

Dear Educator,

When it comes to driving safety, we tend to think of driver responsibilities. Yet passengers also have responsibilities—from wearing seat belts and not distracting the driver, to speaking up if a driver (or another passenger) is being reckless, to refusing to ride with a driver who is unsafe or should not be behind the wheel.

This year, the National Road Safety Foundation (NRSF) is focusing its annual Drive2Life PSA Contest on passengers and empowering them to speak up for safe driving. NRSF has teamed up with the American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association (ADTSEA) to create a program that provides students with important passenger safety facts and tips to help them avoid unsafe situations. The activities also support language arts, health, media, and communication lessons.

The program concludes with an activity that challenges students to enter the **2024 Drive2Life PSA Contest** by writing a short script (not more than two pages) for a 30-second video that will empower passengers to speak up for driving safety. All students ages 13 to 19 in grades 6–12 can enter for the chance to win one of these great prizes:

- **Grand Prize:** The Grand Prize winner will receive a cash prize of \$2,000, and a trip to New York City (accompanied by a parent or a legal guardian) and the chance to work with an Emmy Award-winning producer to transform his/her entry into a 30-second video! The winner and PSA video will be featured on Teen Kids News.
- **Runner-up Prizes:** Four student runners-up (two from grades 6-8 and two from grades 9-12) will receive \$500 each and will have their name, school, city, state, and PSA title posted on the NRSF website.
- **Teacher Prizes:** The teacher of each student winner will receive a \$100 Visa gift card!

The **contest deadline is March 25, 2024**. Visit www.nrsf.org/contests/drive2life for complete contest details, entry forms, and the official rules.

We hope you will share this program with other teachers in your school. And please let us know your opinion of these learning materials by emailing us at feedback@nrsf.org. We look forward to your comments.

Sincerely,

Michelle Anderson
The National Road Safety Foundation



For questions, contact NRSF toll free at 866-723-3728 or by email at feedback@nrsf.org



PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Available at nrsf.org/contests/drive2life

- This two-page teacher's guide
- A reproducible student activity sheet
- A reproducible take-home letter for parents/caregivers
- **Drive2Life PSA Contest** Overview, Entry Form, and Official Rules
- PSA lesson and student handouts
- Standards alignment chart
- Program feedback form at nrsf.org/contests/drive2life

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Raise awareness and empower students to speak up and intervene if a driver or other passengers are being unsafe
- Support language, communication, and creative skills with the **2024 Drive2Life PSA Contest**

HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM

Download, photocopy, and distribute the reproducible activity sheet to all students. Prepare the materials for the activity. Distribute the take-home letter to help parents and guardians continue the conversation at home.

USING THE ACTIVITY SHEET PASSENGERS: SPEAK UP FOR SAFE DRIVING!

Start the activity by asking students what they do when they're a passenger in a car. Ask: *Do you buckle your seat belt automatically? Do you talk a lot? Are you aware of the level or volume of your voice? Do you share things with the driver to look at while driving, like text messages and images?* Have the students reflect on the questions; then ask how they can support the driver as a passenger.

Next, if you have student drivers, ask them what they experience when they have passengers in the car. Ask: *Do passengers distract you? Are the passengers considerate? Do you set any parameters or rules for your passengers to help you focus on driving?*

Statistics Show That In 2020:*

- 16% of all traffic fatalities were passengers in vehicles.
- 56% of the deaths of teenage passengers in passenger vehicles occurred in vehicles driven by another teenager.
- 24% of deaths in passenger vehicles (cars, SUVs, pickups, vans, and minivans) were passengers.
- 6,275 vehicle passengers were killed in crashes.

**SPEAK UP
FOR SAFE
DRIVING**



*Source: www.nationalpassengersafety.org

Explain that passengers share a responsibility for road safety with drivers. Ask the students: *How can passengers demonstrate their responsibility for road safety?* Next, distribute the activity sheet. Review the directions for Part 1, and then have the students complete the chart on their own or with a partner. Before proceeding to Part 2, review the answers and ask students to correct any unsafe behaviors.

Answers: Part 1:

1. Safe
2. Unsafe – Passengers and drivers should speak at a conversational level.
3. Unsafe – Passengers should not distract the driver by playing with the radio station.
4. Safe
5. Safe
6. Safe
7. Unsafe – Passengers should encourage the driver to keep their eyes on the road; the text can wait or be read aloud if important.
8. Safe
9. Unsafe – Passengers who are being loud and moving around in the car can distract the driver; they should act calmly and speak at a conversational level.
10. Unsafe – Passengers should be alert and not let friends who are extremely tired drive; they should make other arrangements for themselves and the driver.

Using examples of unsafe drivers from the chart (drivers impaired, tired, talking on the phone, driving recklessly), ask students: *What should the passengers in these situations do to keep themselves and the driver safe?* Share the following answers with students if they don't suggest them:

- Tell the friend not to drive and that they won't get into the car with them.
- Tell the friend they're not comfortable driving with them.
- Speak up and do not let an impaired friend drive.
- Remind the friend of the possible consequences and that it's not worth it.
- Take the car keys.
- Offer an alternative or arrange another ride for themselves and their friend.
- Tell the friend to stop the car so that they can get out if the driver becomes reckless.
- Call their family for a ride.

For passengers who may not be comfortable speaking up, ask students what they might do to avoid getting in a car with an impaired driver or to get out of the car if a friend is being a reckless or unsafe driver. Teens might:

- Create a "safe word" with their families that they can text to them signaling that they need help. The parent/caregiver will then call explaining that they need the teen to come home and that they will pick them up.
- Give the driver a reason to stop the car by using one of the "three Ps"—say "I have to pee" or "I have to puke" or "I hear the police" to make the driver stop.

Explain to students that it's not always easy to speak up to our friends, but remind them that in these situations, their lives and their friend's life (the driver) are at stake, as well as the safety and



well-being of other people that they might encounter on the road. Practicing how to respond in these situations can help prepare us to speak up when it matters.

Have students work in teams to complete Part 2 and take turns role-playing the passenger and the driver. Then have them share their responses to help reinforce the importance of speaking up in these potentially dangerous situations. Answers will vary.

TAKE-HOME LETTER

We encourage you to make copies of the take-home letter or include a link to it in email communications with parents and caregivers to inform them about Drive2Life and provide them with tips for talking with their children about passengers speaking up for safe driving to help keep your community safe.



2024 DRIVE2LIFE PSA CONTEST

To enter the **Drive2Life PSA Contest**, students ages 13 to 19 in grades 6–12 must write a script not more than two pages on 8.5 x11-inch paper for a 30-second PSA video to empower passengers to speak up for safe driving. See the Contest Overview, Entry Form, and Official Rules at nrsf.org/contests/drive2life for contest details and entry information. Entries may be submitted online or by mail by teachers or parents/caregivers.

Deadline: Entries submitted online must be received by 11:59 p.m. ET on March 25, 2024. Entries submitted by mail must be postmarked by March 25, 2024, and received by April 1, 2024. For a supporting lesson on creating PSAs, download the PSA Lesson at nrsf.org/contests/drive2life

RESOURCES

- National Road Safety Foundation – nrsf.org
- American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association – adtsea.org
- We Save Lives – wesavelives.org
- NationalPassengerSafety.org