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News

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Posted on Tue, Jun. 28, 2005

21.3% of fatal accidents involve teen-agers

By Gordon Dickson
 Star-Telegram Staff Writer

More than one in five fatal accidents in Texas involves a teen-ager, according to a report issued Monday by a nationwide group of physicians.

The group, Coalition to End Needless Death on Our Roadways, calls for parents to keep a close eye on young drivers during the Independence Day weekend.

About 21.3 percent of fatal Texas crashes involve at least one driver age 16 to 20. That's higher than the national average of 19.8 percent.

The numbers are startling because young drivers represent 6 percent of motorists, said Dr. Andrea Barthwell, co-chairwoman of the group.

"In teen-age years, some kids are thrill-seeking and risk-taking. If you've got a kid like that, you've got to know it," she said.

Statistics are based on federal data from 2003, the most recent year available.

The report, co-sponsored by the National Safety Council, recommends that parents require their children to have 30 to 50 hours of driving practice before being allowed to drive alone. A ban on night driving is also advised.

IN THE KNOW

Fatality rate

States with the highest fatality rate per 100,000 drivers ages 16-20:

Rank	Fatalities
1. District of Columbia	127
2. North Carolina	103.9
3. Mississippi	96.7

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4. Delaware	96
5. Louisiana	95.7
13. Texas	83.1
National average	68.2

* 2003 data

SOURCE: Coalition to End Needless Death on Our Roadways

STAR-TELEGRAM

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