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# Core Elements of Driver Education Parent / Guardian Seminars



**ANSTSE**

Developed by the Association of  
National Stakeholders in Traffic Safety  
Education

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## Executive Summary

The Association of National Stakeholders in Traffic Safety Education (ANSTSE) consists of major stakeholders to assist in improving the administration of driver education programs nationally. ANSTSE was created to maintain the Novice Teen Driver Education and Training Administrative Standards (NTDETAS) and to provide oversight in implementation activities.

ANSTSE recognizes that parents/guardians play a vital role in supporting and enhancing driver education during the novice teen's learning-to-drive experience. Every State has a novice teen parental component in the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) process. It is also vital to include parents/guardians in the driver education process to influence safe driving habits that can then reduce motor vehicle related crashes.

ANSTSE identified the need to develop recommendations for the administration, while also improving the content and delivery of seminars for the parents/guardians of novice teen drivers (under the age of 18). This activity supports Section 5 of the NTDETAS – Parent / Guardian Involvement.

ANSTSE reviewed existing policies, practices, and research regarding parent/guardian seminars (Seminars). Web meetings were conducted with States to collect information on programs and policies. Research on Seminars was reviewed from the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

These efforts led to the development of recommended core elements for the administration, content, and delivery of Seminars for parents/guardians of novice teen drivers. The objectives of these core elements are to: (1) prepare parents/guardians for their critical role during their teen's learning-to-drive process, (2) ease States' path toward the implementation of such Seminars, (3) advocate to all stakeholders the benefits of Seminars, and (4) provide a foundation for the prevention of novice driver motor vehicle crashes.

## Introduction

The NTDETAS were developed to assist in improving the administration of driver education programs nationally. ANSTSE, an association of major stakeholders, was created to maintain and, when necessary, upgrade the Standards and to provide oversight in implementation activities.

ANSTSE identified the need to develop recommendations for the administration, while also improving the content and delivery of Seminars for the parents/guardians of novice teen drivers (under the age of 18). These recommendations support Section 5 of the NTDETAS – Parent / Guardian Involvement.

### Standard 5.2.1 specifies:

States shall require the parent/guardian of a novice teen driver to complete a parent/guardian seminar prior to or at the start of the course.

### Standard 5.2.2 specifies:

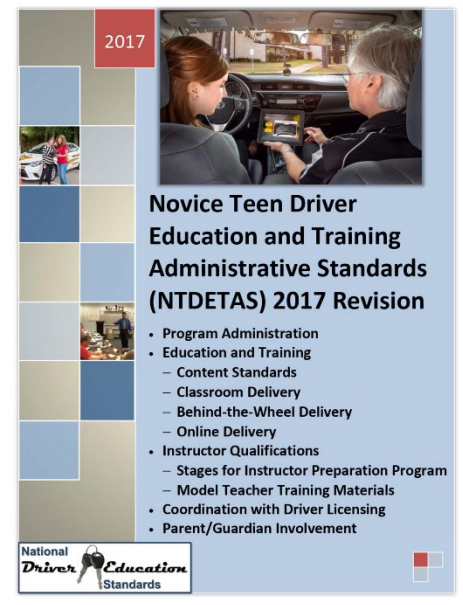
States should ensure that the parent/guardian seminar outlines the parent's responsibility and opportunities to reduce his or her novice teen driver's risk, and should include, but not be limited to:

- a) modeling safe driving behavior;
- b) determining the readiness of the novice teen driver to begin the learning process;
- c) managing the novice teen driver's overall learning-to-drive experience;
- d) conducting effective supervised practice driving;
- e) determining the novice teen driver's readiness to advance to the next licensing stage and assume broader driving privileges; and
- f) negotiating and adopting a written agreement between the novice teen driver and parent that reflects the expectations of both teen and parent and clearly defines the restrictions, privileges, rules, and consequences that will serve as the basis for the novice teen driver to learn and for the parent to grant progressively broader driving privileges.

# ANSTSE

## Stakeholders

- AAA, William Van Tassel;
- American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), Kevin Lewis;
- American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association (ADTSEA), Connie Sessoms, Jr.;
- Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (ADED), Liz Green;
- Driver Education and Training Administrators (DETA), Nina Saint;
- Driving School Association of the Americas (DSAA), Sharon Fife;
- Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), John Saunders;
- Transportation Research Board (TRB), Dan Mayhew.



