

# Share the Keys



## New Jersey Parent/Teen Safe Driving Orientation

Kean University in partnership with the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety and New Jersey State Police has developed *Share the Keys*, a research based, data-driven orientation designed to reduce teen driver crash risks by increasing parental involvement.

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws are recognized as the single most effective tool for reducing teen driver crashes, injuries and deaths. While New Jersey's GDL is considered one of the most progressive and stringent in the United States, it must be clearly understood and supported by parents to save lives. To that end, ensuring that parents and teens fully understand the risks and responsibilities associated with driving is essential to teen driver safety.

Parental involvement has a significant impact on teen driver safety. *Driving through the Eyes of Teens, A Closer Look*, a research report from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute and State Farm, examined the impact parenting styles had on teen driver safety and found that teens whose parents set rules and pay attention to their driving activities in a helpful, supportive way are **half as likely** to be involved in a crash. The report presents the numerous safety gains experienced through this balanced parenting approach (authoritative) and provides a series of best practices.

**These best practices were used to define the key objectives for the orientation program:**

### ***Understanding the Graduated Driver License (GDL)***

The GDL is one of the most complex traffic laws and can be very confusing.

### ***Being a Good Role Model***

Research by CHOP, Travelers Insurance and many others found that teens mimic their parent's driving behaviors.

### ***Effectively Enforcing the GDL at Home***

The two restrictions of the GDL that have the most lifesaving potential are the curfew and passenger restrictions. Forty percent of all teen fatal crashes occur after 9:00 pm and teens with just one passenger have nearly twice the risk of being involved in a fatal crash.

### ***Increasing Practice Driving Hours***

During the first 12-24 months of driving, teens are at the greatest risk for being involved in a crash, which decreases with driving experience.

### ***Controlling the Keys***

CHOP's research also revealed that teens who requested permission to use the car were fifty percent less likely to be involved in crashes when compared to teens that had primary access. Drivers whose parents controlled the keys were also less likely to violate the provisions of the GDL.

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## Orientation program format and participation:

*Share the Keys* is approximately 90 minutes in length, presented by facilitators in community based settings (i.e., schools, libraries) and can be linked to parking permit requirements, classroom driver education programs and back-to-school nights. The orientation is designed for parents and their teens in the pre-permit/permit stage of licensure (parents and their teens already holding a probationary license will also benefit) and includes a resource guide full of materials that support parental involvement and safe driving behaviors.

## Become a Facilitator

Facilitator training workshops are conducted throughout the state and include a comprehensive review of relevant research materials and the unique learning approach used to construct the orientation. After a brief introduction to the research, facilitators are guided through learning approaches and practice numerous parent/teen exercises contained in the orientation. CEUs and training certificates are issued to those who have successfully completed the training. To become a facilitator, please contact:

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