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Did you know that 2,439 teens died in motor vehicle crashes in 2012?

The facts:
• Car crashes are the No. 1 killer of teens.
• Seatbelts reduce the risk of death for front-seat passengers by 45 percent.

Results from a recent study released by Safe Kids Worldwide of teen drivers and passengers show that:
• 39 percent of teens surveyed said they have ridden with a teen driver who was texting.
• 28 percent have ridden in a car with a parent who was texting.
• 49 percent reported feeling unsafe when riding with a teen driver; 31 percent when riding with a parent.
• When someone was driving dangerously, four in 10 teens say they asked the driver to stop, but almost the same number said they did nothing.

Teens in cars

Tips for the entire family:
• Remember three things while riding in cars
• Buckle up.
• Phones down.
• Speak up.
• Buckle up on every ride, every time. This is important for everyone, both drivers and passengers.
• Make buckling up a habit starting when kids are young.
• Be a good role model in all your driving habits. Teens often model their behavior from their parents, and they’ve been watching their parents in cars since they were infants. So if parents are putting phones down and buckling up on every ride, then teens are more likely to do the same.
• Talk to teens and kids about ways to speak up if a driver of any age isn’t driving safely.

Safety tip: Always buckle up, even when riding in the back seat.
Gear up for fall sports

The hard facts about sports-related injuries:

- Every three minutes, a child is seen in an emergency department for a sports-related concussion.
- Every year, 2.6 million kids ages 19 and under receive medical treatment for sports and recreation injuries.

Tips to prepare your kids:

- Begin by having your child receive a pre-participation medical examination by a health care professional.
  - If your athlete has any history of asthma or other medical conditions that require special attention, meet with the coach before the first practice.
  - Share emergency contact information with coaches.
- Warm up and stretch before games and practices.
  - Kids should start with about 10 minutes of jogging or any light activity and then stretch all major muscle groups, holding each stretch for 20 to 30 seconds.
- Remember to hydrate.
  - Know the signs and symptoms of dehydration.
  - Have your child bring a water bottle to all practices and games.
  - Water is best. Encourage athletes to drink plenty of water before, during and after play.
- Have the right gear.
  - Wear properly fitted equipment and gear for all practices and games appropriate for the sport.
- Use your head.
  - Don’t take chances with the brain: know the signs and symptoms of concussions.
  - A player with a suspected concussion must be immediately sidelined until evaluated and released by a medical professional.
  - A good rule of thumb: when in doubt, sit them out.
- Make rest a priority.
  - Rest helps athletes avoid overuse injuries.
  - Smart athletes tell coaches, parents or other adults if they are hurt or not feeling well.
  - Kids should have at least one to two days off from any particular sport each week.

Safety tip: Buckle up and do not use your cellphone while driving.

Do you know Kentucky’s cellphone use law?

Cellphone use:

- No person under the age of 18 may operate a motor vehicle while using a personal communication device (including talking, texting or emailing on cellphones) except when it is necessary to summon medical help or law enforcement in an emergency situation.

Texting:

- All drivers are prohibited from texting while driving.
- No person may write, send or read a text-based communication (including text messages, instant messages and emails) while operating a motor vehicle that is in motion.

Bus drivers:

- School bus drivers are prohibited from using any cellphone (handheld or hands-free) while driving with children.

For more information, contact Safe Kids at 859-323-1153 or visit www.safekidsfayettecounty.com.