

CASE Newsletter

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Legislature Moving to Adopt New Teen Restrictions

By Jerry Gaines, Past CASE President

The California State Legislature has approved two legislative proposals that will impose new restrictions on teens holding provisional driver licenses. Once the Governor approves of the two bills, SB 194 will become law on January 1, 2014, and AB 1113 will take effect on January 1, 2015.

Much has been said about restricting hands free electronic devices along with hand held devices. SB 194 (Galgiani – D) would prohibit drivers under 18 years of age from operating an electronic wireless communication device, even if it is equipped with a hands-free-device. CASE joined with other traffic safety support groups to advocate for passage of this legislation. The increase in distracted driving behavior as a significant cause of crashes calls for a change in the use of electronic devices, whether hands free or not.



Recently the federal government adopted new legislation (known as MAP 21) for the U.S. Highway Transportation system. One feature is a new grant program directed towards encouraging states to adopt more restrictive graduated license programs. AB 1113 (Frazier—D) would help California meet criteria set forth in the MAP 21 regulations and then qualify for federal grant funds. The legislation calls for a person to hold an instructional driver's permit for a minimum of nine months (now six months) prior to applying for a provisional driver's license (PDL). It requires PDL requirements to remain in effect until age 18. It prohibits driving with a PDL from between the hours of 10:00 p.m. (now 11:00 p.m.) and 5:00 a.m. And it prohibits PDL drivers from transporting passengers who are under 21 years of age (now 20 years of age), except as specified.

Both of these legislative bills have passed in the Assembly and the Senate by wide margins and are being sent to the Governor's desk for signature. It is noted that the Challenge 6 Team of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan played a key role in the development of these bills. The California Highway Patrol, among other agencies, has advocated for more restrictions on electronic devices and provisional license regulations. CASE commends the CHP's leadership here.

GDL Law Has Reduced Young Driver Crashes by 68 Percent After 15 Years

An analysis of California's teen-age graduated driver licensing law (GDL) implemented 15 years ago shows that it has been effective in reducing fatal and injury collisions for novice drivers. The number of at-fault fatal and injury crashes for 16-year-old teen drivers declined by 68 percent, according to the Automobile Club of Southern California. Among 17-year-olds, the drop was 51 percent.

The Brady-Jared Teen Driver Safety Act that established the state's GDL system was co-sponsored by California's AAA clubs and CASE. The law, passed in 1997, eases novice teen drivers into the driving experience, and reduces their exposure to the most dangerous risks by imposing restrictions that prohibited young passengers and limiting nighttime driving.

In 1998, the year before the first teens received provisional licenses under the GDL law, 18,000 California teens were killed or injured in vehicle crashes annually. In 2010 (most recent data available), about 8,000 teens ages 16 and 17 were killed or injured statewide in motor vehicles.

"Parental involvement, more time behind the wheel, removing young passengers from the vehicle and limiting late night driving have all helped reduce teen driver crashes and are all part of GDL," said the Auto Club's Senior Traffic Safety Researcher Steven A. Bloch, Ph.D. "We need parents and teens to continue to understand and follow the law to further reduce crashes."

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GDL Law Has Reduced Young Driver Crashes by 68 Percent After 15 Years

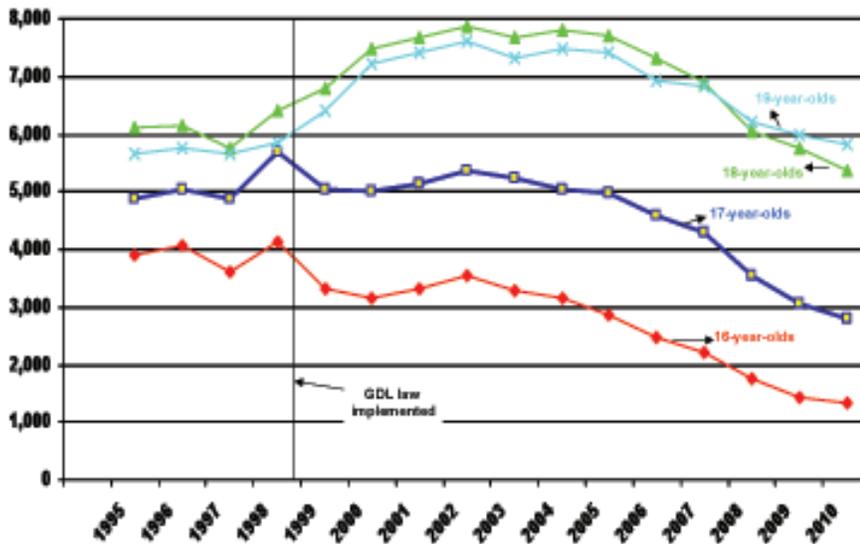
(Continued from page 1)

