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PRESS ADVISORY

For Immediate Release
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Before Handing Over the Keys, Make Sure Your Teen Knows the Rules

Mechanicsburg, Pa. – According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teens 15-18 in the United States – ahead of all other types of injury, disease, and violence. The American Trauma Society, Pennsylvania Division (ATSPA) and South Central PA Highway Safety (SCPAHS) are joining NHTSA during National Teen Driver Safety Week, (October 21-27) to encourage all parents not to hand over the keys until their teens know the rules of the road.

SCPAHS Coordinator, Matt Frampton stated, “As a parent of teenagers, I know we have a very strong influence on teens, even as they grow older and become more independent. This week, and every week, parents need to talk to their teens about safe driving and set a good example for them.”

NHTSA provides tips for parents on how to talk about safe driving behaviors with teens, and to address the most dangerous and deadly driving behaviors for teen drivers:

- **No Drinking and Driving.** Remind your teens that driving under the influence of any impairing substance could have deadly consequences.
- **Buckle Up – Every Trip, Every Time. Everyone – Front Seat and Back.** Remind your teens that it’s important to buckle up on every trip, every time, no matter what – front seat and back.
- **Eyes on the Road, Hands on the Wheel. All the Time.** Remind your teens about the dangers of texting and using a phone while driving and that distracted driving is not limited to cell phone use (other passengers, audio and climate controls, etc.).
- **Follow the Posted Speed Limit.** Remind your teen to always drive within the speed limit. In 2016, almost one-third (31%) of teen drivers of passenger vehicles involved in a fatal crash were speeding at the time of the crash.
- **Passengers.** Passengers in a teen’s car can lead to disastrous consequences. The likelihood of teen drivers engaging in risky behaviors triples when driving with multiple passengers.
- **Avoid Driving Drowsy.** Make sure your teen gets a good night’s sleep.

Frampton added, “Parents can help protect their teen drivers by talking with them about driving risks. Self-reported surveys show that teens whose parents set firm rules for driving typically engage in less risky driving behaviors and are involved in fewer crashes.” For more information on National Teen Driver Safety Week, contact the ATSPA at 717-766-1616 or atspa@atspa.org.

The American Trauma Society, PA Division (ATSPA) is a non-profit trauma prevention education organization dedicated to reducing suffering, disability and death due to trauma. The ATSPA strives to help all Pennsylvanians survive and lead healthier lives through its trauma prevention education programs. For information, call 717-766-1616 and visit www.atspa.org.

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