Risk Situations
Statistics show that the top six driving risk factors for teens are:

• Inattentiveness — Driver inattention/distraction is the most common contributing factor in multiple vehicle crashes.

• Excessive speed — Illegal/unsafe speed is the most common contributing factor in single vehicle crashes for drivers. Teens particularly have difficulty adjusting speed to driving conditions.

• Failure to wear a safety belt — Properly wearing a seat belt reduces the risk of fatal injury to front seat passenger occupants by 45% in a car and 60% in a light truck.

• Fatigue — A person who has been awake for 24 hours experiences impairment nearly equal to a blood alcohol concentration of .10%. And, teens often don’t get enough sleep.

• Not checking traffic before pulling out — Most crashes involving teens occur at intersections because of their inexperience judging distance and speed.

• Driving with other teens — The presence of passengers strongly increases crash risk. For teen drivers, the more passengers the greater the risk.

Upon request, this material can be made available in alternative formats, such as Braille or large print. If you require an alternative format, please call 651-282-6565 (voice) or 651-282-6555 (TTY).
Parent Involvement Matters

Studies show that new drivers who are supervised have very few crashes. Developing necessary skills for safe driving is a complex task and can only be learned after many hours of practice. Driver’s education is a first step, but a parent’s role in teaching students to drive is crucial. Following are tips for parents.

- Require safety belt use at all times.
- When you drive, set a good example.
- Take time and practice with your teen while they have their permit and during their first year of licensed driving. Give positive feedback frequently and remain calm.
- Set a limit on the number of passengers in the car, especially multiple teens, to minimize distractions.
- Prohibit driving while excessively fatigued.
- Discuss the dangers and legal consequences of driving impaired.
- Take time to discuss driving rules and consequences. Strike a written contract between you and your teen.
- Expose your teen to different driving conditions including wet roads, snow, highways, rural and metro roadways, night driving, etc. Practice on roads unfamiliar to the teen.
- Choose vehicles for safety, not image.
- Restrict new drivers to driving alone only under favorable conditions, such as during daylight hours, good weather and in low traffic. Gradually allow them to take on more driving situations.
- Review the Minnesota Driver’s Manual.

Additional information is available through a new brochure, *Teens Behind the Wheel: A Roadmap for Parents*. This publication offers tools to assess teen drivers and provides a sample written contract. It is available at Minnesota Driver Exam Stations and at the following website.

http://www.dps.state.mn.us/trafsafe/Communications/teendrivers/teendrivers.html