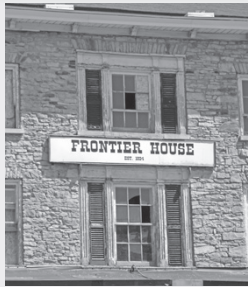


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AAA, community partners warn drivers of '100 Deadliest Days for Teen Drivers'

By AAA of Western and Central New York
The "100 Deadliest Days" is the period between Memorial Day and Labor Day when fatal teen crashes increase dramatically. AAA coined the phrase after examining troubling data regarding fatal crashes among teen drivers. Nationwide, 6,598 people died in teen driver-related summertime crashes over a 10-year period from 2012 to 2021. That is nearly half of the total number of those killed in teen-driver crashes for the entire rest of the year in that span. In 2021 alone, 803 people were killed in such deadly crashes. The 2021 figure is a 25% increase over prepandemic figures from 2019.



AAA photo

In New York state, 19 people were killed in crashes involving teen drivers in summer of 2021. And 185 people were killed in teen driver crashes during the "100 Deadliest Days" over the 10-year span from 2012-21 - 185 people killed during summer months over the 10-year span equates to a summertime average of 19 deaths. It's a dramatic increase from 292 people killed over the course of nine non-summer months over the 10-year period.

AAA teamed up with area police agencies and elected officials across Western and Central New York to raise awareness of traffic

safety as Memorial Day kicked off the "100 Deadliest Days" for teen drivers.

"Young drivers in high school and college look forward to the summer season and await newfound freedom with a break from school," said Mike Formanowicz, driver training manager at AAA Western and Central New York. "AAA urges parents to talk to their young drivers about traffic safety and serve as good role models as well. Putting the phone down be-

hind the wheel is a great example."

Due to their inexperience, teen drivers are at a higher risk of crashes. According to a recent AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety Culture Index, about 72% of teen drivers aged 16-18 admitted to having engaged in at least one of the following risky behaviors in the past 30 days:

- Driving 10 mph over the speed limit on a residential street (47%)
Driving 15 mph over the speed limit on a freeway (40%)

- Texting (35%)
Red-light running (32%)
Aggressive driving (31%)
Drowsy driving (25%)
Driving without a seatbelt (17%)
AAA driving instructors urge teen drivers to store phones out of reach, obey speed limits, and stay away from impairing substances such as alcohol and marijuana. AAA encourages parents to:

Talk with teens early and often about avoiding dangerous behavior behind the wheel, such as speeding, impairment, and distracted driving. Serve as a role model for safe behavior.

Always buckle up, and follow posted speed limits.

Teach by example, minimize risky behavior; conduct at least 50 hours of supervised practice driving with their teen.

Make a parent-teen driving agreement setting family rules for driving.

AAA recommends enrolling teens in a driver education program that teaches safety skills and distracted driving avoidance. AAA has in-person lessons and online tools for parents and teens, including TeenDriving.AAA.com and the StartSmart program.

Visit AAA at www.AAA.com.

IN THE NEWS

Social Security Administration expands outreach & access for Supplemental Security Income

Press Release

Kilolo Kijakazi, acting commissioner of Social Security, announced the agency has expanded its outreach to people in critical need of financial help who may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

SSI provides monthly payments to adults ages 65 and older or to other adults - and children - with a disability or blindness who have limited income and financial resources. SSI helps pay for basic needs like rent, food, clothing and medicine.

"Helping eligible people access critical benefits, including SSI, is part of Social Security's core mission," Kijakazi said. "Underserved communities face additional challenges, like unreliable or no access to the internet and computers, that widen the divide. Social Security's campaign strives to reach people

in their communities to tell them about the eligibility criteria for SSI, and how to contact us online at www.ssa.gov/ssi or by phone for more information or an appointment to apply."

The press release stated, "The campaign supports President Biden's executive order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government."

Social Security used data to identify and reach underserved communities in rural and urban areas across the country where it noted the greatest decline in SSI applications since the pandemic, and where the majority of people living in those ZIP codes are people of color and/or people living at or below the 150% federal poverty threshold.

Social Security's campaign uses a variety of ways to reach people,

including radio and television public service announcements (PSA), radio ads, mailers, bus shelter and other large signs, flyers distributed to local stores, and printed publications in several language options.

Watch the 60-second television PSA: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0Fny59kmLU.

Social Security also is reaching more people online through social media, digital, YouTube ads and search engine marketing.

Individuals who receive SSI may qualify for other financial help, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as food stamps), Medicaid, and discounted internet service through the Federal Trade Commission's Affordable Connectivity Program. Individuals who receive Social Security benefits may also be eligible for SSI.

People with limited income and

financial resources, and with access to the internet, should visit www.ssa.gov/ssi to learn more about SSI eligibility and request an appointment to apply for benefits. People without access to the internet can call Social Security's national 800 number at 1-800-772-1213 to speak with a representative.

A press release stated, "In addition to this campaign, Social Security recently proposed simplifications to the SSI program when people are receiving food assistance. The proposed changes will simplify the rules, making it easier to understand and comply with program requirements. This will save time for the public and Social Security, and improve the equitable treatment of food assistance within the SSI program."

Social Security accepted comments about the proposed rule through April 17.

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