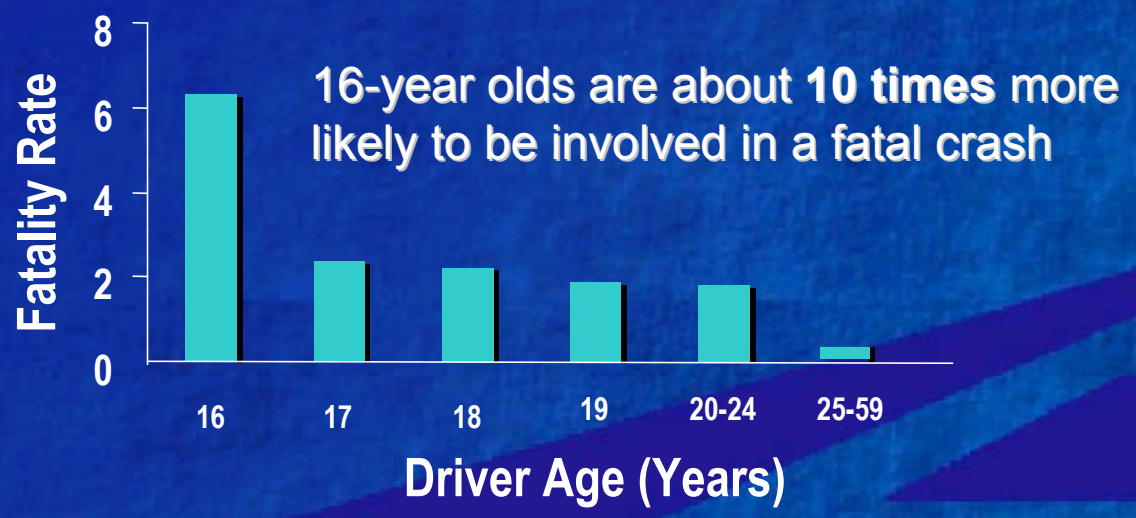
Texas Transportation Institute
The Texas A&M University System

Teen Drivers – What is the Concern?

- Primary Causes of Teen Crashes
- Key Science & Statistics
- Current Scope of the Problem at the State & National Levels

The Novice Driver Problem

Fatality Rate per 100 Million Vehicle Miles Traveled



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Primary Causes

- Drinking and driving involved in only 12% **of 15 & 16-year old driver crashes**
- **Campaigns directed at this issue are** missing 88% of the problem **for this age group**

Teen driver in fatal crash was not drunk

By Joe Gerrety
Journal and Courier

A teen-ager who died from injuries suffered in a Feb. 5 one-vehicle crash on Indiana 25 West did not have alcohol in his system, contrary to a story published in Wednesday's *Journal and Courier*.

Bryan K. Snyder, 18, died early Feb. 6 in Home Hospital from injuries he suffered in a crash at 9:48 p.m. the night before. The crash occurred when the passen-

corrected, crossed the road and crashed into a farm field. The pickup truck he was driving rolled, and Snyder was ejected, suffering serious injuries.

Tippecanoe County deputy coroner Jane Haan said she misread a Home Hospital toxicology report that she consulted Tuesday in response to a *Journal and Courier* inquiry.

"I just misread the information," Haan said. "We

The toxicology report showed that Snyder's blood-alcohol content was less than 0.013 percent, which means negative. Haan misread the information as 0.13 percent. The current legal limit for driving in Indiana is 0.08 percent.

Snyder's blood also was negative for all other drugs for which the hospital tested.

After reading the story in Wednesday's *Journal and*

Scholarship fund

Max Snyder, the father of Bryan K. Snyder, has established a scholarship fund in Bryan's memory.

Because Bryan hoped to become a police officer, Max plans for the scholarship to benefit other students with the same career goal.

Snyder

Contributions may be sent to Bryan's Scholarship Fund c/o The Farmers Bank; P.O. Box 280; Mulberry, IN 46058-0280. Max Snyder can be contacted by e-mail: max@mintel.net

