



Grandparents Corner

May 2013

School's Out - Summer Safety

As the school year comes to an end, young people across America are looking forward to the summer. Teens are preparing for proms, graduations, vacations and road trips. It is important to keep safety in mind. The scary truth, according to the National Safety Council and the U.S. Secretary of Transportation:

- Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death for teens.
- Drivers ages 16 and 17 have the highest crash rates than any other age group.

These fatalities are in the summer months of May, June, July and August. During these four months, nearly twice as many teens died on the roads each day when compared to the rest of the year.

Sadly, but according to statistics, teens are notoriously bad drivers. You cannot force them to be mature, responsible citizens, but you can educate them about the facts when it comes to operating vehicles safely. Note the following:

- Passenger Restrictions - the fewer passengers, the fewer distractions. Passengers influence risk-taking behaviors of young and inexperienced drivers.
- Nighttime Driving Restrictions - teen crash risk is particularly elevated when driving at night and with passengers in the vehicle. Inexperience with night driving, low visibility (glare of oncoming headlights), fatigue, and alcohol and/or other drug use.
- Technology - teens are more willing than other drivers to use cell phones, text and PDAs (personal digital assistant) while driving.

Remind your teens that driving is a privilege, not a right, and that they should drive by rules or lose the privilege.

*Source: National Safety Council www.nsc.org
www.nhtsa.gov*

QUICK QUIZ

It is important that you, the caregiver, not become agitated yourself when the person with Alzheimer's disease (AD) does. Take a few breaths, stay calm, don't raise your voice, or take personally anything the person says. Answer True or False to the questions below.

1. Paranoia in people with Alzheimer's disease appears as unrealistic beliefs, usually of someone seeking to do them harm. T F
2. Very mild agitation may seem like a personality change in which a person acts in ways that are uncharacteristic or inappropriate for them, such as being very stubborn, worried, or nervous. T F
3. While agitation may be a symptom of the illness, remember that you may have done something to offend the person that would have been distressing even before they became ill with Alzheimer's. T F
4. Sometimes, people with AD hoard or hide things because they believe someone is trying to take their possessions. T F
5. One of the signs that a senior should stop driving is that they forget they are driving and turn around to talk to the person in the back seat. T F
6. It is important to try to understand why the person may be behaving in ways you find difficult, and learn how to avoid making them worse. T F
7. Sometimes people with AD use offensive language, which they never would have used before they became ill. T F
8. People with dementia are very sensitive to the environment they live in. They are less able to handle changes and uncertainty. T F
9. Severe agitation is unpleasant to deal with, but never dangerous. T F
10. Feelings of loneliness in older adults are not associated with a increase in the risk of dementia. T F

KEY: 1. T 2. T 3. T 4. T 5. T 6. T 7. T 8. T 9. F 10. F