

2010 Youth Voices Multi-Media Contest

Driving Statistics & Facts

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Humboldt County Traffic Statistics

Source: **Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS)**

- In 2006 Humboldt County lost eight young residents between the ages of 16 and 24 due to motor vehicle crashes.
- Between 2007 and 2009, Humboldt County lost thirty-one young residents between the ages of 16 and 24 due to motor vehicle crashes.
 - Of these fatalities, 51.6% (16 people) were not buckled up at the time of the crash.
 - Of these fatalities, 28.7% (12 people) were killed in crashes where the driver was under the influence at the time of the crash.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of injury and death for young people in Humboldt County.
- Data indicates that impaired driving, unsafe turning movements, and unsafe speeds are the leading causes of crashes involving young drivers in Humboldt County.
- Contributing causes to local teen crashes also include: lack of seat belt use, distracted driving, fatigue, street racing, driving at night, and driving with young passengers.
- In a five year period (2004-2008), 770 young people between the ages of 16 and 20 were injured in motor vehicle collisions.
- Drivers ages 16-19 make up 4 percent of licensed drivers in Humboldt County; yet they were involved in 15 percent of collision that occurred in 2005.
- In 2005, 275 drivers between the ages of 16 and 21 were involved in a motor vehicle crash in Humboldt County and in 73 percent of cases the young driver was at fault.
- In a five year period in Humboldt County, 50 percent of local drivers between the ages of 16 and 20 were not buckled up at the time of the crash.
- Many Humboldt County roads are narrow, winding two-lane highways with continuously changing uphill and downhill gradients and numerous blind curves.
- In 2005, 53 percent of overall collisions and 79 percent of fatal collisions occurred on unincorporated rural roads in Humboldt County.
- Severe weather such as heavy rains, dense fog, and high winds regularly impact the condition of local roadways.

Other Facts & Statistics

Sources: **Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Allstate Foundation, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS)**

- We lose about 40,000 people every year to motor vehicle crashes in the United States. That's about the size of the entire populations of Eureka and Arcata combined. We also lose about 5000 teenagers every year. That's about 15 teenagers every single day of the year.
- At 35 miles per hour, the impact of a crash is equal to jumping off a three-story building.
- 80% of traffic deaths occur within 25 miles of home and at speeds under 40 miles per hour.
- One unbelted passenger in a vehicle becomes a "human torpedo" in a crash and can seriously injure or kill others in the car.
- Speeding is a leading cause of teen crashes. 55 percent of teens in a recent survey said they sometimes exceed the speed limit by more than 10 MPH.

- Cars with two or more teens are four times more likely to crash than those with single drivers.
- Every two miles the average drivers make four hundred observations, forty decisions, and one mistake.
- Fifty-three percent of teen driver deaths occur on weekends.
- Although 23% of the U.S. population lives in rural areas, rural fatalities accounted for 57% of all traffic fatalities in 2007.
- Distracted driving (cell phones, CDs, food, text messaging) contributes to 80 percent of collisions.
- Your risk of crashing is four times higher if you are using your cell phone while driving.
- Most speed-related fatal collisions occur between 6 PM and 6 AM.
- Speeding reduces your reaction time and increases your stopping distance while also increasing the impact of the crash and the severity of injuries.
- For every 10 miles per hour over 50 MPH, the risk of being killed in a crash doubles.
- Almost half of fatal crashes involving teen drivers occurred at night (between 9 PM and 6 AM),
- According to a recent survey over half of all driving teens reported that they had driven while drowsy at least once in the last year.