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics

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The Highest Risks

►Driver inexperience

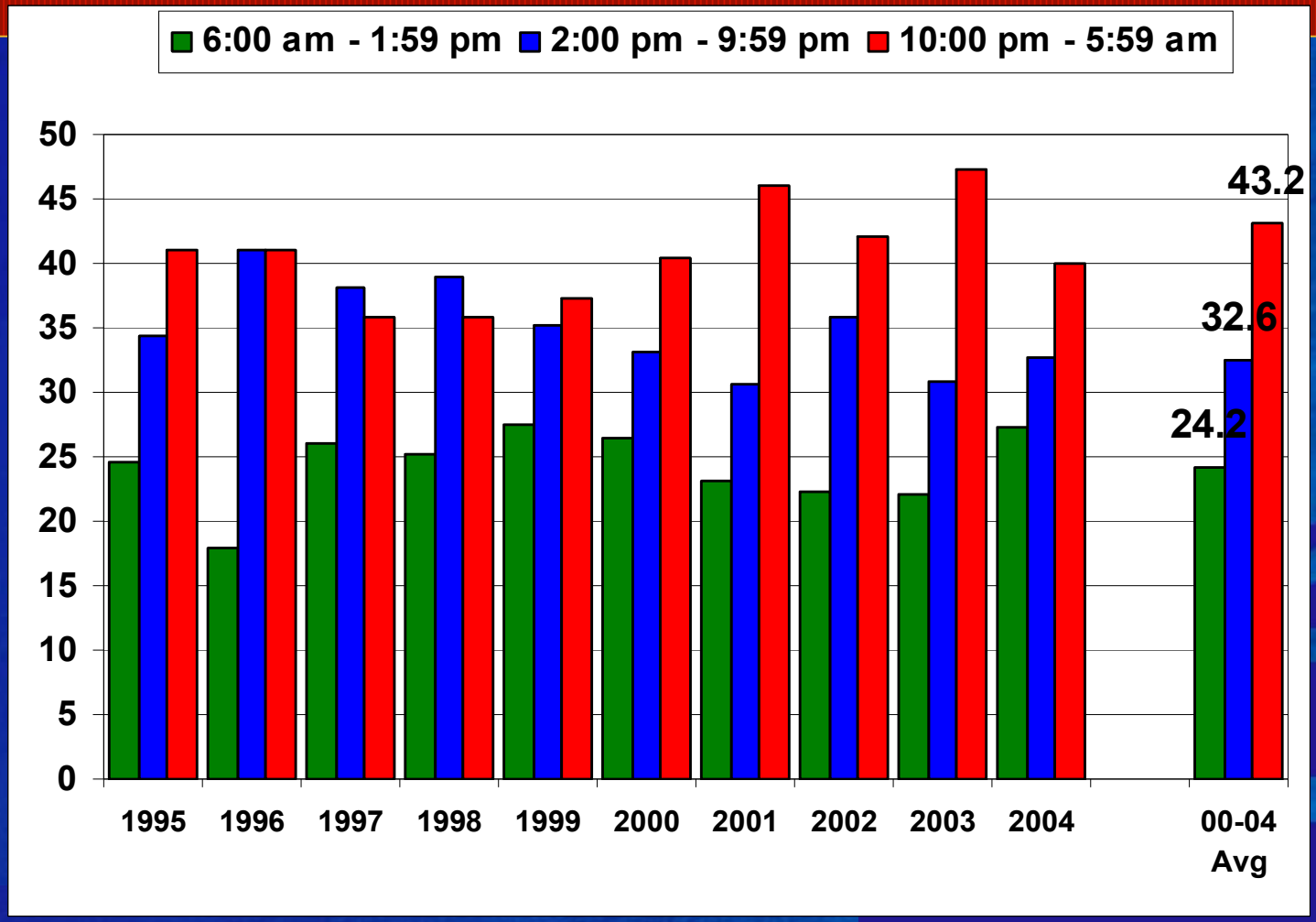
Coupled with following situations/conditions

- Driving at night
- Distractions
  - **Teen passengers in the vehicle without an adult**
  - **Cell phones/"texting"**
- Low seat belt use
- Speeding/racing
- Alcohol/drugs

Driving at Night

- 66% of teen crashes happen between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.
- Driving visibility is significantly reduced at night
- Teen driver fatigue is a growing problem and is relatively unknown by teens and parents

