



Parent-Teen Homework Assignments to Increase Driver Safety

INFORMATION SHEET FOR HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #4

KEYS to... Adverse Driving Conditions

Purpose

To increase the safety of everyone involved, families should ensure that teens have the safety knowledge, skills, & behaviors related to Adverse Driving Conditions.

- ♦ **Goal for Parent:** Make it clear to your teen that you expect her/him to be a safe driver. For Activity #4, assess your teen's knowledge, skills, & behaviors related to adverse driving conditions.
- ♦ **Goal for Teen:** Fully explain to your parents the concepts & show them the procedures that you have learned in driver education. For Activity #4, show your parents that you have the knowledge, skills, & behaviors for adverse driving conditions.

Instructions

Completing activities may take some time & energy, but the safety impact will be long-lasting!

- ♦ **TOGETHER:** Parents & teens need to: (1) read over this Information Sheet, (2) fully & thoroughly perform the parent-teen activities listed on the Assignment Sheet for Homework Assignment #4, & (3) complete & turn in the Assignment Sheet to your driver education class.
- ♦ **As your family completes the activities, remember to REMAIN PATIENT with each other! This is a new experience for both parents & teens!**

Information for Homework Assignment #4: Adverse Weather Conditions

Box A: Drive Cautiously in Adverse Weather

Because of their inexperience, teen drivers are at high risk for weather-related crashes.

Risks associated with adverse weather conditions

- ♦ Rain, snow, & ice make it more difficult to start, stop, or turn, especially when the temperature is close to freezing (29-32° F)
- ♦ On wet roads, maneuvers taken at normal "dry pavement" speeds can throw the vehicle out of control.
- ♦ Even small amounts of precipitation make roads slippery. "Black ice"—patches of road that look wet but are actually icy—can be especially dangerous.
- ♦ Rain, fog, & sun glare make it more difficult to see, detect hazards, & be seen by other drivers.
- ♦ In all adverse weather conditions, safe following & stopping distances increase dramatically.
- ♦ The most common weather-related factor in teen crashes is rain.

Tips for driving in snow, sleet, or icy conditions

- ♦ Drive with your headlights on so others may identify you easier.
- ♦ Wear sunglasses to reduce the glare off of ice or snow.
- ♦ Slowly put the vehicle in motion.
- ♦ Slow down earlier before entering a curve or turning.
- ♦ Keep at least 3 times the normal driving distance from other vehicles.
- ♦ Signal your intentions (e.g., to turn) to other roadway users sooner.
- ♦ Expect delays at lights & intersections.
- ♦ Remember that bridges, overpasses, & underpasses freeze first.
- ♦ Watch for "black ice," which is the thin coating of ice that forms in shaded spots, creating a slippery surface that may be hard to see.
- ♦ SLOW DOWN & be more attentive!

Teens should have extensive supervised practice in adverse weather conditions before they are allowed to drive in them on their own.

Box B: Be Ready for Wintry Conditions

It is important to keep your vehicle ready for wintry conditions.

Get your car ready for wintry conditions

- ♦ Check your car's battery, antifreeze, wipers, windshield washer fluid, ignition system, thermostat, lights, emergency lights, exhaust system, heater, brakes, defroster, & oil.
- ♦ Make sure your tires have adequate tread & air pressure.
- ♦ Keep your fuel tank at least half full to avoid fuel line freeze-up.
- ♦ Let your car warm up for 5 minutes (any longer just wastes fuel), but not in an enclosed area such as garage.
- ♦ Keep the following in your car: a windshield scraper & small broom for ice & snow removal; gloves; blankets; a flashlight with extra batteries; booster cables; small sack of sand or kitty litter for traction (or use bird seed—it helps with traction, it melts ice/snow because it is salty, & it feeds the birds when you leave it behind!); & a cell phone for emergencies.

If caught in a blizzard (or your vehicle dies)

- ♦ Turn on your hazard lights.
- ♦ Do not search for assistance unless help is visible within 100 yards.
- ♦ Run your engine & heater to keep warm for about 10 minutes each hour.
- ♦ Open a downwind window slightly for ventilation & to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- ♦ Keep the exhaust pipe clear of anything (snow, mud, etc.).

Information for Homework Assignment #4: More Adverse Driving Conditions

Box C: Drive Cautiously at Dawn, Dusk, & Night

Because they lack experience, teens are at high-risk for crashes in “dark” conditions.

Risks associated with driving at dawn, dusk, or night

- ♦ Visibility is reduced & people & things look different & are harder to see & to identify.
- ♦ Distances & speeds are harder to judge.
- ♦ Changes in temperature causes dew, wetness, & black ice.
- ♦ There may be too much lighting in urban/busy areas (street lights, headlights, neon signs, etc.) & too little in rural areas.
- ♦ More unsafe & impaired drivers are on the roads at night.
- ♦ Crashes at night are much more likely to involve high speeds & end in serious injury or death.
- ♦ The risk of being in a fatal crash is highest for teens between 9 p.m. & 6 a.m. because of reduced visibility, higher speeds, drowsiness, or lack of attention.

