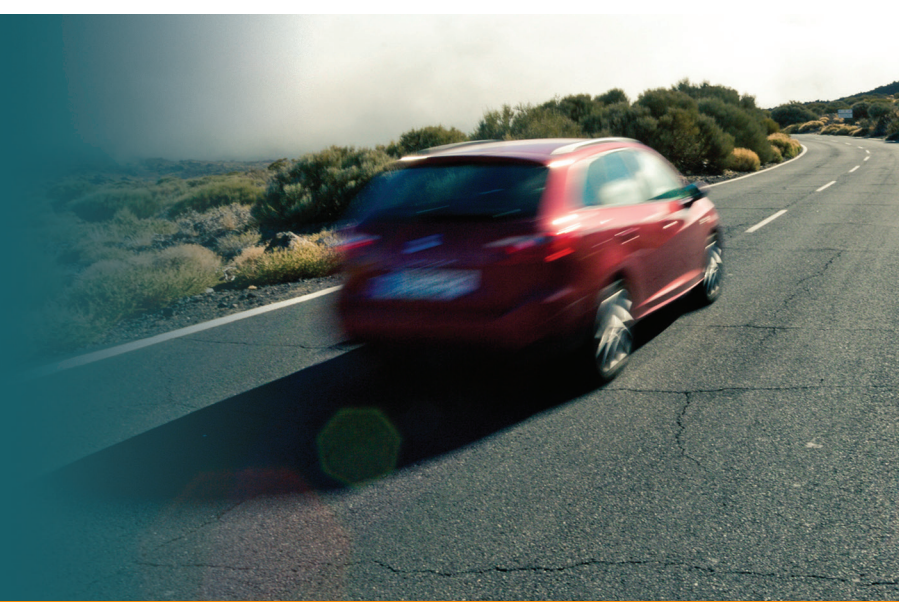




NIGHT DRIVING RESTRICTION AT 9 OR 10 PM



The Issue

- Teens driving late at night are at higher risk of fatal crashes because of reduced visibility in the dark and due to features of recreational driving. Fatigue and alcohol use are also more common during evening hours.
- More than half (almost 60%) of nighttime crashes involving teen drivers occur before midnight.
- Night restrictions have proven safety benefits, and earlier start times (such as 9 or 10 p.m.) have the greatest safety benefits.

Policy questions

1. Is a nighttime driving restriction an important component of a GDL program?

Yes. Late-night driving increases teen driver risk for fatal crashes and more than half of nighttime crashes involving teen drivers occur before midnight. Novice drivers also have poor hazard detection skills, and hazards are harder to see and identify at night. An earlier night driving restriction reduces the fatal crash risk of teen drivers.



2. Has a 9 or 10 p.m. nighttime restriction been shown to have safety benefits?

Yes. The effectiveness of nighttime driving restrictions is well-established and the evidence supporting driving restrictions that begin earlier is strong. A host of studies have indicated that the earlier night restrictions begin, the more safety benefits in terms of crash reductions (McCartt et al., 2010; Trempel et al., 2009; Masten et al., 2013; Masten et al., 2014).

3. Does an earlier nighttime driving restriction prevent teens from participating in essential activities, such school and work in the evening?

No. Nighttime driving restrictions are not absolute and jurisdictions permit nighttime driving for activities they deem to be essential, such as work and school-related activities, as well as for purpose of medical emergencies.

4. My state already has a nighttime driving restriction beginning at midnight. Does the nighttime restriction have to begin earlier?

Yes. National studies in the U.S. have shown that more than half (almost 60%) of nighttime crashes involving teen drivers occurred before midnight. It has also shown that teen crash deaths most frequently occurred between 9 p.m. and midnight (17%), and between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. (16%). A slightly smaller percentage of crashes (15%) occurred between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

5. Do parents support an earlier nighttime driving restriction?

Yes. Parents of teenagers are supportive of night driving restrictions with early start times. In a national survey, 9 out of 10 (90%) approved of night restrictions. Among those who approved, more than 75% agreed the start time should be 10 p.m. or earlier. States without nighttime driving restrictions or states with restrictions that begin later are encouraged to consider adopting 9 or 10 p.m. as a starting time. It is equally important that parents and police enforce this restriction.

Examples of Practice

- Almost all states (50) currently have night driving restrictions. While these restrictions are popular, in many jurisdictions the restriction does not start until midnight or later.
- There are 13 states that have implemented earlier start times (10 p.m. or earlier): Delaware, Illinois, Kansas, Idaho, Michigan, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, and West Virginia.



- In Idaho the night restriction starts at sunset and ends at sunrise.
- In South Carolina the restriction is in effect from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. EST and 8 p.m. until 6 a.m. EDT.

Traffic Injury Research Foundation

The mission of the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) is to reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries. TIRF is a national, independent, charitable road safety institute. Since its inception in 1964, TIRF has become internationally recognized for its accomplishments in a wide range of subject areas related to identifying the causes of road crashes and developing programs and policies to address them effectively.

Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF)

171 Nepean Street, Suite 200

Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0B4

Phone: (877) 238-5235

Fax: (613) 238-5292

Email: tirf@tirf.ca

Website: www.tirf.ca

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