

## **ANSWER KEY & REAL TALK:**

### **1. D**

Car accidents take more teen lives than all other causes, and teens die in car accidents in larger proportions than any other driving group. Motor vehicle accidents account for more than one in three teen deaths. In 2007, 6,982 teens were killed in car accidents – that means **19 teens are killed every day**.

### **2. C**

Per mile driven, teen drivers ages 16 to 19 are four times more likely than older drivers to crash. Teens make up only 10% of the U.S. population, but suffer 14% of all vehicular fatalities and 20% of all reported accidents.

### **3. D**

1.6 million teens (ages 16-20) were involved in automobile accidents in 2006, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. That means that **every minute, three teens** are in an auto accident. In fact, over 400,000 teens are **injured** in accidents every year. In other words, on average **every hour** 45 teens are injured in a car accident.

### **4. D**

**One in five**, or 20 percent, of 16-year-old drivers will be involved in an accident at some point during their first year of driving.

### **5. C**

The fatality rate for drivers ages 16 to 19, based on miles driven, is **four times** higher than for drivers ages 25 to 69.

### **6. A**

Accident rates for young drivers are high largely because of their inexperience with driving. New drivers are more likely to engage in risky driving practices such as speeding and distracted driving. At the same time, teens' lack of experience behind the wheel makes it difficult for them to recognize and respond to hazards.

### **7. D**

Nearly 80% of accidents and 65% of near-accidents involved some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the event.

### **8. G**

The most common distraction for drivers is the use of cell phones. Other distractions include reaching for a moving object, which increases the risk of an accident or near-accident by 9 times; looking at an external object, which increases the risk by 3.7 times; reading and applying make up, both which increase the risk by 3 times; dialing a hand-held device (typically a cell phone), which increases risk by almost 3 times; and talking or listening on a hand-held device, which increases risk by 1.3 times.

### **9. FALSE. Texting while driving is now *just as dangerous as drinking and driving*.**

A 2007 study conducted by SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) and Liberty Mutual Insurance Group found that text-messaging while driving is becoming as dangerous

as drinking and driving, in terms of inhibiting a teen's driving abilities. Alarming, 46 percent of teens admitted that they text-message while driving, according to an AAA study which appeared in *Seventeen* magazine's August 2007 issue.

#### 10. D

The risk of fatal accidents is highest at age 16. In fact, the accident rate per mile driven is more than twice as high for 16-year-olds as it is for 18 and 19-year-olds. 16-year-olds also have almost 10 times the accident risk of drivers age 30-59. The accident fatality rate is highest within the first six months after licensure, and remains high through age 24.

#### 11. TRUE

Just one other teen in the car increases the fatal accident risk by 50 percent. Accident risk for teen drivers increases incrementally with one, two, three or more passengers. With three or more, fatal accident risk is about three times higher than when a teen is driving alone.

#### 12. A

Nearly 90,000 pedestrians are injured or killed in motor vehicle accidents each year in the United States, with a majority of these accidents taking place in urban areas. That means that **10 pedestrians** are injured or killed **every hour** of every day. Approximately 5,900 pedestrians are killed by automobiles every year and 84,000 suffer nonfatal injuries. Almost one-third of these victims are children under the age of 15, yet they represent only about 15% of the U.S. population

#### 13. FALSE. The number is closer to two-thirds of teens killed were not wearing seatbelts.

Teens buckle up far less frequently than adults do. Despite efforts aimed at increasing belt use among teens, actual seat belt use among teens and young adults (16 to 24 years old) stood at 76 percent in 2006 – the **lowest** of any age group. In fact, in 2006 the majority (58%) of young people 16 to 20 years old involved in fatal motor vehicle accidents were not buckled in. In 2007, 72 percent of the restrained passengers involved in fatal accidents survived, as compared to 38 percent of the unrestrained passengers.

#### 14. E

Over 50% of teen driving deaths occur on the weekend. In fact, during a typical weekend, an average of **one teen dies each hour** in a car accident.

#### 15. Graduated Driver's License

The GDL is a system designed to phase in young beginners to full driving privileges as they become more mature and develop their driving skills. There are three stages to a graduated system: a supervised learner's period; an intermediate license (after passing the driver test) that limits driving in high-risk situations except under supervision; and then a license with full privileges, available after completing the first two stages. In U.S. states that have adopted elements of graduated licensing, studies have found **accident reductions of about 10-30 percent**. This means if every state implemented the GDL system, upwards of **2,000 teen lives would be saved** every year. Currently, 44 states and the District of Columbia have implemented graduated driver licensing.

\*Statistics and information compiled from: *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Center for Statistics & Analysis, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Insurance Information Institute, National Safety Council, The Center for Injury Research and Prevention at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and the Traffic Injury Research Foundation.*