Tips for driving at dawn, dusk, or night

- ♦ Turn on your headlights. Use high beams when there are no oncoming vehicles or vehicles ahead of you.
- ♦ To help keep from “fixating” on objects, keep your eyes moving (even more so than during the day).
- ♦ When searching your intended path-of-travel, look beyond headlights, & look for the unexpected such as curves, turns, animals, vehicles without headlights on, etc.
- ♦ Be aware that animals are more active around roadways at dawn & dusk.
- ♦ Glance to the right to avoid the glare of headlights of oncoming cars.
- ♦ Help others to pass safely by slowing & moving to the right of your lane when it is safe for the vehicle to pass.

Teens should have extensive supervised practice in dawn, dusk, & nighttime driving conditions before they are allowed to drive at night on their own.

Box D: Understand Driving Challenges for Conditions

Because they lack experience, teens may not respond well to various challenging driving conditions.

Risks associated with various road & traffic conditions

- ♦ The road itself—no painted lines on the road, no street lights, no shoulders for stopping, narrow shoulders, steep drop-off on side of road
- ♦ Traffic conditions—high-speed traffic, stopped traffic, slowing traffic, oncoming traffic
- ♦ Other roadway users—pedestrians, motorcyclists, bicyclists, animals
- ♦ Obstructions to line-of-sight or path-of-travel—trees on the side of road, buildings on side of road, parked vehicles, construction areas

Tips for driving in adverse weather, light, road & traffic conditions

- ♦ **Drive with your headlights on so others may identify you easier.**
- ♦ **Slow down!**
- ♦ **Pay attention & keep your eyes searching!**
- ♦ **Remember, any abrupt changes in steering, speed control, or lane position can result in reduced vehicle control or an out-of-control vehicle.**

Risks associated with driving with teen passengers

- ♦ The likelihood of risk-taking behaviors such as speeding, tailgating, or weaving in & out of traffic is increased with teen passengers.
- ♦ Teen passengers may unintentionally encourage teen drivers to speed, show off, play loud music, or not pay enough attention to driving.
- ♦ Teen passengers may persuade or challenge teen drivers to do risky things, including running red lights or racing other vehicles.
- ♦ Teen passengers may directly interfere with driving such as grabbing the steering wheel.
- ♦ Teen crash rates are lowest with no teen passengers, increase with one teen passenger, & are MUCH greater with two or more teen passengers.
- ♦ For teens, crashes are 11 times more likely when driving at night with teen passengers than driving during the daytime without any passengers.

Family Activities to Increase Teen Driver Safety: For Now & In the Future

Families should complete parent-teen homework assignments to assess teen knowledge & practice of driver safety.

For Homework Assignment #4, teens will talk to parents about how to do the following:

- ♦ Identify various risk conditions & options for speed control & lane position

Families should talk about driver safety OFTEN.

Parents & teens should discuss the following:

- ☐ The risks related to driving in adverse weather conditions
- ☐ The risks related to driving in dawn/dusk/nighttime conditions
- ☐ The risks related to various road & traffic conditions
- ☐ The risk related to driving with teen passengers

Families should supervise driving under high-risk conditions OFTEN.

- ☐ Teens should have extensive supervised practice in adverse driving conditions before they drive in them on their own
 - Adverse weather conditions
 - Dawn, dusk, or night driving conditions
 - Various road & traffic conditions
- ☐ Once licensed, teens should have extensive experience driving in low-risk conditions—fair weather conditions, daylight driving, NO PASSENGERS, & fair road & traffic conditions—before they drive under adverse driving conditions

Families should set expectations for driver safety EARLY.

MAKE CLEAR that teens are expected to:

- ☐ Never put yourself or others at increased risk by making unnecessary trips in adverse weather
- ☐ Pay attention while driving at dawn, dusk, or night
- ☐ Pay attention while driving with teen passengers
- ☐ Call home if you cannot get home safely (Parent will arrange a safe ride home)

MAKE CLEAR that teens who violate safety expectations will:

- ☐ Lose driving privileges for _____
(write in amount of time)
- ☐ Other: _____
(write in what & amount of time)



Parent-Teen Homework Assignments to Increase Driver Safety *ASSIGNMENT SHEET FOR HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #4* *Adverse Driving Conditions*

Date:

Student:

Parent:

Phone number:

Instructions

Together, parent & teen need to: (1) read over the Information Sheet for Homework Assignment #4, (2) fully & thoroughly perform the parent-teen activities listed on this Assignment Sheet, & (3) complete & turn in this Assignment Sheet to your driver education class.

