



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ThinkFirst Foundation Partners with General Motors

Teen Traffic Safety Grant

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The ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation (ThinkFirst Foundation) was recently awarded a transportation safety education grant from General Motors. The grant *Expanding Road Safety Programs to High-risk Road Users* has been created to address teen drivers and their parents about the Graduated Drivers Licensing laws. The program recently piloted in Illinois, will now be introduced in Michigan. The focus of the program is to help instruct parents on how they can be actively engaged with their teens as they learn to drive. This program is being rolled out to prevent motor vehicle crashes which are the leading cause of death for U.S. teens (Center for Disease Control (CDC)).

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, the risk of motor vehicle crashes is higher among teens ages 16-19 than among any other age group. During 2018 the 1,509 Michigan drivers involved in fatal crashes 103 or 6.8% were under 21 years of age. This age group lacks driving experience and when combined with their tendency toward risk-taking behavior it puts them at a heightened risk for crashes. The program teaches parental involvement is key to their teen's driving success and curbing fatalities.

The Graduated Licensing Program (GDL) focuses on the 3-step licensure system, Permit, Initial License and Final Licensing. Each stage has very specific regulations for how and when a student driver may drive, determining the time of day a teen may drive and the number of passengers allowed. The program also advocates for parents to have a personal Parent-Teen Contract outlining the parents' expectation of their teen while behind the wheel of a vehicle.

Last year ThinkFirst Foundation presentations were presented to 100,000 teens nationwide.

The key message of the program to parents is drive the way you want your teen to drive and monitor your teen's driving. The purpose of the program's message is educating teens and their parents to avoid heartbreaking stories of loss.

About ThinkFirst

Founded by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, ThinkFirst is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to prevent brain, spinal cord and other traumatic injuries through education, research and advocacy. ThinkFirst programs promote safe behaviors, including basic safety, traffic safety and concussion awareness for students, falls prevention for older adults, and infant safety for new parents. ThinkFirst chapters, based in hospitals and **healthcare** centers throughout the U.S. and internationally, provide more than 7,000 presentations annually to schools and community groups.

ThinkFirst's transportation safety programs are funded, in part, by grants from General Motors and the AAA Foundation. For more information, visit www.thinkfirst.org.

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