

Parent/Teen Vehicle Use Agreement

Parental involvement is a vital part of your child's experience toward becoming a safe driver. Work together with your teen to help him or her learn safe driving skills and responsible, economical vehicle use by following these guidelines

Parent Guidelines - A Partnership for Survival

There are several agreements parents and young drivers can make to reduce the likelihood of crashes. New drivers should agree to:

- Limit night driving.
- Never use alcohol or drugs before they get behind the wheel or allow the use of alcohol or other drugs in the vehicle.
- Make sure that everyone in the vehicle wears seat belts at all times.
- Restrict the number of passengers.
- Restrict high-risk driving situations during the first year behind the wheel. Examples: adverse weather, congested traffic, unsupervised long trips.
- Never drive when excessively fatigued, angry, or upset.

Guidelines for Implementing a Parent-Teen Vehicle-Use Agreement

1. Be an Example

- Behavior is learned, not innate.
- It is unreasonable to expect your child to behave differently than you do when driving or caring for a vehicle.
- If there are preteens in the family, prepare them to take responsibility as a part of growing up.

2. Be Clear

- Go over the contract with your son or daughter.
- Fill in the blanks where applicable.
- Explain the regulations.
- Listen to your child's point of view.
- Link driving privileges to school performance and overall behavior.
- Emphasize consequences of failure to meet contract provisions.
- Emphasize that you will not accept irresponsible behavior.

3. Be Positive and Emphasize:

- Your concern for your child's safety and welfare.
- Your hopes for your child's future.
- Your expectations concerning responsible behavior.
- That driving is a privilege and a reward for responsible behavior.
- Conservation of family resources as an important need.

4. Be vigilant

Let your child know that together you and he or she will be inspecting the following:

- Compliance with maintenance requirements.
- Tires for abusive use or adequate pressure.
- Fuel level and mileage before and after child uses car.
- Vehicle for damage
- Vehicle for clues of drinking or other drug abuse.

5. Be Prompt

- Act promptly if there is an infraction of the agreement.
- The longer you wait to impose consequences, the weaker the link to behavior.
- Delaying can be perceived as a sign of weakness.

6. Be Firm, but Gentle

- Let the contract do the talking.
- Express disappointment when rules are broken.
- Do not negotiate consequences for infractions.
- Be firm. Do not change your mind.
- Let your anger show, but do not allow it to take over.
- If your child is not accustomed to obeying regulations to the letter, he or she may protest loudly when sanctions are imposed. Do not cave in to the uproar.

7. Be Consistent

- Discipline each infraction the same way each time it occurs.
- Both parents must provide a united front on issues. Do not allow yourselves to be divided and conquered.
- Your credibility and the power of the agreement will be weakened if you are not consistent in your enforcement and application of consequences.

8. Be Fair

- Get all the facts before you take action.
- Inform your child that other families are also using the parent-teen agreement and that he or she is not being singled out as an exception.

9. Be Flexible

- Zero flexibility could lead your child to drive at breakneck speeds to meet deadlines.
- Be careful not to allow exceptions too frequently, otherwise your exceptions become the rules, and your agreement loses its power.
- Beware of the tradeoff game. You deny the driving privilege on Friday night, but your child wants to trade for the following Friday night instead.
- Avoid the negotiation game in which your child wants to bargain for extra miles or extra driving time.

10. Be in Control-Be Alert for Games

- On strike: "I won't study if you won't let me have the car."
- Nobody likes me: "This is the only way I can make it with the group."
- The tickets are bought: "Now you'll make all of us waste money."
- Nobody else can drive: "You're spoiling the fun for all of us."
- The excuse game: "We ran out of gas." "I had to take everybody home."

11. Be Forgiving

- Your love must be unconditional.
- The contract provides for withholding privileges, not withholding love.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date