

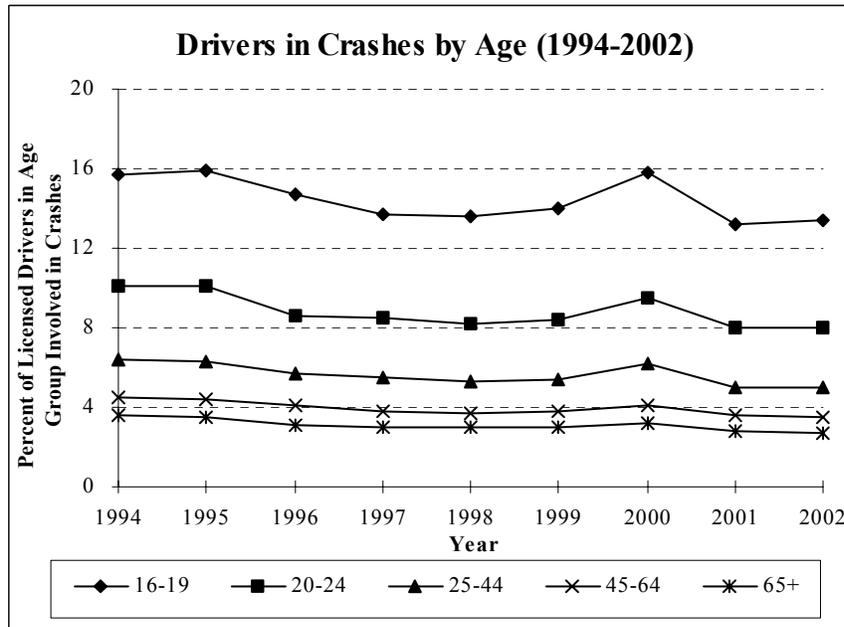
## WISCONSIN CRASH FACTS ON THE 16-19 YEAR OLD AGE GROUP

AUGUST 2003



- Historically, for two out of three 16-19 year old drivers killed in motor vehicle crashes, it was their first and last crash.** In 2002, traffic crashes claimed the lives of 109 teens ages 16 - 19. That compares to 84 who were killed in 2001, 99 who were killed in 2000, 93 who were killed in 1999, and 99 killed in 1998.
- Drivers between the ages of 16 and 19 are more likely to be in a motor vehicle crash than other age groups (Figure 1).** During 2002, 13.4% of all 16-19 year old licensed drivers in Wisconsin had a crash – nearly one in seven teen drivers.

*Figure 1*

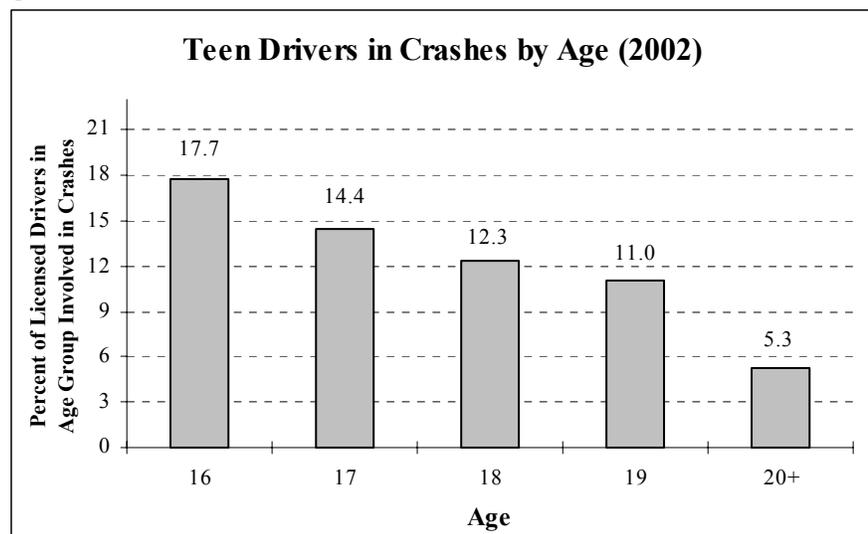


- Compared to drivers in other age groups, teen drivers have more crashes involving high risk factors.** In 2002, only 6% of all licensed drivers were between the ages of 16-19 years old. Yet, these drivers accounted for 16% of all drivers in crashes. They also accounted for 11% of all drivers in crashes who were listed as *had been drinking* and 15% of those suspected of using other drugs.
- Drivers aged 16 -19 who are involved in crashes are more likely than other drivers to be reported as exceeding the speed limit, as driving too fast for conditions, as failing to control, and as driving inattentively** according to the possible contributing circumstances (PCCs) listed on crash reports. This has been true every year since 1996.

- **More than two out of three 16-19 year old passengers killed or seriously injured were in a vehicle driven by another teenager.** Specifically, of the 38 passengers age 16-19 killed in traffic crashes in 2002, 22 (58%) of them were riding in vehicles with drivers age 16-19. Additionally, 320 passengers age 16-19 suffered incapacitating injuries in crashes in 2002. More than two-thirds (69%) of them were in vehicles driven by teenagers.
- **Peer pressure may affect when teens wear seat belts.** Among teen drivers and their passengers of all ages who were killed or seriously injured in a passenger car or light truck crash in 2002, seat belt use was 55% in driver-only crashes and dropped to 44% when peer passengers were also present in the vehicle.
- **Weekends are more deadly for teens than weekdays.** Fifty-six of the 109 (51%) 16-19 year olds who died in traffic crashes in 2002 died in crashes occurring on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.
- **Teen drivers tend to crash in the late afternoon.** In both the summer and during the school year, the peak hour for teen driver crashes is 3-4 pm. More crashes involving 16-19 year old drivers occurred on Friday than on any other day of the week.
- **Snowy/slushy/icy road conditions pose special threats for teen drivers.** A larger percentage of teen drivers crashed during snowy/slushy/icy road conditions than did drivers aged 19 or older involved in crashes in January and December 2002 (31% vs. 25%).