- ♦ **Materials needed:** Parent, teen, this assignment sheet, the **Driving Pictures** handout, pencil or pen, & vehicle.
- ♦ **Time needed:** Each activity can take 10-30 minutes & can be done separately, at different times.
- ♦ **Directions:** After completing each activity, check (☑) the box to show that it was completed & then parent rates teen's performance as "good," "fair," or "needs improvement." No matter what the rating, please list comments about teen's performance to help us keep track.
- ♦ **Grading:** Grading of Homework Assignment #4 is based **ONLY on completing the activities, not on the actual ratings for teen progress**. Thus, a "needs improvement" rating will not lower your teen's grade. This information is important for tracking student progress & providing you with feedback for ways to improve.
- ♦ **Driving Activities:** For the activities that involve driving, parent should drive so teen can focus on the activity & write down answers. If teen drives, parent will need to write down the answers that teen gives.

☑	Activities for Adverse Driving Conditions (Use info from Boxes A-D on the Information Sheet)	Rating (☑) NI = Needs Improvement			
☑	Family Discussion: Adverse Driving Conditions. To assess knowledge, teen tells parent about each of the following. Parent checks accuracy using information from Boxes A & B on the Information Sheet	Good	Fair	NI	Comments
☐	The risks related to driving in adverse weather conditions & ways to reduce them.	☐	☐	☐	
☐	The risks related to driving in nighttime conditions & ways to reduce them.	☐	☐	☐	
☐	The risks related to various road & traffic conditions & ways to reduce them.	☐	☐	☐	
☐	The risks related to driving with teen passengers & ways to reduce them.	☐	☐	☐	
☑	Family Exercise: Driving Pictures. To assess skill, use the Driving Pictures handout. With it, parent & teen do each of the following for each picture.	Good	Fair	NI	Comments
☐	Number all driving conditions found in pictures. Note: Not all 29 conditions will be found on each picture.	☐	☐	☐	
☐	Determine the 3 most problematic driving conditions	☐	☐	☐	
☐	For those 3 conditions, determine the appropriate speed control option (keep the same speed, decrease speed—either cover brake or apply brake, or increase speed) & lane position (middle/lane position 1, left/lane position 2, or right/lane position 3)	☐	☐	☐	
☑	Family Exercise: Vehicle Safety Kits. For family peace of mind, together, parent & teen do each of the following.	Good	Fair	NI	Comments
☐	Put together "kits" for each family vehicle that include: first aid kit; reflective triangles; air pressure gauge; windshield scraper; small broom for ice & snow removal; gloves; blankets; water & snacks; a flashlight with extra batteries; small sack of sand, kitty litter, or bird seed for traction; emergency phone numbers (tow truck, etc); & a cell phone.	☐	☐	☐	
☐	Make sure each vehicle has an owner's manual (you can get one online or at a dealership), a jack, the correct lug wrench, something to block tires with, an aired-up spare tire, & jumper cables	☐	☐	☐	

☒	Driving Activity: Driving Conditions. To assess skill, parent drives several predetermined routes (choose 3 or 4 of the following trips) while teen sits in the front passenger seat & (1) points out & (2) writes down the numbers for the 29 driving conditions from the list below that are found on those routes. Note: not all driving conditions will be found on all trips.	Good	Fair	NI	Comments
☐	To school List conditions (write down the numbers):	☐	☐	☐	
☐	Back from school List conditions (write down the numbers):	☐	☐	☐	
☐	To grocery store or other store List conditions (write down the numbers):	☐	☐	☐	
☐	Back from grocery store or other store List conditions (write down the numbers):	☐	☐	☐	
☐	To friend's or family member's house List conditions (write down the numbers):	☐	☐	☐	
☐	Back from friend's or family member's house List conditions (write down the numbers):	☐	☐	☐	
☐	To entertainment place List conditions (write down the numbers):	☐	☐	☐	
☐	Back from entertainment place List conditions (write down the numbers):	☐	☐	☐	

Driving Conditions Note: not all driving conditions will be used for all trips	<u>Time of day</u> 1. early in morning 2. bright sun/glare 3. late in afternoon 4. nighttime <u>Weather conditions</u> 5. rain 6. snow/ice on road 7. black ice possible	<u>Road conditions</u> 8. intersection 9. hill crest 10. curve in road 11. no street lights 12. no painted lane lines 13. overpasses or bridges 14. unusable or unforgiving shoulders 15. steep dropoffs on side of road	<u>Traffic conditions</u> 16. tailgating 17. heavy traffic 18. oncoming traffic 19. pedestrians 20. motorcyclists 21. bicyclists 22. animals	<u>Obstructions to sight</u> 23. windows fogged 24. scenery 25. trees on side of road 26. buildings on side of road 27. parked vehicles 28. construction area 29. reduced visibility for other reasons
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