Report Highlights Teen Distracted Driving Policies and Programs

States share how to keep novice drivers focused on the road

WASHINGTON, D.C.—As young drivers head back to school, a new Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) report explores the problem of teen distracted driving and highlights promising policies designed to address it. According to the most recent data, teens represent the largest proportion of drivers who are distracted at the time of a fatal crash. These crashes impact not only the distracted teen drivers, but also other roadway users: 57 percent of those killed were the teen drivers; the rest were their passengers, other vehicle occupants, pedestrians and bicyclists.

The report, Distracted & Dangerous: Helping States Keep Teens Focused on the Road, looks at legislation, enforcement and educational programs developed and implemented by the public and private sector at the national, state and local levels. Funded through a grant by State Farm®, the report was researched and written by nationally recognized teen safe driving expert, Pam Fischer, Principal of Pam Fischer Consulting.

“The teens have the highest crash risk of any age group, and research confirms that distraction is often a factor,” said GHSA Executive Director Jonathan Adkins, who oversaw the development of the report.

“Eliminating distraction caused by electronic devices and passengers, two of the main culprits for novice drivers, is essential, and back to school season is the perfect time to share this message.”

“When it comes to distracted driving, we are particularly concerned about young drivers,” said Chris Mullen, Director of Technology Research at State Farm. “Inexperience behind the wheel, combined with the many distractions teens encounter, can have serious consequences. State Farm is committed to research-based solutions for this issue. Programs like those outlined in this report, which encourage teens to be fully engaged in the task of driving, are a step in the right direction.”

Ensuring that teens recognize and eliminate deadly distractions when driving now and throughout adulthood is at the heart of the nearly two dozen state policy, enforcement and education initiatives featured in the report. Below are just a few examples:

- **New York** will soon have the nation’s toughest distracted driving penalties. Effective November 1, the penalty for those younger than 21 will be a 120-day license suspension for the first offense and one year for the second. The state complements its laws with aggressive enforcement, including utilizing unmarked, raised sport utility vehicles in a variety of colors that allow officers a better visual of drivers who are texting or engaging in other distracting behaviors.

- **North Dakota** invested federal distracted driving grant funds to
Greetings and welcome to the November MTSC Newsletter.

I hope that everyone has been able to get out and enjoy the great autumn season that we’ve been experiencing here in the “Pine Tree State”. We’ve been having an excellent fall foliage season full of amazing colors and have had many visitors to our great state.

As the fall season winds down and we prepare for winter, I’d be remiss if I didn’t remind everyone that winter’s right around the corner and hope that we are getting our vehicles ready for the weather that’s about to arrive sooner than later.

Weather driving tips are listed on the Maine DOT winter driving information page.

http://www.maine.gov/mdot/winterdriving/

On Thursday, December 4, 2014, the Maine Department of Transportation, the Maine Better Transportation Association and the Maine Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers are hosting the 64th Maine Transportation Conference at the Augusta Civic Center. This conference will provide individual and panel presentations on various policy and technical aspects relating to the theme “TRANSPORTATION WITHOUT BORDERS: LEARNING FROM OUR NEIGHBORS”.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday January 8, 2015 at the Central Maine Commerce Center, Augusta, ME and our featured presenter will be Mr. Maurice Dionne, FMCSA Hazardous Materials Specialist, discussing his duties and Hazardous Materials shipping and transportation in Maine and New England.

So let’s enjoy the remaining fall season; drive, bike and hike safely; and please, no texting or cell phone use while driving! Stay safe as someone is always awaiting your arrival home.

Regards,

Alan
Webinar: Practical Approaches to Youth Engagement in Safe Routes to School

*Tuesday, November 18, 1-2pm*

Safe Routes to School has enjoyed success in tens of thousands of elementary and middle schools across the country and has helped make walking and bicycling a safe and appealing way for kids to get to and from school. In many communities, programs have been in place long enough to see one generation of students “graduate” and move on to middle and even high school. For these older students, youth engagement strategies can help maintain enthusiasm and interest in safe routes to school, and can pay off in extraordinary ways (like through this East End Community School Walk & Bike Challenge group in Portland).

