

Toyota Expands National Teen Safe Driving Program with Dealership and High School Outreach

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TORRANCE, CALIF. (September 13, 2012) – Building upon the eight-year success of its behind-the-wheel safety workshops, Toyota announces the expansion of its national advanced teen driving skills program, [Toyota Driving Expectations](#), through partnerships with high schools and local dealerships as well as continuing its popular online safety program.

Toyota established the free safe teen driving program in 2004 to supplement standard driving education courses with real-time opportunities to learn about defensive driving, the impact of distractions, and safe habits. The original 2.5-hour course involves both driving time and classroom discussions, and is unique for requiring the participation of a parent or guardian to support coaching within the family so they can continue to act as role models and teachers at home. Nearly 20,000 teens and parents have participated in the “On the Road” Toyota Driving Expectations program which was among the first to understand the importance of and include parents in safe driving programs for teen drivers.

New this year, National Hot Rod Association driver Erica Enders will headline interactive safe teen driver assemblies at 12 select Los Angeles area and Orange County high schools. Enders will share her experiences as the first woman to qualify No. 1 in the association’s Pro Stock Field and the importance of concentration while driving. “The Road Ahead” assembly also engages students with high-impact video and a hands-on driving simulator which demonstrates dangers of driver distractions.

The third prong of the program includes free safety clinics at select Toyota dealerships in the spring covering vehicle dynamics and safety features, defensive driving, distracted driving and the importance of vehicle maintenance. This program offers parents and teens an opportunity to learn safe driving tips by professional instructors in a non-sales environment inside their local Toyota dealerships.

Finally, the Toyota Teen Driver program offers teens, parents and educators across the country access to free information and resources at www.toyotateendriver.com. The program also includes the Toyota Teen Driver Video Challenge and Educator Challenge, which offers teachers and students the opportunity to win prizes and scholarships by showing a commitment to safety. The online content and tools were created in partnership with Discovery Education.

Together, these four programs highlight Toyota’s commitment to safety behind the wheel and arming teens with life-saving skills. National data shows young drivers are more likely to be in crashes and be killed than more experienced drivers, and are the least likely to wear seatbelts or have their passengers wear them.

Further underscoring its commitment to safe teen driving, Toyota is conducting research to evaluate the effectiveness of an electronic coaching and monitoring system for newly licensed teenage drivers to help reduce unsafe driving behaviors. The research is being conducted by Toyota’s [Collaborative Safety Research Center](#) (CSRC), which is based in Michigan. Launched in January 2011, the CSRC’s mission is to serve as a catalyst for the advancement of auto safety involving the vehicle, driver and traffic environment.

For fall 2012, the “On the Road” Toyota Driving Expectations events will be held at the following locations:

- Cleveland High School in Cleveland, Tenn., September 29*
- Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky, Inc. (TMMK) Plant in Georgetown, Ky., October 6-7
- Neshaminy Mall in Bensalem, Pa., October 13-14
- Soldier Field in Chicago, Ill., October 20-21

** Denotes special event; by invitation only.*

Participants must be between the ages of 15-19 with a valid driver's license or learner's permit, and be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Online registration is currently open at www.toyotadrivingexpectations.com.

Taught by professional drivers, the curriculum for Toyota Driving Expectations was developed in partnership with multiple organizations committed to safe driving, including the National Safety Council and the Defensive Driving Academy in California.

Quote

“The ultimate goal of the Toyota Driving Expectations program is for teens to develop responsible daily driving habits and gain the skills to handle challenging situations behind the wheel. These new elements of the Toyota Driving Expectations program will expand safety knowledge to more teens and parents, and ultimately make our roads safer for everyone.”

– Michael Rouse, Toyota's vice president of diversity, philanthropy and community affairs