



Understanding Parents' Perspectives on Teen Driver Safety

NSC DriveitHOME Survey Analysis in partnership with Boden
June 2025

BACKGROUND

BODEN conducted a focused survey to gain meaningful insights into parents' perspectives on teen driver safety. Hosted on a specialized survey platform, the study captured valuable data to better understand their concerns and priorities.

OBJECTIVE

To inform and enhance our media materials. By understanding the concerns and priorities of parents, we aim to develop more resonant and impactful public safety insights.

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Survey Language	English
Country	USA
Age	25-70
Languages Spoken	English
Ethnicity	65% White; 16% Black; 10% Hispanic; 6% Asian; 6% Other
No. of survey respondents	1000
Survey Timing	May 2025
Areas	28% cities 55% suburbs 17% rural

Key Findings Overview

The survey reveals that parents feel confident in both their teen's driving abilities and their own role in teaching safe driving habits. Still, many remain concerned about common risks such as distraction, inexperience, and speeding—especially in high-risk driving conditions.

Parents actively engage in their teen's learning by practicing together, modeling safe behavior, and using personal experiences to reinforce key lessons. While most feel prepared, many are still interested in learning more about teen driving safety.

When it comes to resources, parents prefer practical, fact-based information delivered through digital platforms like websites, apps, and email.

Parental Confidence

Parents feel confident in both their teen's ability to drive and their own capacity to guide them in safe driving habits. Many believe their teens are prepared to drive safely, and they feel equipped to teach them safe driving practices. This confidence is reflected in high self-reported comfort with both instruction and their teen's driving abilities. **Still, with just over half of parents describing themselves as knowledgeable about teen driving safety, there may be opportunities to reinforce this preparedness through additional resources.**

- **82% of parents feel confident in teaching their teen safe driving habits.** (Question 11: Parents' Confidence in Teaching Safe Driving)
- **55% of parents consider themselves "knowledgeable" of teen driving safety practices.** (Question 4: Parents' Knowledge of Teen Driving Safety Practices)
- **42% of parents feel "very confident" and 38% feel "moderately confident" about their teen's driving skills.** (Question 5: Parents' Confidence in Teen's Driving Skills)

Top Concerns About Teen Driving

While parents express confidence in their teens' driving abilities, concerns about safety remain prominent. Parents are especially focused on risks related to **distraction, inexperience, and speeding**—highlighting the everyday challenges new drivers face. Beyond these primary concerns, parents also worry about their teens **driving in more complex or high-risk situations, such as on highways, in winter conditions, or late at night**. These concerns suggest that even confident parents are mindful of the real-world risks their teens may encounter on the road.

Top Concerns:

- **Distracted Driving**: 61% are concerned about distracted driving
- **Lack of Experience**: 48% worry about their teen's lack of experience
- **Speeding**: 37% of parents are most concerned about their teen speeding
- **Additional concerns**: Include driving on the highway (28%), winter driving (28%), night driving (24%), and driving late (24%)

(Question 6: Parents' Top Concerns)

Occasions of Concerns

FREQUENCY OF WORRY

Many parents carry ongoing concerns about their teen being involved in a car crash. For a large portion of parents, this worry is not occasional, it's a regular part of their day-to-day thinking. Even among those who feel confident in their teen's driving abilities, the possibility of a crash remains a persistent source of anxiety. These findings highlight how emotional and constant the issue of teen driving safety can be for families.

How Often Do Parents Worry About Car Crashes?

- Daily: 38%
- Occasionally: 34%

(Question 8: Frequency of the Worry About Car Crashes)

OCCASIONS OF WORRY

Parents' concerns about their teen's driving tend to peak during specific high-risk situations. **Bad weather, heavy traffic, and late-night driving are the most common triggers for heightened worry.** These situations are seen as especially risky due to reduced visibility, increased unpredictability, and greater potential for crashes.

- 79% worry most when their teen drives in bad weather conditions
- 63% worry during high traffic hours
- 60% worry about late-night driving

(Question 18: Concerns by Driving Context)

Understanding Driving Risks

While many parents believe their teens are aware of the dangers associated with unsafe driving, **there remains a notable gap between understanding and actual behavior**. Although teens recognize the risks, a significant portion do not take these dangers seriously enough, **raising concerns among parents about their teens' judgment and decision-making behind the wheel**.

Teen's Understanding of Driving Risks (According to Parents):

- **54%** believe their teen completely understands the risks of unsafe driving
- **29%** say their teen understands but doesn't take risks seriously enough
- **13%** feel their teen only understands some risks

(Question 19: Teen's Understanding of Driving Risks)

Interest in Further Learning

A striking 79% of parents express interest in learning more about safe driving practices to better guide their teens, highlighting a strong demand for additional educational resources. While many feel confident in their knowledge, they recognize that driving safety is an evolving topic. This proactive mindset **shows parents' commitment to providing up-to-date guidance**. Nearly half of parents report discussing safety with their teens weekly, and a sizable number speak with them daily, demonstrating ongoing engagement in promoting safe driving habits.

- **79% of parents are interested in learning more about safe driving habits so they can better guide their teen. This demonstrates a willingness to seek out resources and improve their knowledge.**

(Question 10: Parents' Interest in Learning More)

- **Almost half of the parents surveyed confirmed they speak to their teen weekly (46%), some even daily (32%).**

(Question 12: Frequency of Safety Conversations)

Parental Involvement

WHO TEACHES SAFE DRIVING

Parents overwhelmingly feel that they bear the primary responsibility for teaching their teens safe driving habits, **with fathers leading this effort in most families.**

Primary Responsibility for Teaching Safe Driving:

- Fathers: 64%
- Mothers: 33%

(Question 9: Primary Responsibility for Teaching Safe Driving Habits)

HOW PARENTS TEACH SAFE DRIVING

Parents take a hands-on approach when teaching their teens to drive, **prioritizing practicing together in the car and having direct conversations about safe driving.** Alongside these personal methods, many also rely on **formal driver's education and driving schools** to support their teens' learning. This reflects the comprehensive role parents play in promoting safe driving habits.

Preferred Teaching Methods:

- 75% prefer practicing driving together as their primary method of educating their teen.
- 67% will have direct conversations.
- 48% enlist a driving school to educate their teen on safe driving. *(Question 13: Resources Used for Safe Driving Education)*
 - Almost 83% of parents confirmed their teen had completed some form of driver's education or formal driving training. *(Question 3: Driver Education Completion)*

Digital Preferences for Resources

Parents show a strong preference for digital resources when it comes to educating themselves and their teens about driving safety. **Websites, email, and apps are the most favored platforms, reflecting a desire for convenient and accessible tools that fit into busy family routines.** This reliance on digital channels highlights the importance of delivering safety information in formats that are easy to access, practical to use, and tailored to how parents prefer to engage with content.

- **61%** of parents prefer to obtain safety tips through websites.
- **51%** prefer to directly receive information via their email.
- **45%** want to use apps to learn about teen driver safety.

(Question 15: Parents' Preferred Sources/Platforms)