This webinar will discuss practical application of youth engagement theories in school-based Safe Routes to School programs. Webinar presenters will provide the basics on youth engagement, highlight proven strategies and successful outcomes in applying youth engagement to safe routes activities, and then provide advice and lessons learned to help safe routes practitioners and youth educators get started.

Technical Assistance from the EPA’s Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program

*Applications Due November 20, 2014 at 5pm*

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) invites communities to apply for technical assistance to implement smart growth development approaches. EPA is offering this technical assistance through the Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities program to help communities across the country – including underserved communities, coastal communities, small cities, and rural areas – adopt sustainable growth strategies. The program aims to increase resilience to natural disasters and strengthen the economy while protecting human health and the environment. Building Blocks provides quick, targeted technical assistance to communities using tools with demonstrated results and widespread application.

Communities may apply for assistance on one or more of the following topics:

- Bikeshare planning
- Equitable development
- Infill development for distressed cities
- Sustainable strategies for small cities and rural areas
- Flood resilience for riverine and coastal communities

If selected, a community will work with an EPA-supported team of experts during a one- to two-day workshop, where participants will learn about relevant strategies, policies, and practices.

*See the Request for Letters of Interest (PDF) (RFLI) for application details. Applications are due by 5 pm, November 20, 2014.*

Safe Communities Grant Projects - Maine Bureau of Highway Safety Now Accepting Proposals for Federal Fiscal Year 2015

*Application Deadline is December 1, 2014*

Interested in improving safety in your community? The Maine Bureau of Highway Safety is requesting proposals to fund local and statewide behavioral safety and safety-awareness projects. Program focus areas include occupant protection (seat belts, child car seat use, etc.), young drivers, mature drivers and distracted driving.

*See pages 7-8 for a full description of this grant program*
provide law enforcement training in advance of a statewide high visibility enforcement initiative and media campaign conducted during the April 2014 observance of Distracted Driving Awareness Month. The state is supporting this enforcement with creative messages that reach young drivers via Pandora, Hulu and other popular social media platforms.

The state of Washington conducts a high school program where teens complete a series of tasks in an attempt to earn a $500 grant for the school group of their choice. Funded through State Farm, the program has prompted teen-led projects in more than 230 high schools, including flash mobs, legislative rallies and construction of Memory Walls to honor victims of distracted driving.

Other promising approaches include state-of-the-art simulators, a statewide summit, peer-to-peer campaigns, contests, phone apps, and grassroots advocacy. While most are adult-led, several were developed by teens who are serving as peer leaders in their communities.

One unexpected research finding is that not all teens are driving distracted. In fact, the youngest and most inexperienced drivers are less likely than any other age group – with the exception of drivers 60 and older – to use a cell phone behind the wheel.

As Adkins notes, “Many brand new teen drivers recognize passengers and portable electronics are distracting. But as they gain experience and become more confident in their driving skills, their attitudes about talking and texting while driving, as well as transporting passengers, changes.”

The featured programs were identified through a survey of State Highway Safety Offices (SHSOs) conducted by GHSA in March 2014. GHSA worked with a panel of teen driver experts to pinpoint the most promising projects.

A PDF version of the new report is available online at http://www.ghsa.org/html/publications/teens/sfteens14.html. GHSA will hold a webinar on the report on September 2 at 2:00 p.m. EDT. Register at https://www4.gotomeeting.com/register/255524375.

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About GHSA
The Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) is a nonprofit association representing the highway safety offices of states, territories, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. GHSA provides leadership and representation for the states and territories to improve traffic safety, influence national policy, enhance program management and promote best practices. Its members are appointed by their Governors to administer federal and state highway safety funds and implement state highway safety plans. Contact GHSA at 202-789-0942 or visit www.ghsa.org. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GHSAhq or follow us on Twitter at @GHSAHQ.

About State Farm®
State Farm and its affiliates are the largest provider of car insurance in the U.S. and is a leading insurer in Canada. In addition to providing auto insurance quotes, their 18,000 agents and more than 65,000 employees serve 81 million policies and accounts – more than 79 million auto, home, life and health policies in the United States and Canada, and nearly 2 million bank accounts. Commercial auto insurance, along with coverage for renters, business owners, boats and motorcycles, is also available. State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company is the parent of the State Farm family of companies. State Farm is ranked No. 41 on the 2014 Fortune 500 list of largest companies. For more information,
Parents Are the Key in Driver Safety for Their Teens

Dear Colleague:

Novice drivers are at greater risk for motor vehicle crashes and their resulting injuries and deaths. In fact, car crashes remain the number one cause of death for teenagers. The Parents Are the Key campaign helps to educate parents on their invaluable role in reducing risk and managing their teens’ driving behavior.

