the child is at least 4′ 9″ tall)
- When children outgrow their booster seats, they should be restrained in the seat belts in the back seat, until at least 13 years of age.

Summer Photo Gallery













▲ *Top: Water Safety at Stanlick School, Jefferson Township*

▶ *Top Left: Bike Rodeo Wildwood School, Mt. Lakes*

▶ *Top Middle: Booster Seat Check, Meriem Street School, Newton*

▶ *Top Right: Bike Safety Event, Phillipsburg Housing Authority*

▶ *Bottom Left: CPS Event , Head Start Dover*

▶ *Bottom Right: CPS Tech Class - Seat Check Saturday Event, Fairfield*

Prevention Works is the official biannual newsletter of
Northern NJ SAFE KIDS/Safe Communities.

We welcome articles of interest highlighting your community or organization. Let us know how you have made your community a safe community.

If you have any comments or topics you would like to see covered, please feel free to contact Karen Jean Feury, RN

Phone: 973-971-4327 Fax: 973-290-7350
email: karenjean.feury@atlantichealth.org.

SAFE KIDS NORTHERN NEW JERSEY

Atlantic Health