Parents/guardians play a vital role in supporting and enhancing driver education during the novice teen's learning-to-drive experience. The parent/guardian is responsible for providing the novice teen's supervised driving practice, regulating their driving exposure and assisting them during the learning-to-drive experience.

Parent/guardian involvement is integral to the State's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program and must be coordinated between the State agencies responsible for driver education and driver licensing. Every State's GDL process has a novice teen parental component. It is vital to engage parents/guardians in the driver education process to influence safe driving behavior to instill appropriate habits leading to a lasting impact in reducing motor vehicle related crashes.



This document provides core elements for the administration, content, and delivery of Seminars for parents/guardians of novice teen drivers.

### The objectives of these core elements are to:

- prepare parents/guardians for their critical role during their teen's learning-to-drive process,
- provide a foundation for the prevention of novice driver motor vehicle crashes,
- ease States' path toward the implementation of such Seminars, and
- advocate to all stakeholders the benefits of Seminars.

### The objectives of the Seminars are to:

- educate parents/guardians about the risks of driving and the major crash causation factors for novice teen drivers,
- provide awareness of the tools and resources to properly educate parents/guardians to become driving coaches for novice teen drivers, and
- emphasize the role and responsibilities of parents/guardians in managing the novice teen driver's overall learning-to-drive experience.



## How to Use This Document



This document may be used to develop or enhance Seminars and includes three key areas:

### A. Administrative Components

- This section provides components to incentivize parents/guardians to attend the Seminar and information on the administration of a Seminar, including the requirements, length and promotion.

### B. Content Elements

- This section provides the content which should be included in a Seminar and additional resources.

### C. Seminar Delivery

- This section provides recommendations for the delivery of Seminars.

These core elements can be used to:

- Deliver and enhance the content of Seminars.
- Engage parents/guardians during their novice teen's learning-to-drive experience.
- Require parent/guardian participation in the Seminar and the means to participate in the learning-to-drive process.
- Utilize Seminar materials and make accessible to all providers.
- Enable parents/guardians to be active during the learning-to-drive experience.
- Implement a plan to evaluate the Seminar.
- Establish a process to continuously review and update the Seminar.

## A. Administrative Components (Refer to NTDETAS 5.2.1)

It is vital for parents/guardians to be involved during their novice teen's learning-to-drive experience. Requiring a Seminar for the parents/guardians of a novice teen driver who is taking a driver education course is important. One of the biggest challenges of Seminars is getting parents/guardians to attend and become involved during their novice drivers learning-to-drive experience. This section provides components to incentivize parents/guardians to attend the Seminar. It also includes information on Seminar administration; including the requirements, duration, and promotion of the Seminar. Section 5.2.1 of the NTDETAS specifies:

**5.2.1 States shall require the parent of a teen driver to complete a parent seminar prior to or at the start of the course.**

### Recommendations to Meet Standard 5.2.1

- A. Implementing State level standards that require core elements for the delivery of parent/guardian seminars.
- B. Integrating the parent/guardian seminar as part of the driver education and licensing process.
- C. Developing and implementing a communication and marketing plan including strategies to incentivize parent/guardian attendance.
- D. Identifying and communicating the benefits to parent/guardians of attending the Seminar.
- E. Requiring parent/guardian and novice driver attendance and participation.
- F. Establishing procedures for novice drivers who do not have a parent or legal guardian.
- G. Requiring driver education programs to:
  - i. Deliver a parent/guardian seminar that meets a minimum time requirement (e.g. 90 minutes).
  - ii. Outline the parent/guardian's responsibilities for participation during the driver education course.
  - iii. Provide open and repeated methods of communication between instructors and parents/guardians (e.g. pre-contact email).
  - iv. Provide progress reports and a post-course final assessment report (Refer to NTDETAS 5.3.1).
  - v. Provide a list of classroom and BTW lesson topics.
  - vi. Encourage parent/guardian attendance of multiple class sessions.
  - vii. Provide a list of apps which track the novice teens driver's supervised driving practice.
- H. Providing parents/guardians with handouts and resources along with class information.
- I. Requiring providers to monitor and evaluate whether Seminars meet the needs of parents/guardians, delivery requirements and Seminar objectives.



