

November 27, 2010

Preface:

More teenagers die due to motor vehicle accidents than any other single cause. Apart from the risk of death is the risk of injury to the teen driver, passengers, and others. Driving can also become a financial burden to the family, a burden which can become a crisis in the event of an accident

- Motor vehicle accidents (MVAs) are the leading cause of death in people age 16 to 20.
- MVAs account for about 1/3 of deaths of people in this age group.
- People aged 16 to 20 have the highest fatality rate due to MVAs of any other age group.
- People aged 16 to 20 make up only 5% of drivers and only 3% of all miles driven by all drivers. And yet they are involved in 15% of traffic deaths.
- About 5000 teenagers of driving age die in automobile accidents every year.
- For every teenager killed, about 100 have injuries that are not fatal. MVAs are the leading cause of disability related to head and spinal cord injuries.
- 17-year old drivers are 6 times as likely to have an MVA as are people in the general population of drivers.
- 16-year old drivers are 20 times as likely to have an MVA.

Driving Agreement

General Principles

Initial each point to show you read and understand it:

_____ I recognize that driving is a privilege, not a right. The State's role is to determine that I meet the basic legal requirements for a license. The privilege to drive is not a legal right: It is granted to me by my parents, who are under no obligation to do so, and who may withdraw the privilege at any time. Because I am a minor, my parents remain responsible for my behavior. I understand that I will only be allowed to drive when I am willing to abide by the rules and regulations established by my parents.

_____ I recognize that the "Golden Rule" is part of this contract. No matter how unfair I believe it is, the bottom line is "He who has the Gold makes the Rules". Life is not fair, and it is no different in the context of driving. I realize that the

parents are undertaking a huge financial burden and risk. If I do not like the rules of the contract, I am free to buy my own car and follow my own rules after I move out of the house and live on my own.

_____ I recognize that driving a car is a very serious matter. I recognize that...

- _____ Automobile accidents are the leading cause of death of people 16-20 years old.
- _____ I am more likely to die in an auto accident than from any other cause.
- _____ Recklessness or errors that I make while driving could kill or hurt me, kill or hurt passengers in my car, and/or kill or hurt people in other cars and pedestrians. Among those that could be victims of my driving mistakes are: babies, children, my friends, my family members, parents of children, and many others.

_____ I will abide by all laws regulating driving. I will observe and abide by posted speed limits. I will abide by rules established by my parents. I recognize these are for my protection and the protection of others. I will abide by these rules even when I don't agree with them.

_____ I understand that the car I drive is property of my parents, even if I pay for part or all of it, even if it is given to me as a "gift." I drive the car only with permission. I may be given limited permission to drive based on parental convenience. Just because I have limited permission (e.g. drive to school) does not mean I have permission to drive all the time (e.g. night time).

_____ I agree to maintain a "B" grade point average to maintain my driving privileges.

_____ I agree to perform errands when asked by parents, including driving my sister(s)/brother(s) places when needed. I will be responsible for appropriate conduct with sisters during these trips, specifically no arguing or discussions that might interfere with my ability to concentrate on driving. Failure to do so will result in loss of driving privileges at parents' discretion.

_____ I understand that my parents and I must reach a written agreement in order for me to be permitted to drive. I understand that the terms of this agreement may be changed based on how I handle the freedom and responsibility of driving. The rules will get stricter if my parents judge that I am not doing well or disregard the rules. It will get somewhat less strict if my parents judge that I am doing well.

_____ We will review this agreement and perhaps make changes to every 6 months or earlier if my parents or I wish to do so.

RULES-Category A

Category A rules, if violated, will lead to indefinite suspension of driving privileges with no chance of reinstatement of driving privileges while in our household.

Violation of these rules are of such magnitude to put the family at risk for permanent damage for stupid acts.

1. I will not drive for 24 hours after my last use of alcohol in ANY amount. (This is not an endorsement of use of alcohol.)
2. I will not drive for 72 hours after my last use of any "substance." In this agreement, "substance" means any drug or chemical (including but not limited to marijuana, pills, inhalants, and other drugs) which would be expected by my parents to alter my ability to drive. There is no acceptable amount of any substance of this kind. If I use any drugs, I will not drive for 72 hours.
3. I will not ride as a passenger with any driver who has used alcohol or any substance as defined above.
4. If I find myself in a situation as described in 1, 2, or 3 above, I will contact my parents or another designated adult to arrange for transportation.
5. I will not engage in any thrill-seeking behavior while driving. I will not drive for recreation. Driving too fast or playing around with a car for fun is NOT ALLOWED.
6. I will not text or talk (or any other similar and/or distracting activity) on the cell phone while driving.
7. I will not allow alcohol or illegal drugs in the car.
8. I will inform my parents about any and all accidents, damages, and encounters with police.
9. Breaking the driving laws or abusing a motor vehicle can result in the loss of driving privileges, even if we learn about it from a source other than the police. You never know who may be observing you.

RULES-Category B

Category B violations will lead to suspension of driving privileges for up to three months or longer based on degree of violations. Parents are solely responsible for determining the length of suspension of driving privileges.

1. I will ask permission to drive to specific locations and will discuss the route planned. As I begin driving independently, I will be certain that my parents know where I am. I will not make unscheduled stops or side trips. Of course safety considerations will always take priority, and will

make changes in the course as needed. I will inform parents of such changes as soon as practical.

