

# Toyota's Free Safe Driving Program Educates Teens and Parents About Dangers of Distracted Driving

February 10, 2011

- Toyota's FREE, 2.5 hour, advanced teen driving skills program will be held in Sacramento, Calif., Torrance, Calif. and the Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas area
  - Since 2004, nearly 16,000 teens and parents have participated in the program
    - Registration is open online at [www.toyotadrivingexpectations.com](http://www.toyotadrivingexpectations.com)

TORRANCE, CALIF. (Feb. 10, 2011) – Committed to reducing teen driving fatalities and educating teens and parents about the dangers of distracted driving, Toyota is continuing its national FREE advanced teen driving skills program, Toyota Driving Expectations. Since the program began in 2004, nearly 16,000 teens and parents have gained critical defensive driving skills and learned firsthand how everyday distractions, to which new drivers are especially prone, can have unexpected, dangerous consequences.

In March, Toyota Driving Expectations events will be held at the following locations:

- Cal Expo in Sacramento, Calif., March 12 – 13
- Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. in Torrance, Calif., March 19 – 20
  - Bass Pro Shops in Grapevine, Texas, March 26 – 27

Participating teenagers must be between the ages of 15-19 and have a valid driver's license or learner's permit. Registration for Toyota Driving Expectations events in Sacramento, Calif. and Grapevine, Texas is currently open online at [www.toyotadrivingexpectations.com](http://www.toyotadrivingexpectations.com). Though the Torrance, Calif. event is at capacity, interested participants can still sign up for the waitlist, as well as the mailing list to be notified about future local Toyota Driving Expectations events.

## Program Overview

In the United States, the crash rate per mile driven for 16-19 year-olds is four times that of older drivers, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). Moreover, in 2009, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), more than 5,000 people were killed on U.S. roadways and an estimated additional 448,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes that were reported to have involved distracted driving. Within this statistic, the greatest proportion of distracted drivers was under the age of 20. In an effort to help young drivers develop safe driving habits, Toyota Driving Expectations goes beyond what is taught in standard driver education courses, putting newly permitted or licensed teens behind the wheel to face challenging, real-world scenarios in a secure environment. The program's curriculum is designed for teens and parents alike to:

- Learn defensive driving skills and accident avoidance techniques
- Identify the dangerous driving situations that they encounter daily
- Experience firsthand the dangers of distracted driving and understand the relationship between distraction and reaction time
- Understand vehicle dynamics and safety features

In an effort to foster an open dialogue between teens and parents about safe driving habits, a parent or guardian is required to attend the Toyota Driving Expectations program. As a result, parents learn the best practices to

promote responsible driving habits with their teen drivers, providing them with tips about how to continue improving driving skills at home.

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, as well as from direct teen and parent feedback at three highly successful pilot programs.

### **Quote**

“By bringing Toyota Driving Expectations to cities across the country, Toyota is committed to reducing the rate of fatalities and accidents among young drivers.” – Michael Rouse, Toyota’s vice president of philanthropy and community affairs

### **About Toyota**

Toyota (NYSE: TM) established operations in the United States in 1957 and currently operates 10 manufacturing plants. Toyota directly employs nearly 34,000 in the U.S. and its investment here is currently valued at more than \$18 billion, including sales and manufacturing operations, research and development, financial services and design. Toyota is committed to being a good corporate citizen in the communities where it does business and believes in supporting programs with long-term sustainable results. Toyota supports numerous organizations across the country, focusing on education, the environment and safety. Since 1991, Toyota has contributed more than \$493 million to philanthropic programs in the U.S. For more information on Toyota’s commitment to improving communities nationwide, visit [www.toyota.com/about/philanthropy](http://www.toyota.com/about/philanthropy).

### **About National Safety Council**

The National Safety Council ([www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)) saves lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes, communities and on the roads, through leadership, research, education and advocacy.