## B. Content Elements (Refer to NTDETAS 5.2.2)

This section provides the content which should be included in a Seminar and additional resources. Section 5.2.2 of the NTDETAS specifies:

**5.2.2 States should ensure that the parent seminar outlines the parent’s responsibility and opportunities to reduce his or her teen’s risk, and should include, but not be limited to:**

- a) modeling safe driving behavior;**
- b) determining the readiness of the teen to begin the learning process;**
- c) managing the novice driver’s overall learning-to-drive experience;**
- d) conducting effective supervised practice driving;**
- e) determining the teen’s readiness to advance to the next licensing stage and assume broader driving privileges; and**
- f) negotiating and adopting a written agreement between the teen and parent that reflects the expectations of both teen and parent and clearly defines the restrictions, privileges, rules, and consequences that will serve as the basis for the teen to learn and for the parent to grant progressively broader driving privileges.**

**NOTE: The parent seminar should focus on parent’s responsibilities and opportunities related to driving, rather than on school administrative information or other social health issues.**

The Seminar should focus on parent/guardian’s responsibilities and opportunities during the learning-to-drive experience. The NTDETAS establishes the core content elements, but there is other critical content that should be included.

There are many elements to include in a Seminar. With the limited time available, not all content may be covered. This section divides the content into two areas: 1) core content and 2) content covered through resources, such as handouts and websites. The Seminar outlines the parent/guardian’s responsibility and opportunities to reduce their novice teen driver’s risk.

### Recommendations to Meet Standard 5.2.2

#### 1. Core Content

- A. Modeling safe driving behavior (e.g. obeying traffic laws)
- B. Determining the readiness of the teen to begin the learning process
- C. Managing the novice driver’s overall learning-to-drive experience
  - i. State licensing procedures
  - ii. The state’s GDL laws
    - i. How parent/guardians can best enforce GDL’s nighttime, passenger and cell phone restrictions
  - iii. Novice driver’s and parent/guardian expectations and responsibilities (parent/guardians are part of the team)
  - iv. Managing all phases of driving privileges

### Recommendations to Meet Standard 5.2.2

- v. Recognize major risk factors contributing to teen driving crashes, injuries and fatalities, such as:
  - i. Inexperience
  - ii. Impairment
    - 1. Alcohol and other Drugs
    - 2. Fatigue
  - iii. Distractions (internal and external)
  - iv. Speeding
  - v. Occupant protection (e.g., safety belt, head restraints)
  - vi. Passengers
  - vii. Nighttime driving
  - viii. Risky drive routes, such as unprotected left turns
  - ix. And other current crash causation factors

- D. Conducting effective supervised practice driving - the parent/guardian is in charge and responsible for the practice and safety of the novice teen driver
  - i. Introduce and explain the importance of completing the practice driving log and which ones are accepted (stress the importance of the driving log and how to complete it)
  - ii. Compare driving today vs. when the parent/guardian learned
    - i. Techniques we teach and why (e.g., hand position, steering techniques, mirror adjustments)
  - iii. Address parent/guardian fears of teaching a novice teen driver to drive
  - iv. Identify typical behaviors of a novice teen driver (e.g. inappropriate visual techniques, poor vehicle handling, confusion between the accelerator and brake)
  - v. Select the primary coach within the family for guided practice
  - vi. Provide tips and guidelines on how to coach for guided practice
  - vii. Share instruction, directions and terminology used in the driver education course
  - viii. Explain the purpose and use of commentary driving
  - ix. Practice effective communication using constructive criticism and positive reinforcement
  - x. Review appropriate times and environments to drive for guided practice
  - xi. Establish a process to set goals and evaluate novice teen driver's progress through guided practice
  - xii. Share driving knowledge using good communication skills
- E. Determining the teen's readiness to advance to the next licensing stage and assume broader driving privileges; (refer to ADED fact sheet general considerations before driving)
- F. Negotiating and adopting a written agreement between the teen and parent/guardian that reflects the expectations of both teen and parent/guardian and clearly defines the restrictions, privileges, rules, and consequences that will serve as the basis for the teen to learn and for the parent/guardian to grant progressively broader driving privileges. There are many model agreements available online (e.g., driver license agency).