Percent of 15-20 year-old Driver Fatalities by *Time of Day*



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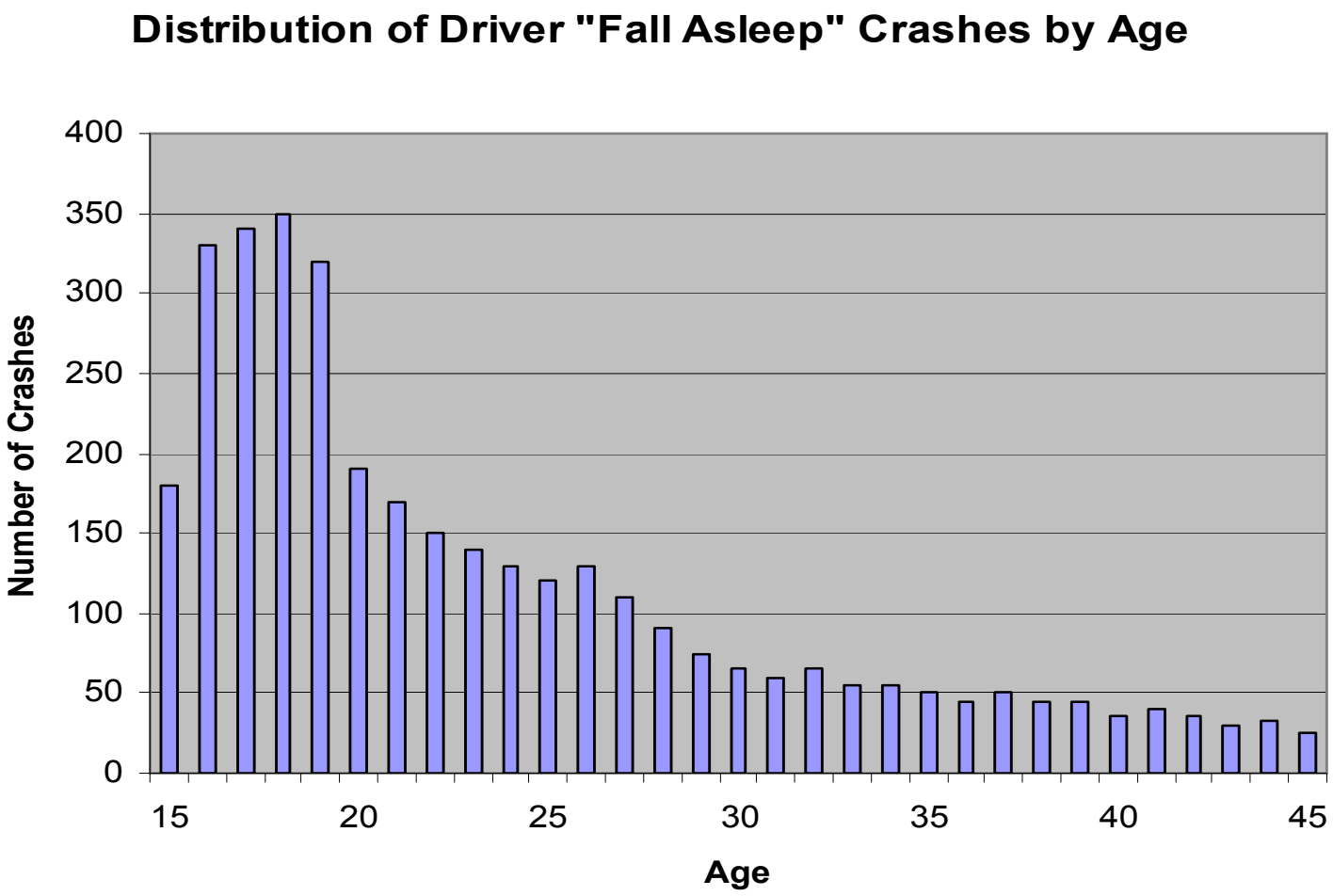
Teen Driver Fatigue

- Teens need more sleep
- National Sleep Foundation recommends 9.25 hours
- Average teen in U.S. is getting 6.9 hours (2006 National Study)
- 80% of teens getting < 9 hours
- Avg. teen driving at 11 p.m. is impacted (by fatigue) the same as if they were drunk

