



BEHIND THE WHEEL: A Health Care Provider Looks at Teen Driving

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Why is This A Relevant Topic for Health Care Providers?

- n Motor Vehicle crashes are the overwhelmingly largest cause of death and severe morbidity in teens
- n The first three critical health outcomes of the National Initiative to Improve Adolescent Health relate directly to this problem
- n Proportionate mortality rates for 16-19 y.o. males: 36.5%; females: 46.5%
- n Health organizations and individual providers in general have not addressed this problem effectively!

Do Health Care Providers Deliver Prevention Messages to Teenagers?

Not often enough.....

- n In only 39% of all visits was ANY health counseling included

- n Only 10.2% of Acute Visits and 15.1% of “well visits” document injury prevention counseling

- n Pediatricians were 4.68 times more likely than FPs/IMs to provide this type of counseling

Does Counseling by Health Care Providers Work?

Probably.....

- n Appears to have impact on Smoking Behavior
- n May have an impact on sexual behavior
- n May influence dietary selection
- n May influence use of seat belts!

Well, what about the experts?

We surveyed the membership of the Society for Adolescent Medicine (SAM) 18 months ago.....

- n Almost 50% of Society members who were “providers” responded
- n SAM members “regularly” counseled their patients about alcohol/drugs/autos 82.5% of time, about seatbelts 80% of time, and helmet use in appropriate settings 77% of time
- n However, they counseled about night driving only 7% of time and about passengers in cars 12% of time

Results of Survey of SAM Providers

- n Only 60% knew if a GDL law existed in their state
- n Surprisingly, of providers with adolescents in their household, only 77% knew about the existence of a GDL law
- n 85% felt there were barriers to providing preventive counseling but only 26% felt they needed more training to provide this counseling

What Can Providers and Provider Organizations do?

- n Appreciate the importance of the problem
- n Establish guidelines that encourage appropriate counseling
- n Find innovative ways to deliver counseling message(s) to youth and their families!
- n Encourage ongoing research as part of “health agenda” for youth