The CDC has launched a refreshed Parents Are the Key website, featuring new materials and resources. We encourage you to visit the Parents Are the Key website<http://www.cdc.gov/parentsarethekey/>, where you will find a Parent-Teen Driving Agreement<http://www.cdc.gov/ParentsAreTheKey/agreement/index.html>, fact sheets and guides that you can share with your constituents.

We encourage you to share our refreshed website through Twitter and Facebook. Below please find sample tweets and Facebook posts that you can use with your constituents:

* Before you hand over your keys, sign the Parent-Teen Driving Agreement http://go.usa.gov/f8aj #NTDSW

* Do you pledge? Parents are the key to protecting inexperienced drivers http://go.usa.gov/f8aV #NTDSW

* 8 teens die a day from car crashes. Know the 8 danger zones http://go.usa.gov/f8ge #NTDSW

We understand the importance of providing parents with the latest research and resources on teen driving. Parents are eager to keep teens safe on the road. We hope that our new Parents Are the Key website and our Parent-Teen Driving Agreement will help them towards this goal.

We appreciate your support and, more importantly, your efforts to help parents keep their teen drivers safe.

Sincerely,

Grant Baldwin, PhD, MPH
Director
Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
In the News

National School Bus Safety Week is an excellent way for everyone — parents, students, teachers, motorists, school bus operators, school administrators, and other interested parties — to join forces and address the importance of school bus safety. This year’s theme — #atmystopustop — was created to elevate discussion about the dangers of cars illegally passing a stopped school bus. Motorists should but often don’t seem to know that when they encounter a stopped school bus with lights flashing they MUST come to a full and complete stop to allow students to cross the street safely. NAPT encourages teachers and parents to talk to their students/children during this year’s National School Bus Safety Week about being safe pedestrians at and around the school bus stop.

Motorists that illegally pass a stopped school bus are the leading cause of pupil transportation-related injuries and fatalities. An annual survey sponsored the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (www.nasdpts.org/stoparm) found that nearly 100,000 school bus drivers reported a total of more than 88,000 vehicles passed their buses illegally on a single day last year. In the 2012/2013 school years, there were nine child fatalities in the school bus “danger zone.” Six of these fatalities were caused by drivers that illegally passed a stopped school bus.

Passing a stopped school bus with its lights flashing is illegal in all 50 states, and can carry a significant fine. Local school transportation service providers should encourage their local media and local law enforcement officials to heighten awareness and enforcement of laws that protect students from motorists that pass a school bus illegally as well as other forms of distracted driving. Click here for a number of resources to help inform your local community. There are also FREE public service announcements you can use in your local area to illustrate the danger of this illegal activity.

By highlighting the importance of school bus safety in your community and promoting awareness of the danger created every time a car illegally passes a stopped school bus, you may save someone’s life this week. Share your news and activities with us on Facebook, Twitter, or email info@napt.org.
Safe Communities Grant Projects

The Bureau is requesting proposals from potential sub-grantees for projects that would utilize federal funds for local and statewide behavioral highway safety programs and increased awareness of behavioral highway safety issues in local communities. Program focus areas include occupant protection, young drivers, mature drivers and distracted driving.

Young Drivers

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for young drivers in the United States. Due to inexperience and other factors, young drivers have a much higher crash and fatality rate than that of the average driver. Maine’s young driver program focuses on drivers between the ages of 16 and 24, with particular focus on the youngest of drivers, ages 16 to 18.

The following are crash facts about Maine’s young drivers:

- Based on miles driven, teens are involved in 3 times as many fatal crashes as other drivers
- Teens have the lowest seat belt use rates of any age group with deadly consequences
- 82% of the nation’s teens ages 16-17 have a cell phone and 34% of them admit to talking on their phone while driving.