Source: National Sleep Foundation

Fatigue-Related Crashes by Age



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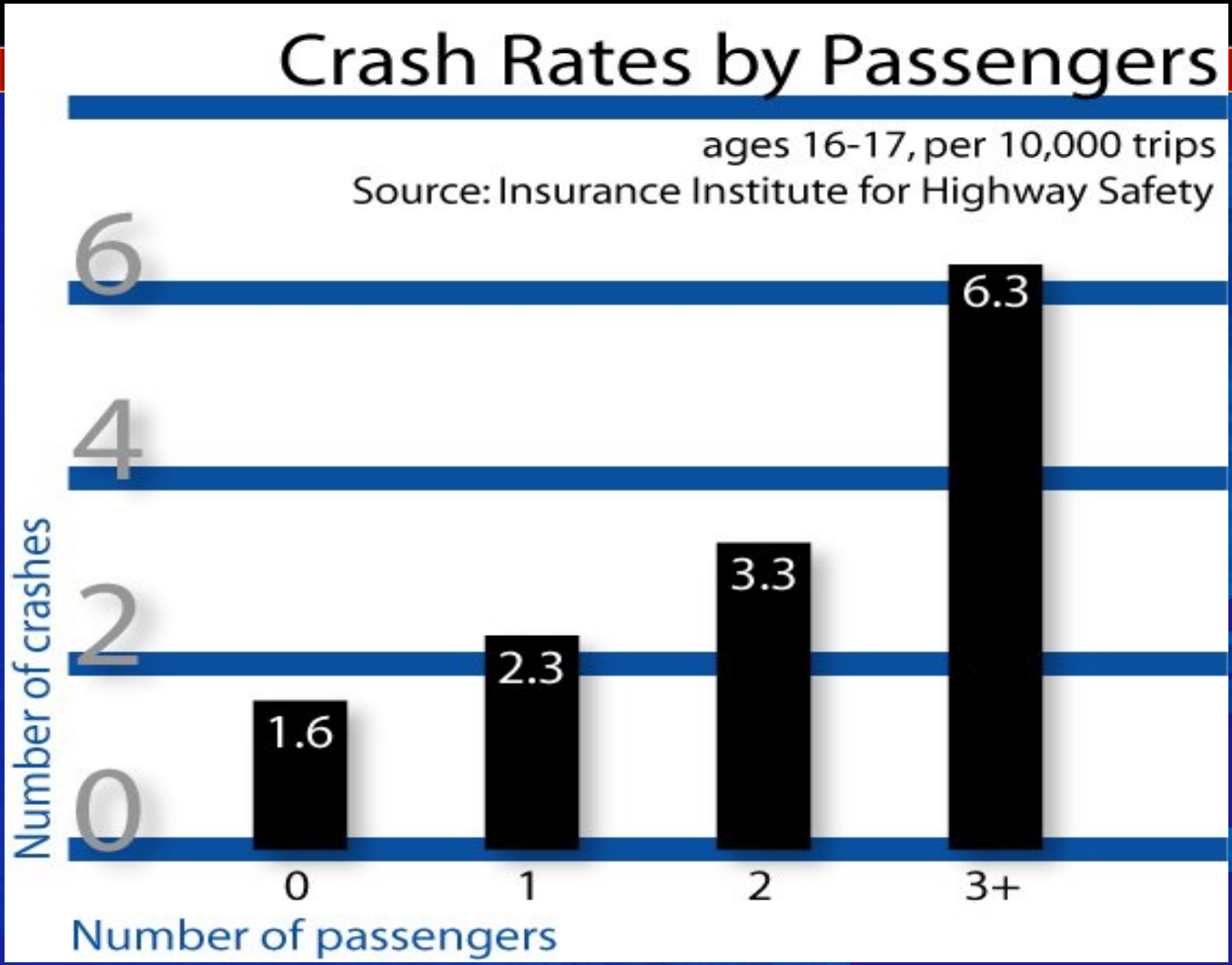
Teen Driver Fatigue (continued)

- Over half of all fatal crashes involving the driver falling asleep at the wheel involves young people age 25 or less
- 30% of teens report they fall asleep in class at least once per week
- Micro-naps & sleep deprivation

Source: National Sleep Foundation, 2006 Study

Influence of Teen Passengers



Cell Phone Use & "Texting"

