



National Safety Council

Position/Policy Statement

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)

Comprehensive Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) systems are proven to reduce crashes involving young drivers. The NSC encourages U.S. states and territories to enact comprehensive GDL legislation that includes extended learning phases for new drivers, provisional driver licenses that include night-time curfews and passenger restrictions, zero tolerance for alcohol use, primary safety belt use, and bans on cell phone use and text messaging. The Council encourages the U.S. Congress to provide financial incentives to states to enact comprehensive GDL systems that include all of these GDL components. The NSC also encourages parents to adopt best practices in their families, regardless of the laws in their states. This policy/position statement only applies to drivers under the age of 18.

The NSC Graduated Licensing Model includes these five elements:

1. **Learner's Permit.** The Learner's permit provides opportunities for new drivers to engage in limited driving for a period of time with a learner's permit under the supervision of a licensed parent, legal guardian or supervising adult. A parent or legal guardian should sign a statement approving the young driver's application for licensing and accept responsibility for providing guidance and supervision. The Council recommends that states establish minimum requirements for supervised practice driving and to establish learners permit periods of at least six months in duration.
2. **Provisional Driver License.** All jurisdictions are urged to enact provisional licensing statutes, covering persons under 18 years of age, which include these restrictions.
 - Licenses should be distinctive for all motorists under age 21.
 - Curfews should begin at 10 pm or earlier.
 - Drivers should be restricted from having any passengers under age 18.
3. **Zero Tolerance for Alcohol Use**
 - The presence of any alcohol or other drugs for which a valid prescription is not in use in the driver's bloodstream represents an offense, punishable by license revocation and suspension upon conviction. The only exception allowed is a maximum .01 BAC for

teens who can prove that the very small amount of alcohol was consumed during a religious ceremony.

- States should vigorously enforce minimum drinking age laws, youth drinking and driving laws, and undertake license revocation action against both underage purchasers and those who sell to underage persons.

4. Mandatory Seat Belt Use

States should enact primary seat belt laws for teen drivers and passengers, with penalties for violators.

5. Ban on Use of Cell Phones

States should enact laws that ban all use of cell phones and other electronic text messaging devices by teens, including hands-free devices, covered by Graduated Licensing laws while operating a motor vehicle.

This position statement reflects the opinions of the National Safety Council but not necessarily those of each member organization.

Approved, September 20, 2008