

**A Prescription for Teen Driver Safety
News Conference Talking Points**

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10:00am

**St. Ignatius College Prep
1076 West Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60608**

Mr. John Chandler Talking Points

Mr. John Chandler, Vice-President St. Ignatius College Prep, make opening remarks.

Mr. Chandler introduces Dr. Thomas Esposito, Co–Chairperson of END and Director of Loyola University Medical Center’s Injury Analysis and Prevention Program.

Dr. Thomas Esposito Talking Points

- Good morning, my name is Dr. Thomas Esposito, Co–Chairperson of END and Director of Loyola University Medical Center’s Injury Analysis and Prevention Program.
- END is a physician, nurse and other healthcare provider organization dedicated to exploring new and innovative strategies for addressing impaired and other dangerous driving behaviors. END is funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
- Before I go any further; I want to recognize John Ulczycki, Director of the National Safety Council’s Transportation Safety Group. Without the partnership and leadership of the National Safety Council on this issue for years, we wouldn’t be here today. John will be addressing you in a few moments.
- Motorists are facing an epidemic of death on our roadways, and one of this nation’s biggest challenges involves young drivers.
- Nationwide, young drivers (16-20 years-old) make up six percent of the driving population yet they are involved in nearly twenty percent of all motor vehicle fatalities. In 2003 alone, young drivers were involved in 8,455 traffic fatalities. Fatality numbers from 2004 are expected to be even higher.
- Tragically, many of these fatalities and serious injuries could have been prevented through behavioral. Youth-related driving fatalities are an epidemic in the United States. Nearly one out of every five traffic fatalities involves a driver between the age of 16 and 20 years old.

- Approximately 36 percent of all deaths for people aged 15-20 are from motor vehicle crashes. They are the leading cause of death for people age 15 through 18 years old.
- The fatality rate for young drivers is about 4 times higher than the rate for drivers age 25 through 69
- Today, the National Safety Council and the physician-lead traffic safety advocacy group called End Needless Death on Our Roadways (END) issue a ranking of the deadliest states in the country for youth-related driving fatalities. The list is based on the percent of young drivers involved in fatal crashes adjusted by each state's 16-20 year-old driving population.
- While some states are clearly more deadly than others, no one, no matter where they live, should feel their children or other family members are exempt from falling victim to youth-related driving fatalities.
- Young drivers, their passengers and passengers in other vehicles are dying needlessly because many young motorists are not given proper guidance, or when unsupervised, choose to participate in unsafe driving behavior during their early driving experience. Today, we take a step forward to keep our roads safe for and from young drivers.
- Now with out further ado, I would like to introduce Mr. John Ulczycki who will unveil a publication that I believe is a must have for any family who has a teen that is or will soon be driving.

Mr. John Ulczycki Talking Points

- Good morning, I'm John Ulczycki, Director of the National Safety Council's Transportation Safety Group.
- We have learned much about teen driver safety during the past decade. We can now say with confidence there are specific proven safety benefits from a variety of best practices. We think parents play a critical role in their children's early driving experience. That's why we developed *Teen Driver*.
- The *Teen Driver* family guide began with a symposium sponsored by the National Safety Council that brought together researchers and acknowledged experts from the United States and other countries to document what we knew about the measurable benefits of GDL (Graduated Drivers Licensing) and GDL-like programs.
- The comprehensive evaluation of available research was published in the Journal of Safety Research, and is the most authoritative review of GDL ever produced.

It delivers convincing evidence that GDL practices have resulted in substantial reductions in crashes, injuries and fatalities for novice teenage drivers.

- The next step was clear – to develop programs and products that will increase compliance with these practices. The result was *Teen Driver*.
- Created through generous funding from DaimlerChrysler, General Motors and Nationwide Insurance, *Teen Driver* will assist families to understand and manage the journey teens will travel from beginner to independent driver.
- *Teen Driver* is divided into sections that examine managing your teen drivers experience, the learning phase, the provisional phase, risks from choices we make, and promoting compliance with privileges and consequences.
- In addition, there are many individuals and organization in the highway safety community who have made significant contributions to the development of *Teen Driver*.
- We deeply appreciate the support and good counsel of all of our colleagues who have participated in this effort.
- The purpose of *Teen Driver* is to take away the anxiety and uncertainties parents of new drivers may feel and replace them with specific actions to manage the risks of teen driving.
- Families interested in a copy of *Teen Driver* can find it at the National Safety Council's website at www.nsc.org or email us at TeenDriverSafetyDesk@nsc.org.
- Based on recommendations found in *Teen Driver*, the National Safety Council has partnered with END to develop *A Prescription for Teen Driver Safety*. To tell you more about this, I'd like to introduce Dr. Andrea Barthwell.

