

## HOLIDAY WEEKEND MARKS START OF MOST DANGEROUS TIME ON ROADS

**Prom season, summer vacations combine to make driving dangerous; Teens most at-risk group for summer tragedy in a car**

**NEW YORK, May 22, 2014** -- The long Memorial Day holiday weekend, when an expected 36 million motorists will take to the roads, marks the start of one of the most dangerous times on streets and highways throughout the U.S., and teens are the greatest at-risk group of drivers. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of teen deaths, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports the incidence of fatal crashes involving teen drivers spikes during the summer months to two or three times the year-round average.

The National Road Safety Foundation, a non-profit group that develops safe driving programs for teens, offers some cautionary tips for young drivers during the busy prom, graduation and summer vacation season.

Even during a special celebration like a prom or graduation party, it is still illegal for young people under 21 to drink alcohol. Avoid using any other substances including drugs – legal or illegal - that could impair your ability to make good decisions.

Know your agenda and advise parents of your plans.

Plan ahead what you will say or do if someone offers you alcohol or another illegal drug. Be prepared to use a phrase like "No thanks" or "I want to remember this night." Don't feel awkward to ask for a soft drink, lemonade or water.

Ask a trusted parent or other adult to be near a phone and available prom night in case you need to call for a ride home.

Watch your date or driver to be sure he or she doesn't drink, since alcohol slows reaction time and impairs vision, judgment, and coordination. Don't be afraid to speak up if the driver seems to be impaired. Try to prevent him or her from driving, or make an excuse such as "I don't feel well" to get out of the car to find another way home.

The National Road Safety Foundation has a fast-paced video that warns teens of many of the driving risks they face during prom season and the summer vacation period. "Stay in the Picture" explains some of the risks and illustrates ways to avoid them. The 7-1/2 minute video can be downloaded free from the Foundation's site at [www.teenlane.org](http://www.teenlane.org). It's worth a look and sharing with friends and family as school ends and summer begins.

The National Road Safety Foundation, Inc. (NRSF), a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization founded more than 50 years ago, produces traffic safety programs on distracted driving, speed and aggression, impaired driving, drowsy driving, driver proficiency, pedestrian safety and a host of other safety issues. It distributes the programs free of charge to schools, police and traffic safety advocates, community groups and individuals. It also sponsors contests to engage teens in promoting safe driving to their peers and in their communities. For more information or to download free programs, visit [www.nrsf.org](http://www.nrsf.org) or [www.teenlane.org](http://www.teenlane.org).