Under GDL, some decline in fatal and injury crashes among 16-17-year-olds can be attributed to a reduction in driver licensing among teens in this group. Some decline also can be attributed to the recession/weak economy and automotive safety improvements that affect all drivers – more air bags, better brakes and stability control systems. But, according to Bloch, after controlling for these changes, the drop in crash rates among teens from 1998-2010 still demonstrates GDL is effective.

California Teen Crashes

At-Fault Fatal and Injury Crashes

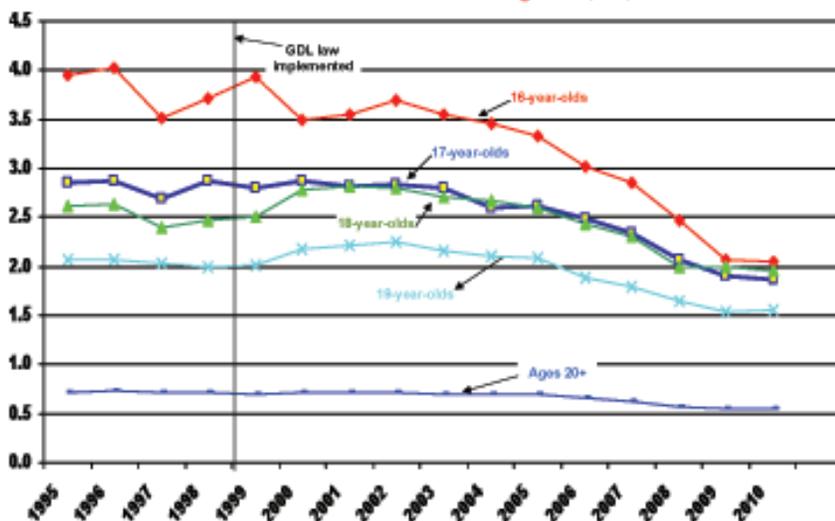
Crashes of 16-year-old drivers dropped 68% since 1998. Those for 17-year-olds dropped 51%. Crashes of 18- and 19-year-olds declined 16% and 1%.



California Teen Crash Rates

At-Fault Fatal and Injury Crashes Per 100 Licensed Drivers

The crash rate for 16-year-old drivers dropped 45% after 1998 – double the reduction for older drivers ages 18, 19, and 20+



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CASE Calendar

September 15-21, 2013 - National Child Passenger Safety Week. Contact: www.nhtsa.gov

October 20-26, 2013 - National Teen Driver Safety Week. Contact: Children's Hospital of Philadelphia @ www.teendriversource.org

March 15, 2014 - 62nd Annual CASE Conference, Hyatt Place Ontario/Rancho Cucamonga, 4760 East Mills Circle, Ontario, CA. Hotel Reservations: (909) 980-2200. (Ask for the CASE Conference rate).

2014 CASE Conference

The 62nd Annual CASE Conference will be held at the Hyatt Place Ontario/Rancho Cucamonga Hotel, Saturday, March 15, 2014, from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. The hotel is located at 4760 East Mills Circle, Ontario, CA 91764.

A conference registration form and additional details have been posted on the CASE website @ www.casewebsite.org/Conference/conference.html

Teacher Preparation Courses

For information on Driver Education teacher prep courses in the Northern California and Riverside areas, contact **Abril Chavando** at UC Riverside School of Extended Education: achavando@ucx.ucr.edu