The Bureau is requesting proposals from potential law enforcement and non-profit agencies for projects that would utilize federal funds for local or statewide teen driver safety programs.

Mature Drivers

Maine is the oldest state by median age (43.9) and the fourth oldest by percent (17.7%) of its population of 65. This percentage is expected to rise to 26.3% by 2030. Senior drivers are defined as any driver over the age of 65, and continue to drive on Maine roads. These drivers experience more crashes per mile driven than any other age group except 16 year olds and the crashes are 1.7 times more likely to lead to serious injury or death than those drivers age 25-65.

The Bureau is requesting proposals from potential non-profit agencies for projects that will increase public knowledge, understanding and acceptance of mature driver needs and enhance self-screening for improved safety that focuses on various outreach strategies and identifies effective approaches that engage the drivers and families most likely to be facing driving transitions.

WHO SHOULD APPLY: Non-profit organizations, law enforcement agencies and partners in Maine state government (other state agencies). The Bureau cannot award funds to for-profit organizations or individuals.

HOW TO APPLY: Complete the grant proposal as indicated and submit to the Bureau of Highway Safety. Proposals may be submitted via e-mail to angela.roberts@maine.gov or via traditional mail to 164 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333.

DUE DATE: Proposals for Federal Fiscal Year 2015 projects are due no later December 1, 2014.

AMOUNT OF AVAILABLE FUNDS: Proposal requests may be for up to $5,000. Each proposal must clearly explain the details of the requested budget. The final award amount will be at the discretion of the Bureau.

PROJECT PERIOD: A sub-grant awarded by the Bureau as a result of a...
Maine Bureau of Highway Safety Accepting Proposals  continued from p. 7

proposal must be used in the Federal Fiscal Year 2015 (October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015) after award notification by the Bureau. The Bureau can only reimburse projects completed by September 30, 2015. No activities after this date will be reimbursed.

RESTRICTIONS: Proposals for projects that would duplicate existing Bureau programs, trainings, projects, or any other Bureau initiatives will not be considered for funding. Proposals that do not sufficiently identify a behavioral highway safety problem based on available data analysis of crash and injuries specific to Maine will not be considered. Proposals must contain an evaluable component and/or be a proven countermeasure. A proposal submission does not guarantee the Bureau will fund a project.

SELECTION: The following will be taken into consideration when the Bureau considers proposals for funding:

- Is the project and supporting data relevant to your jurisdiction or area of influence?
- Is the problem adequately identified?
- Is the problem identification supported by accurate and relevant data?
- Will this project save lives and reduce serious crashes?
- Are the activities to support the goals and objectives realistic, measurable, and achievable?
- Is this project cost effective?
- Is the evaluation plan sound? (Is the performance/progress measurable?)
- Is there a realistic plan for self-sustainability (if applicable)?
- Is sufficient match documented and provided to enhance the overall value of the project?

If there are sections of your proposal that require additional information or generate questions on the part of the Bureau staff, you may be contacted to provide additional information and amend your proposal before your project can be considered for funding.

PROPOSAL ACCEPTANCE NOTIFICATION: If the Bureau determines that your proposal meets all the specifications put forth in this document and the Bureau makes a sub-grant award based on your proposal, you will be notified by a Bureau staff member of the approval by January 5, 2015.

A sub-grant application package will be sent to you after notification. If it is your organization’s first sub-grant award from the Bureau, a Bureau staff member may meet with you to discuss sub-grant award processes and requirements.

Please note: no Bureau-funded projects may begin until after award has been made and the contract(s) have been signed.

SUB-GRANT AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: During the span of the approved sub-grant period, applicants will be required to meet reporting requirements. These requirements include, but are not limited to, cash reimbursement requests and progress reports.

Johannah

Johannah Oberg
Highway Safety Coordinator/Maine Driving Dynamics Coordinator

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http://www.maine.gov/dps/bhs/
PACTS Public Opinion Survey Results

The Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System, PACTS, has completed a public opinion survey on regional transportation topics. It shows that people are making significant changes in their transportation behavior in response to changes in the world around them. PACTS will use the results in the development of a 2015 long range regional transportation policy and projects plan.