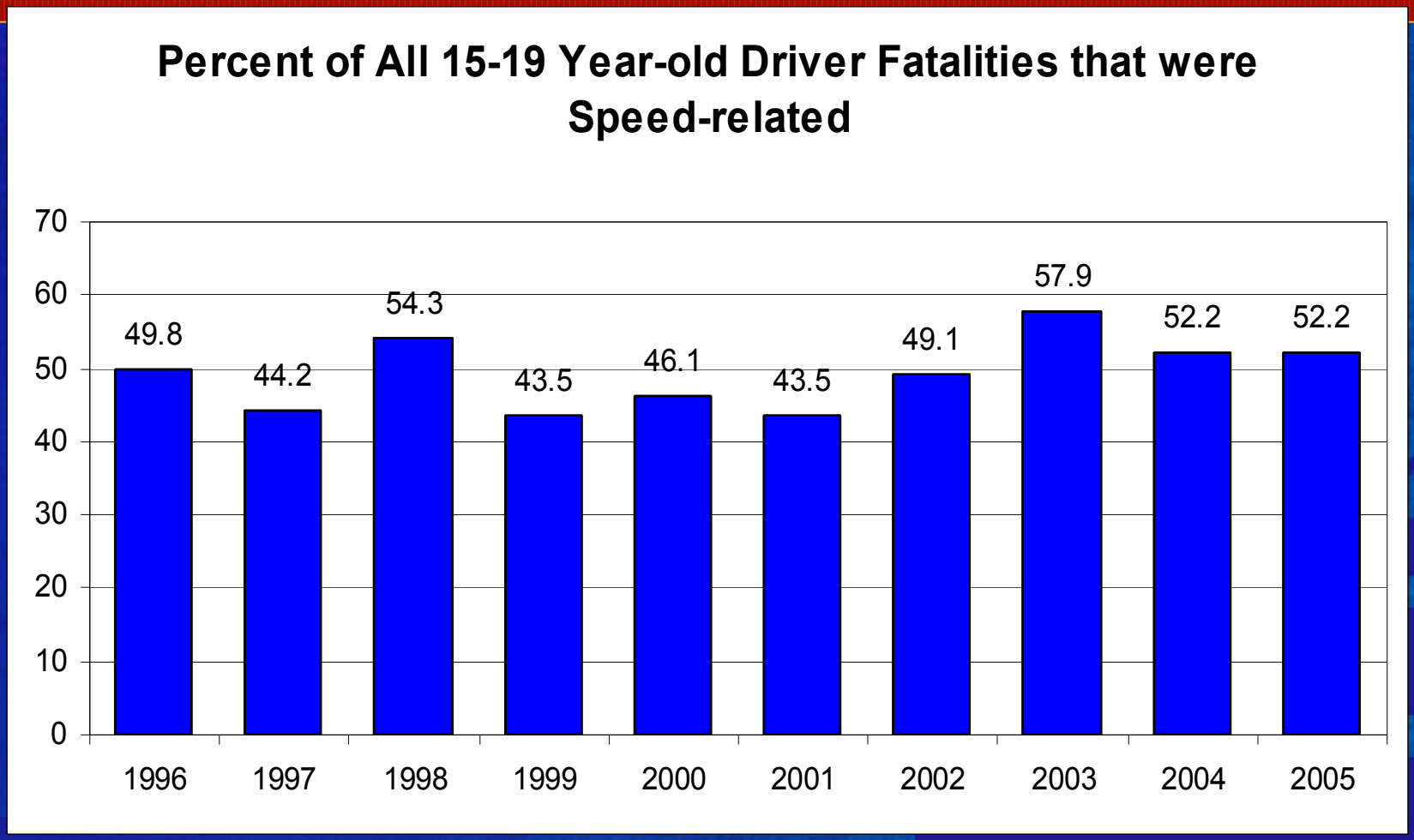
- Drivers engaged in cell phone conversation are 4 times more likely to be in a crash (New England Journal of Medicine)

- Cell phone use estimated to be a factor in approx. 25% of all crashes (NHTSA)

Seat Belt Use

- Teens “buckle up” at a lesser rate than adults
- Teen seat belt use in the back seat is approximately 25%
- Teens tend to carry passengers more often than adults, leading to serious injuries & fatalities for backseat teen passengers

Speeding



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Texas Teen Risk Awareness (%), 2007

Risk	Urban Teens (n= 3,123)	Rural Teens (n = 1,319)
Drinking & Driving	**93**	**47**
Cell Phone/Texting	**42**	**21**
Speeding	**36**	**13**
Teen Passengers	**22**	**10**
Seat Belt Use	**10**	**5**
Driving at Night	**1**	**1**

Texas Teen Driver Behavior, 2007

Question	Urban Teens (%)	Rural Teens (%)
Speeding ticket	7	22
"Text" while driving	18	33
Talk on cell phone	25	48
No seat belt	9	11
Drink & drive	6	6
Drive after 10 p.m.	40	58

Key Statistics for Texas

- In U.S., teens are involved in 15% of crashes
- In Texas they are in 22% of crashes

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics

Teenage Drivers – A Tragic Story

- Motor vehicle crashes are the **#1 killer of teens in America**
- Car crashes account for 2% of all deaths in U.S.
- They account for

  70% of teen injury deaths

Tragedies Put in Perspective

- Approx. 6,000 teens per year **killed in traffic crashes in U.S.**
- **500 per year in Texas**

Tragedies Put in Perspective

Equivalent of one
commercial airliner
full of teens crashing
every week

Economic Impact

- Total economic cost of crashes with drivers age
  15 to 20 years old =

  $41 Billion *per year* in U.S.

  $3.5 Billion in Texas

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics