

From: CDC Washington Office
Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2012 12:10 PM
To: CDC Washington Office
Subject: CDC CAPITOL HILL ANNOUNCEMENT - CDC reports decrease in teen drinking and driving



Tuesday, October 2, 2012

CDC reports decrease in teen drinking and driving

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) reported today that the percentage of teens in high school (16 years or older) who drove when they had been drinking alcohol decreased by 54% between 1991 and 2011. For the [Vital Signs](#) report, researchers analyzed data from the 1991-2011 national [Youth Risk Behavior Surveys \(YRBS\)](#).

These national surveys asked high school students if they had driven a vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol one or more times during the 30 days before the survey; CDC researchers focused their analysis on students aged 16 and older and found that 9 out of 10 high school teens were not drinking and driving during 2011.

The study also found that:

- Teens were responsible for approximately 2.4 million episodes of drinking and driving a month in 2011; some engaged in the dangerous behavior more than once a month.
- High school boys 18 years and older were most likely to drink and drive (18% of male high school students aged 18 years and older reported driving when they had been drinking alcohol), while 16-year-old high school girls were least likely (6%).
- 85% of teens in high school who reported drinking and driving in the past month also reported binge drinking. For YRBS, binge drinking means five or more drinks during a short period of time.

Many efforts have been helping to reduce teen drinking and driving. Some of the proven, effective strategies include the laws in place in every state that make it illegal to sell alcohol to anyone under age 21 and for those under age 21 to drive after drinking any alcohol. The graduated driver licensing systems in every state allow teens to gain privileges, such as driving at night or driving with passengers, over time.

Parents also play a crucial role in keeping their teens safe on the road. They can model safe driving behavior and set and enforce the "rules of the road" by completing a [parent-teen driving agreement](#) with their teens. Safe driving habits for teens include never drinking and driving, following state GDL laws, and wearing a seat belt on every trip. CDC's [Parents Are the Key campaign](#) offers parents of teen drivers information, tools, and proven tips to help protect their teens from crashes.

CDC *Vital Signs* provides timely, high impact, and data-driven prevention information, linking science, policy, and communications to create a call-to-action. The full report and past issues of *Vital Signs* are available at www.cdc.gov/VitalSigns.

For more information about motor vehicle safety, visit www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/ or contact the CDC Washington office at (202)245-0600.



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