Dr. Andrea Barthwell Talking Points

- Hello, I am Dr Andrea Barthwell, Co-Chairperson of END and former Deputy Director for Demand Reduction for the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.
- Every day physicians, nurses, EMS technicians and other health care providers are called upon to take heroic steps in an attempt to save the lives of people injured in motor vehicle crashes. Unfortunately, all too often they are unsuccessful.
- Medical involvement often means that those committed to traffic safety have failed. Their message went unheard or unheeded. Someone, usually a young person, chose to drive impaired or recklessly. They probably also chose not to

wear their safety belt. Law enforcement didn't catch up with them this time. That young person was in a violent car crash.

- Physicians, nurses, EMS technicians and other healthcare providers have the unenviable task of wading through broken glass, and ripped flesh in an attempt to put that young life back together again.
- Often, they have the most unappealing job of all...telling family members that their loved one is gone forever. They are the messengers of bad news that causes a level of grief that parents, children, family and friends must endure forever.
- Tragically, traffic related fatalities often have three elements in common. Alcohol, no safety belt and a teen or other young person was involved.
- Because physicians, nurses and EMS professionals see the effects of traffic crashes every day, they can speak with more passion, experience and authority on the devastation car crashes can cause.
- Everyday, doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals see the results of car crashes; broken lives and futures that will never be. They also see that all too often, deadly crashes are caused by a young driver.
- As Dr. Esposito has said, much of what is known about youth driving and the strategies we are using to address this serious issue have come to us through the leadership of the National Safety Council.
- Through our partnership with them, END is presenting *A Prescription for Teen Driver Safety*.
- The *Prescription for Teen Driver Safety* toolkit provides specific recommended teen driving restriction guidelines, state fatality data and ranking information and a youth driving fact sheet.
- Following the strict but reasonable guidelines set forth in *A Prescription for Teen Driver Safety*, will limit a young driver's exposure at dangerous times and allow them to acquire vital driving experiences to help avoid a fatal tragedy.
- Specific suggested recommendations include 30-50 practice hours of behind-the-wheel training with an adult (over age 21) licensed driver;
- Holding a learner's permit for at least six months with no exceptions;
- Passenger restrictions until age 18;
- Mandatory safety belt use in all seating positions until age 18;

- Unsupervised night-time driving between 10:00pm and 5:00am is prohibited until age 18;
- And license denial for any alcohol violation.
- *A Prescription for Teen Driver Safety* offers an easy reference for parents or anyone else interested in providing a safer early driving experience for new drivers.
- I would now like to introduce a man who's name is synonymous with traffic safety in Illinois has been a leader in the cause of saving lives nationwide Illinois State Senator John Cullerton.

Sen. Cullerton Makes brief comments.

Sen. Cullerton concludes comments

Sen. Cullerton introduces Don McNamara, Great Lakes Regional Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Mr. Don McNamara Talking Points

- Thank you Senator Cullerton. Hello, I'm Don McNamara, Great Lakes Regional Administrator for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
- The July 4th holiday season is a most appropriate time to present *A Prescription for Teen Driver Safety* and for the National Safety Council to unveil *Teen Driver*. While the Independence Day holiday is a time for celebration, parades, festivals and family, it is also a time of impaired and other dangerous driving.
- The July 4th holiday weekend is one of the year's deadliest holiday driving seasons. During the 2003 Independence Day holiday, 514 motorists died nationwide in traffic crashes, 55 percent of those crashes were alcohol-related.
- Tragically, for teenage drivers, traffic related fatalities often have three elements in common. Alcohol, no safety belt and lack of experience.
- Drivers 15 to 20 years old are more often involved in alcohol-related crashes than any comparable age group.
- While all 50 States and the District of Columbia now have 21-year-old-minimum drinking age laws, more than 20 percent of young people below the legal drinking age reported driving under the influence of alcohol, other drugs, or both, in the past year, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

- In fact, nearly a third (31 percent) of the 15-20-year-old drivers killed in fatal crashes in 2003 had been drinking. Twenty-five percent of the drivers had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level of .08 or higher.
- The fatality rate in these crashes is compounded because young drivers and their passengers are much less likely to wear their safety belts after drinking: 74 percent of the young drivers killed after drinking were not buckled up. And 65 percent of 15-20-year-old drivers killed in all fatal crashes in 2003 were unrestrained.
- So beginning today, extending through the July 4th holiday and everyday, I encourage parents to play an active role in your teenage driver's early driving experience. You can truly make a difference.
- Today, I'm excited about the prospects of what an organization like END can accomplish in the area of teen driver safety.
- Working together with the National Safety Council they can be a powerful force for good in the effort to end needless death on our roadways

Don McNamara opens news conference up for questions.