## Recommendations to Meet Standard 5.2.2

### 2. Content Covered through Resources

- A. Providing access to State licensing procedures
- B. Providing access to rules, regulations, and expectations of the State GDL and driver education requirements
- C. Providing access to resources related to the risks of driving and major crash causation factors
- D. Providing a parent/guardian guide based on research
  - i. Clear guidance to parent/guardians on what they should work on with their novice teen driver's once they leave the class (objectives)
  - ii. How to conduct effective supervised practice driving
- E. Providing a tool for logging the required hours of supervised practice
- F. Providing a sample "Parent/Guardian-Teen Driving Agreement" between the novice teen driver and parent/guardian that reflects the expectations of both teen and parent/guardian
- G. Choosing a safer vehicle for the novice teen driver

## C. Seminar Delivery

This section provides recommendations for the delivery of Seminars. How a Seminar is delivered is just as important as the content. It can affect perceptions about the risks of driving. The provider should recognize the unique needs of adult learners, incorporate active learning to engage the participants and provide resources to supervise their novice driver's learning-to-drive experience.

It can be a challenge to have all parents/guardians attend and actively participate in a Seminar. Consideration should be given for alternative ways to reach as many parents/guardians as possible.

States and/or driver education providers should require the Seminar to:

### Recommendations for Seminar Delivery

- A. Be conducted by trained individuals who utilize adult learning theories.
- B. Be engaging and informational.
- C. Incorporating active learning approaches and blended presentations, such as, but not limited to:
  - i. Small group discussion
  - ii. Role playing
  - iii. Hands on / interactive activities or discussions
  - iv. Demonstrations
  - v. Questions
  - vi. Videos
- D. Providing resources with key information (e.g. handouts, websites)
- E. Providing for participant needs (e.g. language, disability, culture)

### Recommendations for Seminar Delivery

- F. Including presentations on the risks of driving (e.g. trauma nurse, law enforcement) appealing to the parent/guardians' emotions.
- G. Discussing how the parent/guardians' and teen's efforts can integrate with driver education and driver licensing process. (e.g. provide driver education course syllabus)
- H. Increasing access by providing alternative ways for delivery, for example, how it may be delivered:
  - a. Face-to-face (preferred)
  - b. Online parent/guardian program (as an alternative)
  - c. One-on-one meetings (as an alternative)
  - d. Multiple offerings and times (e.g., evenings/weekends)
- I. Additional tips for success:
  - a. Providing objectives and skills for practice driving including access to driving lessons
  - b. Texting / emailing reminders
  - c. Sending home and/or emailing materials / handouts
  - d. Coordinating with other school programs

### Conclusion



Driving is a life-long skill that requires a solid foundation in a world of ever-changing transportation environments. As part of the novice teen's driver education and licensing experience, it is vital to include parents/guardians in the driver education process. Engaging

parents/guardians into the driver education program can expand the reach of the life-saving skills imparted by professional driver educators.

You cannot solve today's problems with yesterday's thinking. Driver education needs to continue to evolve to accommodate new content and practices. It is important to motivate parents/guardians to attend Seminars and focus on making the Seminars easily accessible through a variety of administration modes.

## Appendix A: Glossary

**Novice driver** – any new driver that has not yet developed and demonstrated the knowledge and skills necessary for licensure.

**Novice teen driver** – any teen, under the age of 18, who falls under the State's GDL system.

**Parent** – a parent, guardian, or other mentor responsible for managing a novice teen driver's learning-to-drive experience.

NOTE: These definitions come from the NTDETAS.

## Appendix B: Existing Practices and Research

ANSTSE collected and analyzed existing research and practices on Seminars to develop these core elements. Some states require Seminars and others do not.

Examples of States requiring Seminars for driver education:

States Who Require Parent/Guardian Seminars					
Alabama		Kentucky		North Dakota	
Alaska		Louisiana	X	Ohio	
Arizona		Maine	X	Oregon	X
Arkansas		Maryland		Pennsylvania	
California		Massachusetts	X	Rhode Island	
Colorado		Michigan		South Carolina	
Connecticut	X	Minnesota	X	South Dakota	
Delaware		Mississippi		Tennessee	
District of Columbia		Missouri		Texas	
Florida		Montana	X	Utah	
Georgia		Nebraska		Vermont	X
Hawaii	X	Nevada		Virginia	X
Idaho	X	New Hampshire		Washington (private schools)	X
Illinois		New Jersey		West Virginia	
Indiana		New Mexico		Wisconsin	
Iowa		New York		Wyoming	
Kansas		North Carolina			