The survey topics were:

* Changes in transportation behavior in recent years
* Satisfaction with transportation options and with recent transportation projects
* Importance of factors in the decision of where to live
* Effectiveness of specific incentives to use bus transit service
* Top choices for future transportation funding strategies
* Several other topics

Pan Atlantic SMS Group of Portland performed the telephone survey for us. Their results were from 700 respondents from the Arundel to Freeport to Raymond PACTS region, and were based on a 95% confidence interval and a margin of error of 4%.

The 250-page survey report is available at www.pactsplan.org. Here are some highlights.

1. 43% have changed their transportation behavior significantly in the past 5 to 10 years:
   * 11% drive less due to increased age
   * 6% due to job change
   * 5% due to increase in gas cost
   * Many other reasons

Comment: A 43% change in behavior is significant, shows people’s adaptability to change, and suggests that people will continue to change their travel behavior in the future.

2. 51% expect to live in smaller house and lot in the future. 29%: larger. 17%: neither.

Comment: This is a major finding, and is consistent with the current trend to relocate to town and city centers. This will lead to more walking, biking and transit use - and demand for supporting infrastructure. For long range planning purposes, such as the PACTS Destination 2040 transportation plan, it is compelling that more than two-thirds of the survey’s 18 to 34 year old respondents envision themselves living in a community where
Maine has made significant updates to its Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Last updated in 2012, the 2014 SHSP has many newly updated elements. This new edition has been approved by FHWA and was designed to meet a number of new MAP-21 requirements. These include:

- Establishing a regular update and evaluation cycle no greater than 5 years – Maine’s will be reviewed in 2017, with 2016 performance goals established.
- Coordination with other Safety Plans, like the Bureau of Highway Safety’s Highway Safety Plan and coordination of safety performance measures with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO’s) and Regional Planning Organizations (RPO’s).
- Defining High Risk Rural Roads

States are federally required to update the SHSP every 5 years. There were significant enough changes needed in Maine’s SHSP to update ours even sooner. This effort was coordinated by the MaineDOT Safety Office, but could not be accomplished without a strong supporting cast, both within MaineDOT and by many partner agencies and organizations. Commissioners from three of the leading agencies signed a letter of support (Secretary of State, Public Safety and DOT).

What else is new in our updated SHSP? Highlights of those changes include: Crash data has been updated; performance targets established; our many important safety partners are listed; safety strategies updated; and a section added citing MPO, RPO and Tribal relationships and related safety activities.

The new SHSP is posted on the web and can be accessed at
http://www.themtsc.org/news/ckfinder/userfiles/files/2014%20SHSP%20102314_75.pdf or
Reduction in Fatalities After Implementation of New Traffic Laws

Reduction in fatalities, ambulance calls, and hospital admissions for road trauma after implementation of new traffic laws.

Abstract
OBJECTIVES:
We evaluated the public health benefits of traffic laws targeting speeding and drunk drivers (British Columbia, Canada, September 2010).

METHODS:
We studied fatal crashes and ambulance dispatches and hospital admissions for road trauma, using interrupted time series with multiple nonequivalent comparison series. We determined estimates of effect using linear regression models incorporating an autoregressive integrated moving average error term. We used neighboring jurisdictions (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Washington State) as external controls.

RESULTS:
In the 2 years after implementation of the new laws, significant decreases occurred in fatal crashes (21.0%; 95% confidence interval [CI]=15.3, 26.4) and in hospital admissions (8.0%; 95% CI=0.6, 14.9) and ambulance calls (7.2%; 95% CI=1.1, 13.0) for road trauma. We found a very large reduction in alcohol-related fatal crashes (52.0%; 95% CI=34.5, 69.5), and the benefits of the new laws are likely primarily the result of a reduction in drinking and driving.

CONCLUSIONS:
These findings suggest that laws calling for immediate sanctions for dangerous drivers can reduce road trauma and should be supported.

MTSC: Promoting Safe Transportation in Maine

Mark Your Calendars and Save the Date(s)
For the Maine Transportation Safety Coalition Meetings

Thursday, January 8, 2015 ~ 9:00 AM – Noon
Central Maine Commerce Building, Augusta

Presenter: Maurice Dionne, FMCSA Hazardous Materials Specialist
RSVP your attendance or non-attendance to Katharyn at katharyn.b.zwicker@maine.gov or 287-5359. Thank you.