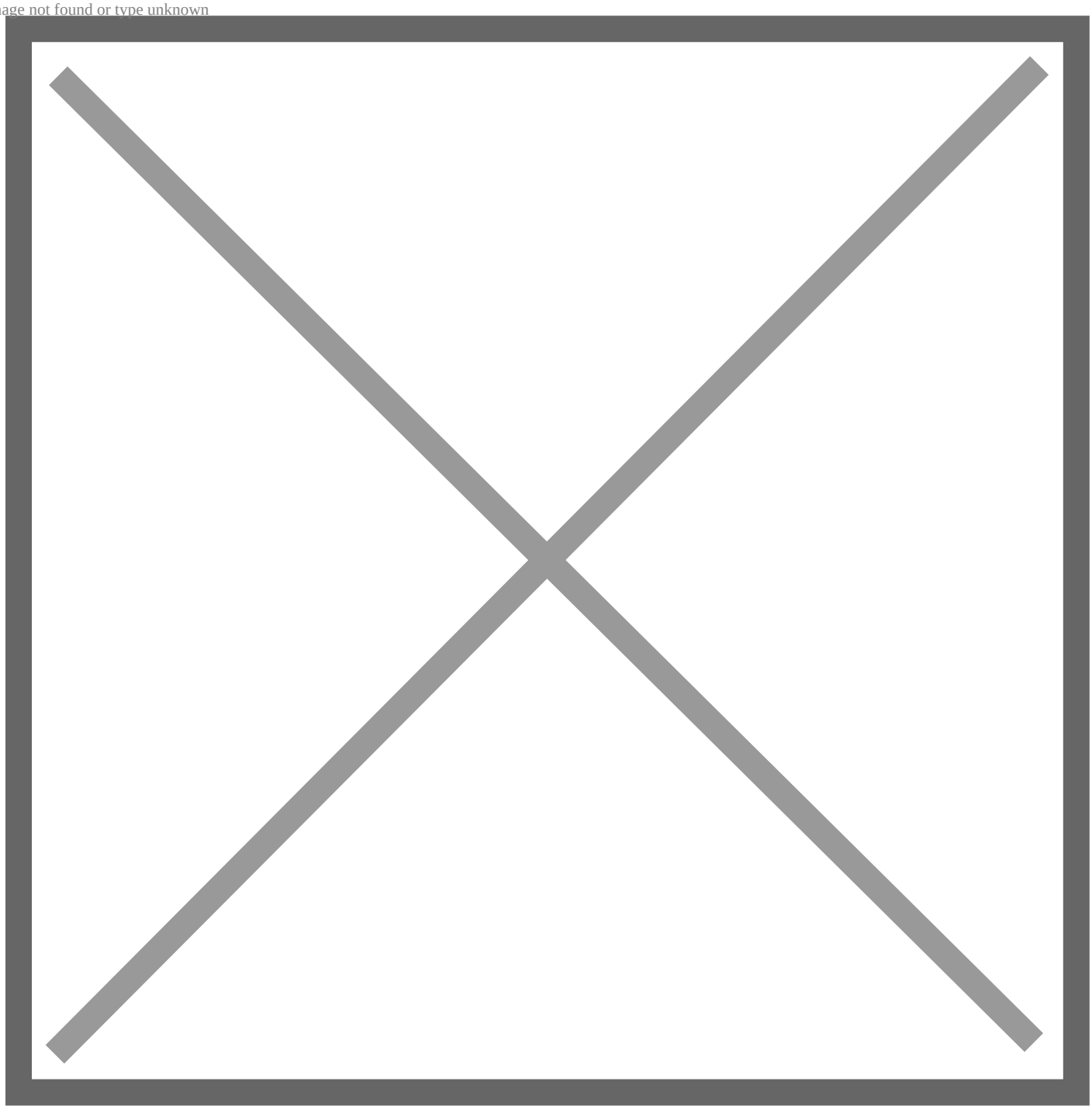
Somebody's Watching You, Alright...Your Teen Driver

November 06, 2014

Image not found or type unknown



NEW YORK (Nov. 6, 2014) – Put down that cup of coffee when you're driving, Mom. And forget about checking that text while behind the wheel, Dad. Parents may think their teens aren't paying attention to them, but the truth is the exact opposite. Safety research by Toyota and the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) reveals that parents are the number one influence on how their teenager will drive.

That's why Toyota created *TeenDrive365* (www.TeenDrive365.com), a comprehensive initiative that offers online tools, expert advice, local events and social media elements to inspire parents and teens to be safe drivers together. *TeenDrive365* builds on the programs and resources Toyota has offered for over a decade to help families 'go safely.' Since its launch last November, millions of people have engaged with the online and in-person resources that make up the *TeenDrive365* program—over 1-million people have visited the web site, more than 22,000 people have taken Toyota's safe driving pledge and over 10,000 people have interacted with *TeenDrive365* at events around the country.