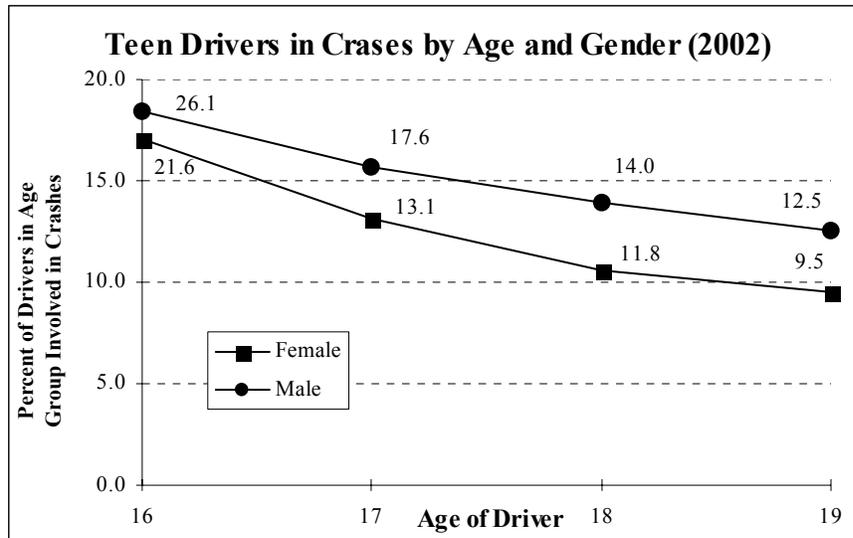
- **Even in the teen years, age matters.** 17.7% of all licensed 16 year old drivers crash; at age 17, the percentage drops to 14.4%; at age 18, it shrinks to 12.3%; at age 19, it falls to 11%. Among licensed drivers aged 20 and older, the 2002 crash rate was 5.3%. (Figure 2).

Figure 2



- Male and female circumstances differ.** By individual age, a larger percentage of 16-19 year old male drivers were involved in all types of crashes than female drivers (*Figure 3*). Sixty-nine of the 109 (63%) 16-19 year olds killed in 2002 traffic crashes were male. Females age 16-19 outnumbered males as injured or killed passengers in motor vehicles driven by a teen (27% vs. 18%). In crashes that proved fatal or incapacitating to a 16-19 year old, 54% of the female victims wore seatbelts. Only 38% of the male victims did so.

*Figure 3*



- On average, a teen driver was involved in a fatal crash every 2.6 days.** About once every 48 minutes a 16-19 year old driver had an injury crash; once every 27 minutes, a 16-19 year old driver had a property damage crash (*Figure 4*).
- New Wisconsin drivers under the age of 18 obtain their licenses via graduated licensing.** Since all phases of Wisconsin's Graduated Driver Licensing Law took effect in 2000, 16 and 17 year old drivers must have an additional 30 hours of practice driving time (including ten hours at night) and hold an instruction permit for at least six months before taking a road test and applying for a probationary driver's license. The probationary license imposes a curfew (no operation between midnight and 5 a.m. except for going to/from school or work) and a passenger restriction (1 passenger other than family members) during the first nine months of probationary operation. These limitations are removed for drivers who remain conviction-free or who turn 18. For more information on Wisconsin's graduated driver licensing: <http://www.dot.state.wi.us/dmv/GDLchanges.html>.

Figure 4

**Wisconsin's Crash Clock for 16-19 Year Olds**

Frequency of Consequence for 16-19 year olds in 2001	Number of Incidents Involving 16-19 year olds			
	2002	2001	2000	1999
One driver involved in property damage crash every 26.8 minutes	19,615	18,664	22,051	20,767
One driver involved in injury crash every 47.7 minutes	11,029	10,745	12,609	12,123
One teen injured every 53.8 minutes	9,777	9,647	10,679	10,663
One driver injured every 1.4 hours	6,117	5,885	6,710	6,578
One vehicle passenger injured every 2.7 hours	3,241	3,299	3,558	3,640
One passenger killed or injured while a 16-19 year was driving every 4.1 hours	2,114	2,090	2,413	2,472
One pedestrian injured every 2.5 days	149	168	162	163
One driver involved in a fatal crash every 2.6 days	139	118	138	125
One motorcyclist injured every 2.9 days	127	156	119	141
One bicyclist injured every 3.2 days	113	124	111	124
One teen killed every 3.4 days	109	84	99	93
One driver killed every 6.1 days	60	53	62	46
One vehicle passenger killed every 9.6 days	38	24	34	40
One moped user injured every 12.2 days	30	15	19	17
One motorcyclist killed every 73 days	5	3	2	3
One pedestrian killed every 91.3 days	4	3	1	4
Two moped users or bicyclists killed every year	2	1	0	0

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
**Bureau of Transportation Safety / Safety Policy Analysis Section**  
 Prepared by Mary Elizabeth Kunkel (608) 267-5179

The data for this monograph comes from the WisDOT Division of Motor Vehicles Accident Database.