

# MOUNTAIN-PLAINS CONSORTIUM

RESEARCH BRIEF | MPC 24-514 (project 567 | March 2024

## Do Advisory Letters Engage Parents in Teen Driver Safety?



### the **ISSUE**

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death among teens in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Teens are a high-risk driver group. Finding innovative ways to reduce crashes among this population is essential for injury prevention.

### the **RESEARCH**

A multiple-method approach was used to collect information about parents' reactions and actions after receiving an advisory letter regarding teen driving. The letter was directed to parents of teens who had been identified as high-risk drivers to encourage parent/teen safe driving discussions and strengthen parent practices with regard to graduated driver's license restrictions. A mail survey, comprised of closed- and open-ended questions, was administered to gather information. A survey was conducted to assess program efficacy and generate feedback for the continuation and/or refinement for a teen parent advisory letter pilot program. A random sample was drawn from this list to produce a mailing sample of 3,590 households, which elicited 309 responses.



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Colorado State University  
North Dakota State University  
South Dakota State University

University of Colorado Denver  
University of Denver  
University of Utah

Utah State University  
University of Wyoming



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## Project Title

Assessing Teen Driver Safety  
Parent Advisory Letter  
Intervention in Early and Full  
Implementation Phases

## Sponsors | Partners

NDDOT In-Kind Contribution

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Innovative Technology  
Administration

## the FINDINGS

After receiving the letter, about 80% of parents reported taking actions, such as discussions with their teen, learning more about teen driver risk, and finding additional driver training. Limited supervised driving appears to be a deficiency in teen driver preparation. A wide range of supervised driving experiences and early exposure, in terms of weekly driving hours, supports the notion of more individualized strategies. Findings may inform other states considering low-cost individualized programs to complement their “one-fits-all” driver improvement strategies.

## the IMPACT

The survey shows parent engagement in safety discussions with their teen drivers. Parents also indicated pursuing additional driving improvement training opportunities in some cases. The survey also creates a general awareness among parents regarding tools and training for their teen drivers. These findings show letters can positively impact teen driver safety.

For more information on this project, download the Main report at <https://www.ugpti.org/resources/reports/details.php?id=1166>

For more information or additional copies, visit the Web site at [www.mountain-plains.org](http://www.mountain-plains.org), call (701) 231-7767 or write to Mountain-Plains Consortium, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, North Dakota State University, Dept. 2880, PO Box 6050, Fargo, ND 58108-6050.



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