Now approaching year two, *TeenDrive365* introduces new resources that further emphasize the impact parents have on their teen's driving and help parents put that knowledge into action. The focus on parents as role models is based on research from a national study from Toyota's Collaborative Safety Research Center (CSRC) and UMTRI. The study found a significant correlation between how parents and their teens drive, suggesting that parents are the biggest influence on how a teen will behave behind the wheel.

"As a mother of a teenager, I often remind myself that the things I do behind the wheel go a long way in setting a powerful example," said Dr. Tina Sayer, Toyota Collaborative Safety Research Center principal engineer and teen safe driving expert. "Experience and education certainly help your teen become a safe and more confident driver, but our research shows us that the biggest factor in how teens will drive is their parents."

TeenDrive365's new resources, which can be accessed at www.TeenDrive365.com, highlight the critical role parents play in helping keep teens safe behind the wheel and include:

- An **online commercial** coined "Parents Who Drive Bad Anonymous", which takes a humorous look at parents' vices behind the wheel as they commit to being safer drivers for their teens;
- The "Masters of the Wheel" **video series**, featuring professional race car driving legends discussing the influential role parents play in teen driver safety;
- An enhanced in-car **distracted driving simulator** with Oculus Rift virtual reality technology, which offers parents and teens the latest, most realistic virtual experience around how common distractions impact their ability to remain safe on the road. This marks the first time the Oculus Rift technology is being used in a driving simulator to educate people about distracted driving. The simulator, which is staged behind the wheel of a real Toyota vehicle, will be available at auto shows around the country;
- An **online pledge** for parents to promise to set the best example behind the wheel for their teens; and
- More ways parents and teens can share important safety tips on social media, including **animated GIFs and picture-based riddles**, which make learning about driving safety fun while informative.

"We are thrilled that parents and teens responded so positively to *TeenDrive365,*" said Marjorie Schussel, Corporate Marketing Director for Toyota. "Over the last year, we learned that once parents realize that they are the key to how their teen will drive, they crave support and guidance on how to be better role models. Our new resources are designed with this in mind and empower parents to be the drivers they want their teens to be so they can help keep them safe."

Created in partnership with agency 360i, *TeenDrive365* continues to be Toyota's largest campaign to address teen safety to date. It is being supported by a comprehensive integrated marketing campaign –that includes targeted media across traditional and online channels, such as national radio, online video, display, mobile and paid social advertising – to raise awareness and drive visitors to the web site. The campaign is further supported by custom content and high-profile sponsorships. It will be promoted across Toyota's branded social

communities, including on Facebook and Twitter.

Popular Video Challenge Engages the Creativity and Talent of Teens Nationwide

Today, Toyota, in partnership with Discovery Education, also launched the 2014-2015 *TeenDrive365* Video Challenge (formerly known as the Toyota Teen Driver Video Challenge). Now in its fourth year, the Video Challenge invites teens across the country to create short videos to inspire their friends to drive safely and avoid distractions.

The grand prize winner will receive a $15,000 cash prize and work with a Discovery film crew to reproduce his/her video as a professional, TV-ready PSA. The second place winner will be awarded a $10,000 cash prize along with a trip to attend a taping of a Velocity network show, and the third place winner will receive a $7,500 cash prize. A panel of judges from Discovery Education and Toyota, as well as educators and community leaders, will select the first, second and third place winners. The winners will be chosen based on the creativity, content and presentation of their videos.

Additionally, the public will have the opportunity to cast their votes for the People's Choice Award. Ten finalists will be chosen and their entries are posted online for public vote. The winner of the public vote will receive a $5,000 cash prize and a trip to see a taping of a Velocity network show.

"With the reduction of safe driving programs at many schools, Toyota's efforts to empower teens to make the right choices behind the wheel are more important than ever," said Bill Goodwyn, President and CEO at Discovery Education. "We know that when it comes to the issue of safe driving, teens play a major role in influencing the behavior of their peers. We are proud to partner with Toyota and educators nationwide on this critically important endeavor and know that their work is literally saving lives."

Last year, more than 1,000 videos were submitted by teens from all 50 states. Teens can submit entries today through March 16, 2015. Additional details can be found at www.TeenDrive365inschool.com.

In addition to new resources and the Video Challenge, *TeenDrive365* will continue to offer its existing teen driving tools such as:

- "The Cost of Driving Calculator", which helps parents teach their teens about the financial implications of life behind the wheel;
- Toyota's Mutual Driving Agreement, which encourages teens and parents to set expectations for safer behaviors while driving;
- *Heads Up!,* an online driving game, which demonstrates the dangers of multitasking while driving; and
- Safe driving events and resources offered around the country, including behind the wheel defensive driving courses and teen safety clinics in partnership with local Toyota dealerships.

TeenDrive365 is just one example of Toyota's commitment to educate and empower all people on the road to 'go safely,' with specialized initiatives for children (*Buckle Up For Life*), teens (*TeenDrive365*) and adults (AARP Driver Safety).

Related Links

"Parents Who Drive Bad Anonymous" Online Commercial
www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/dJ4BVnu-_QE
www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/eUTloWTDNB4

Animated Safety GIFs
http://safetygifs.tumblr.com/

“Masters of the Wheel” Video Series
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-tmJR4ik1w