

Study Suggests State Laws Can Help Reduce Teens' Drinking and Driving



Two types of state laws can help reduce the risk of teens' drinking and driving, a new study suggests.

Graduated driver licensing laws, which help new drivers gain experience in less risky situations, and use-and-lose laws, which allow the suspension of a teen's driver license if they are caught using alcohol, were both found effective.

Researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis looked at the drinking and driving behaviors of more than 220,000 teens ages 16 and 17, HealthDay reports.

"The key finding of our study was that states with restrictive [graduated driver licensing] laws and use-and-lose laws had less youth who reported driving after drinking any alcohol or riding in a car with a driver who had been drinking alcohol," study author Patricia Cavazos-Rehg said in a journal news release.

"In other words, a student in a state with the strongest [graduated driver licensing] and use-and-lose laws would be approximately half as likely as a student in a state with the weakest laws to drive after drinking." She said she hoped the findings provide evidence for adopting and/or strengthening these laws.

The researchers noted that while teens make up less than 5 percent of licensed drivers in the United States, they account for about 20 percent of motor vehicle crashes. The findings appear in the journal *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*.

To learn more about Alcohol, Drugs and Youth, [click here](#).