

## ANSWERS TO A TEEN'S RESPONSES

### "I'M A SAFE DRIVER."

Point out that other drivers are not necessarily safe, so a seat belt is always needed.

### "I'M NOT GOING TO GET INTO AN ACCIDENT."

Here, focus on the immediate, milder outcomes of not using a seat belt. Your teenager could get an expensive ticket. And, of course, you have set consequences as well.

### "I'M NOT GOING FAR."

Here, you can remind your teenager that most vehicle crashes happen within 10 miles of home. Buckle up for every trip, no matter how long or how short.

### THE SCIENCE BEHIND HOW TEENS THINK



Many teenagers are shortsighted risk takers who think, "Surely this won't happen to me." Making the right decisions and understanding the true consequences of those decisions is a struggle.

According to TeenMentalHealth.org, the teen brain is going through massive structural changes. These changes make it hard for teenagers, especially males, to think long-term. Teens are most motivated to change habits when the desired behavior is tied directly to immediate gratification.



Every year, new teen drivers get behind the wheel in Texas. Unfortunately, teens are involved in three times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. TxDOT is partnering with high schools across the state during its Teen Click It or Ticket campaign to show teens how buckling up can save their lives. The Teen Click It or Ticket campaign aims to increase seat belt usage among young people ages 15-20.

**GO HERE FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES  
AND INFORMATIVE VIDEOS:**

**TEXASCLICKITORTICKET.COM**



# BUCKLING

# UP

*is a*

# NO-BRAINER

SO HELP US CONVINCE YOUR TEEN

# Click It OR Ticket

TxDOT

 Save a Life™  
Texas Department of Transportation

## LET'S START WITH THE FACTS

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, teens have the lowest rate of seat belt use of any age group. And male teens lag behind female teens in seat belt use. What are the consequences of those facts here in Texas? Well, according to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), nearly half (46 percent) of 15- to 20-year-olds killed in vehicle crashes around the state in 2011 were not wearing safety belts.

Parents may think it's logical that a teenager would wear a seat belt, but teens don't think the way adults think. In this guide, we're going to give you a few strategies to help your teen see that buckling up is a no-brainer.

## WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

### BE A ROLE MODEL

When it comes to buckling up, actions speak louder than words. Kids are observing you even when you don't think they are paying attention. Remember, every time you buckle up that seat belt, it's a teachable moment.

So no matter how quick an errand or short a trip, always buckle up. And give your passengers a glance to be sure everyone, front seat and back, is wearing a safety belt. Finally, a simple verbal cue — “Everybody bucked in?” — is also a good practice and sends a clear message that buckling up is the only real option.

### MAKE THE RULES CLEAR

Have the talk. Sit down and explain the rules of the road — according to the state of Texas and according to you.

In Texas, whether you're the driver, front seat passenger or backseat passenger, you have to buckle up.

It's the state law. And not doing so could cost you up to \$200. Drivers on the Graduated Driver License (GDL) Program could risk license suspension if they receive a seat belt citation.



Be clear that there will also be consequences at home for not buckling up. Let your teen know that any violation will result in the loss of driving privileges — or worse. Put it in writing. Your child must know where you stand. Also, immediate consequences resonate with teens. If a teen knows just one violation will mess with weekend plans, then there's strong motivation to behave in the desired manner.

## LET THE RISKS BE KNOWN

Why is driving without a seat belt so dangerous? Teens need to know the answer to this question. And the facts are clear — wearing a seat belt is a lifesaver. Even in vehicles equipped with air bags, seat belts save lives and are still needed to prevent serious injury.

In crashes, seat belts help keep you and your passengers inside the vehicle, where everyone is the safest. Seat belts also keep you from hitting objects or other passengers inside the vehicle.

Speed plays a big role in the severity of crashes, but it can be deceptive. A collision at 25 mph is like falling from a two-story window. At 40 mph, a collision is equivalent to falling out of a six-story window. And at 60 mph, it's like falling 12 stories.

The bottom line is that buckling up cuts a person's chance of being killed or seriously injured in a crash by nearly 50 percent. That's a no-brainer.

