

Teen motor vehicle fatalities rise in 2012, reversing positive trend

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Parents of teenagers may think they don't have influence on their kids, but when it comes to safe driving, they do—and it could mean the difference between life and death.

From 2004 to 2011, rates of motor vehicle crash deaths among 15-19-year-olds in Colorado dropped more than 67 percent. However, in 2012, Colorado experienced a 10 percent rise in teen fatalities from 2011.

“The pairing of statewide education and heightened enforcement has contributed to a significant decline in teen driving fatalities, but the increase in 2012 is cause for concern,” said Ali Maffey, policy and communication coordinator at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

“Before teen drivers get behind the wheel on their own, experts suggest parents sign a contract with their teenager outlining clear rules and specific consequences if rules are broken. This accountability goes a long way in decreasing a teen's risk of motor vehicle crash or fatality,” said Maffey.

In conjunction with National Teen Driver Safety Week, Oct. 20-26, the Colorado Teen Driving Alliance launched a new online parent course providing step-by-step instructions on how parents can support their teens through Colorado's graduated driver licensing laws.

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