2. I will not drive on streets, highways, or in areas that are designated as off-limits. I understand that greater flexibility in these matters will come as I gain experience and show that I am honoring the agreement. For the time being, the following roads and areas are to be avoided:

3. I must ask permission to drive each time I drive. Exceptions to this rule will be given for regularly scheduled transportation to school, work, regular meetings, etc. I am expected to go directly to and from school when dismissed and immediately after school events unless express permission is given. I will keep parent informed of whereabouts and will use routes approved by parents.

4. I will not permit any other person to drive the car. I will not drive anyone else's car. I will not lend the car out to anyone.

5. I will limit the number of passengers (not counting parents and family) to 1 (one).

RULES-CATEGORY C

Category C violations may lead to suspension of driving privileges for up to six weeks. Parents are solely responsible for determining the length of suspension of driving privileges.

1. I will respect weather and road conditions, slowing down as needed for safety. I will contact my parents to discuss weather or poor road conditions when I am out driving and the weather is worse than expected.

2. Knowing that judgment and driving skills are altered by emotions, I will not drive when I am upset or angry. Under these conditions, I will contact my parents for transportation and I reserve the right to maintain my privacy regarding personal matters. I know I can always call my parents for a ride at ANY time that I have any question about driving, or I question my ability to drive. I realize there will be times that I will be unable to drive at 100% (e.g. getting sick or mechanical problems), and they will help me out. At the same time, I realize the same can happen to my parents, and I will help them out.

3. It is my responsibility to protect the car I drive. I will keep it reasonably clean and maintained. I have some specific responsibilities regarding the maintenance of the car as noted below:

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4. I will not allow my passengers to behave in such a way as to damage the car or distract me while driving. I will be responsible for any damages my passengers do to the car and agree to pay for their repair at a repair shop of my parent's choosing.
 5. I will not play the radio/cassette/CD at a volume that will distract or cause me not to be able to concentrate on outside sounds.
 6. I will wear my seatbelt and shoulder harness at all times and requires all passengers to wear them.
 7. When transporting my friends, I will be reasonably sure that they have their parents' permission to ride with me.
 8. I will not allow smoking in the car.
 9. I will not eat/drink while driving.
 10. For the first two months I drive, I will not have the car stereo on.
 11. I will not use beepers, cell phones, text messaging, etc. or operate car stereos while driving. When I am allowed to use it, I will only adjust the volume of the stereo while driving. I will pull over for other operations of beepers, cell phones, texting, radio/stereo changes, and electronic equipment.
 12. Accidents are more likely to happen when I rush. I am more likely to rush when I leave late. Therefore, my parents reserve the right to not allow me to drive unless I leave by a time they specify. For example, if my parents tell me that I must allow 20 minutes to get to something that starts at 7:00, I may not leave later than that.
 13. I am responsible to determine the gas needed for the trip, the availability of gas on the trip. Running a car out of gas is not good for the car and can be dangerous if the car stops unexpectedly (middle of street with no controls or brakes), or in an undesirable neighborhood. If I have a long trip to leave in the morning, I will be sure to fill up the night before.

SPECIAL ITEMS:

1. Tickets and moving violations will result in suspension of my driving privileges for a period to be determined by my parents. It would be extremely unlikely that this was the first time the event to cause the ticket issuance to occur. The insurance companies look at this in this way, and I know my parents will also.
2. My parents have no obligation to pay my fines, court costs, increased insurance premiums, or any other expenses for driving-related incidences.
3. I will not drive the car with known defects. I will inform my parents of these defects so they can be corrected. I realize that early repair of

defects is cheaper in the long run, and I know my parents have provided a warranty on the car.

4. I will make certain financial contributions to the operating costs of the car. I also know that my parents have provided the basic insurance for me to the car. I will defray the costs of car ownership by paying a mileage rate of \$.50 (fifty cents) per mile. I realize that this will only pay part of the total costs of the car, maintenance, and. My contributions are adjusted as follows:

- Report Card Grades:
- A 100 free miles
- B 50 free miles
- C 5 free miles
- A "+" or "-" will average the 2 values of the corresponding grades (e.g. B+ is 75 miles).

5. I will agree to provide transportation to family members at the directive of my parents. Fulfilling these obligations is a condition of my use of a car. Sometimes these responsibilities will override my own desires and interests in using the car (just like driving duties undertaken by my parents). These additional driving duties will not count to my mileage costs.

6. I agree an accurate log will be maintained for the car. This log will be used to track mileage charges, maintenance needs, different drivers, and any other needs to be determined in the future.

7. I agree that I must be responsible to drive safely and that my parents must believe I am relatively responsible in order to allow me to drive. They may, therefore, take into account how I handle my general responsibilities, to include schoolwork, employment, and household duties. I will also maintain a respectful attitude. I will not ask my parents to allow me to drive when I am rude and disrespectful to them or to others.

8. My parents have a right to expect me to be responsible. I have a right to be told what this means. For this reason, I may ask my parents for clarification of their requirement that I "be responsible." Until I receive clarification of this issue, I will not drive the car until I have total understanding. I have the right to have this in writing if this would help my understanding of the situation.

Summary: I agree to abide by the rules in this contract and I accept the consequences and penalties if I do not. I recognize my parents' authority in deciding if I may drive. That authority is final until I am an adult living independently of my parents. Of course, it is agreed that common sense, safety, and good judgement will always be utilized and can supercede this contract in an emergent situation

Signatures:

DRIVER _____ (date)

PARENT: _____ (date)

PARENT: _____ (date)

Parent Addendum:

I agree to arrange for your safe, sober transportation home regardless of when you call or where you are. I will remain calm and won't start any arguments. However, we both must discuss the issue at a later time. There is no excuse for not being able to get us. If you need to call a taxi, then we will pay for it.

PARENT: _____ (date)

PARENT: _____ (date)