Examples of States with established guidelines or presentations:

States With Established Guidelines or Presentations for Parent/Guardian Seminars	
1. Connecticut – outline	6. Montana – parent teen homework
2. Delaware – standard presentation	7. Oregon - PlayBook curriculum
3. Idaho – standard presentation	8. Utah – uses Zero Fatalities
4. Massachusetts – curriculum outline	9. Washington – standards
5. Minnesota – outline and guide	

Examples of current Seminar offerings include:

Examples of Parent/Guardian Seminars	
1. AAA Start Smart	6. Minnesota Teen Driver Parental Awareness Program (TDPAP)
2. Connecticut – Highway Safety Office, DOT	7. Montana – KEYS
3. Georgia – Parents Reducing Injuries & Driver Error (PRIDE)	8. New Jersey – Share the Keys
4. Idaho – Road to Success	9. Utah – Zero Fatalities
5. Michigan – Checkpoints Program	10. Virginia - Partners for Safe Teen Driving



## ➤ Montana Keep Encouraging Young Driver Safety (KEYS) Program

The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI), the Montana State University and Montana Traffic Education Association developed five parent-teen homework assignments, called KEYS (Keep Encouraging Young Driver Safety.)

KEYS addresses safe driving topics (e.g., safety precautions/equipment) and includes family activities (e.g., properly adjusting mirrors).

“Research conducted with parents across Montana, confirms there is strong support (76%) for parental involvement. Most parents want information and instruction, including written materials and tools to help them assess their teens.”

“Parents’ time is ALWAYS limited, but it’s only a 5-week commitment and the effects could last a lifetime!”

*KEYS Pilot Study: Increasing Parental Involvement in Teenage Driving Through Driver Education, Final Report: Prepared by Jessica Hartos, Ph.D., David Huff, M.S., James Carroll, M.Ed., 2009*

For more information go to: <https://opi.mt.gov/> and click on driver education.

### ***Benefits of Montana Parent Seminar***




“I think it’s a blast to get parents involved. I can’t think of a better place in education when parents and teachers should be working together. Parents don’t have a clue about the GDL restrictions and the risks for teens, so partnering with them is critical.”

*Whitefish School District’s Traffic Education Coordinator*

## ➤ Utah Zero Fatalities

Zero Fatalities is a mutual effort from Utah, Nevada and Iowa and addresses the top five behaviors that are killing people on America’s roads.

1. Drowsy driving
2. Distracted driving
3. Aggressive driving
4. Impaired driving
5. Not buckling up

Parent-Teen Activity #3: Driving Pictures	
<b>Driving Situations.</b> For each picture: (1) put an "X" on the "target" you would use for driving; (2) draw in the driver's control, challenges, & potential vision ranges; & (3) circle all the possible issues with line-of-sight & path-of-travel.	<b>Evaluation.</b> For each picture: (1) list 3 issues for driving in the scene; & then list (2) the best speed control option & (3) the best lane position option for each.
	Issue 1: _____
	Issue 2: _____
	Issue 3: _____
Speed control option: _____	
Lane position option: _____	
	Issue 1: _____
	Issue 2: _____
	Issue 3: _____
Speed control option: _____	
Lane position option: _____	
	Issue 1: _____
	Issue 2: _____
	Issue 3: _____
Speed control option: _____	
Lane position option: _____	

Each picture represents the perspective and quality of the driver's view.

Various organizations contribute to the success of the Zero Fatalities program, including state departments, organizations and private businesses. This extensive public education program is designed to convince adults, teens, children, community, business and political leaders why Zero Fatalities is the only number of deaths our nation should strive to achieve. Zero Fatalities consists of a 1-hour presentation after school or sometimes before school depending on preference presented to parents and teens and where they sign a parent / teen contract together.

Driver education instructors contact Zero Fatalities to sign up, pick a date and time and require students to bring a parent or guardian to the presentation. For more information go to [www.zerofatalitiesUT.com](http://www.zerofatalitiesUT.com).

### ***Benefits of Utah Zero Fatalities Presentation***

- “I learned MANY things that I had forgotten”
- “I loved this presentation even though I didn't want to come...it was not only beneficial for my daughter but for me as well”
- “Everyone should see this presentation!”
- “After this presentation I will turn my phone off before getting in the car. I think making the parent night mandatory is a really good idea. I am glad I came. I wish I could have come to this with my older son - would have helped me to be more confident teaching/working with him during new driving phase.”

### ***Parent/guardian participants of the Utah Zero Fatalities Presentation***

- “Keep doing what you are doing. Our parents love it.”
- “You do a fabulous job. I always get positive feedback with a thank you”
- “I think it is great, and the parents have very positive things to say about it”
- “This the best thing to happen to my driver education program since I started teaching the class”

### ***Instructors of the Utah Zero Fatalities Presentation***

“I have attended multiple presentations. As I watch parents arrive I hear a lot of complaints about how frustrated they are that they have to attend. When they leave I watch them wait for the teacher to make sure they thank them for making them come. This 1-hour presentation changes behaviors and is the best 1-hour spent in the driver education classroom.”

### ***Administrator of the Utah Zero Fatalities Presentation***

## **Idaho Parent Seminar**

Idaho requires a one-hour parent/guardian seminar; however, most schools exceed this requirement by conducting two-hour Seminars. In addition, Idaho provides driver educators with a discussion outline and access to the Road Ready app for parents/guardians to track supervised driving sessions. Ninety-five percent of schools offer the parent seminar prior to the class starting.

Instructors also provide an end-of-session parent meeting and include parent/guardians in a drive. The Parent Drives require one or more parents to ride in the backseat during the last 30 minutes of the in-car instruction. These Drives provide a great opportunity to accomplish what's necessary to ease the student's transition from teacher directed instruction to parent directed instruction.

The Parent Drives:

- Model the type of instruction we have used and give some tips to the parents.
- Allow the parent to see that their child is not a perfect driver yet.
- Allow the student to demonstrate some driving in a variety of environments.
- Can answer most of the questions and concerns the parent may have.
- Are good public relations to involve the parents.

For parent resources go to: <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/driver-ed/>.

### ***Benefits of Idaho Parent/Guardian Seminar***

“We believe the importance of pre and post parent meetings are:

- To acquaint and orient the parents with our policies/procedures and update on current laws that have changed since the parents have taken drivers education.
- This is an important milestone in a teenager's life. They need parent support, encouragement and involvement to become responsible drivers to themselves and respectful to others.”

### ***Instructors of the Idaho Parent Seminar***

“GHSa shows teen driver fatalities are on the rise among 16 to 17-year-old drivers. Parents can help reverse that trend since they play a key role in teen driving decisions. Research shows teens tend to emulate how their parents drive. By setting a good example behind-the-wheel, parents can increase the chances their children will adopt safe driving practices. While state laws and educational programs are critical, ultimately, parents are the most important component to keep their teen drivers safe.”

### ***State Administrators involved with the Idaho Parent Seminar***

## **Michigan Checkpoints**

Michigan Checkpoints was developed by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute. It is a 30-minute session. The session reviews and discusses a 9-minute video, discusses the risks in the first few months of licensure and develops a parent/teen contract and restrictions for the teen. For the program visit: <http://youngdriverparenting.org/>.

Key findings of the Checkpoints program include:

- Sixteen times more likely to report parent teen driving agreement use (three quarters were still using them six months after participating in the program);

- Nine times more likely to have restrictions on driving with peer passengers and on weekend nights;
- Three and a half times more likely to be restricted from driving on roads with speed limits over 55 mph; and
- Restricted from transporting, on average, one fewer passenger

*Source: GHSA Promoting Parent Involvement in Teen Driving*

## **Oregon Playbook**

The Oregon Playbook curriculum includes a lesson plan for conducting Parent/Guardian Orientations. The orientation is 1 – 1 ½ hours in length and shares information on the driver education program as well as risks associated with driving such as driver inexperience, distractions, speed, alcohol, etc. It also outlines the important role of the parent/guardian; including their influence on safe driving habits and needed support during the course. It provides different techniques that are taught, such as adjusting mirror settings, steering and reference points. Five hours of parent or guardian guided practice is required as part of the course. The orientation also provides a teen/parent driving agreement for family use.