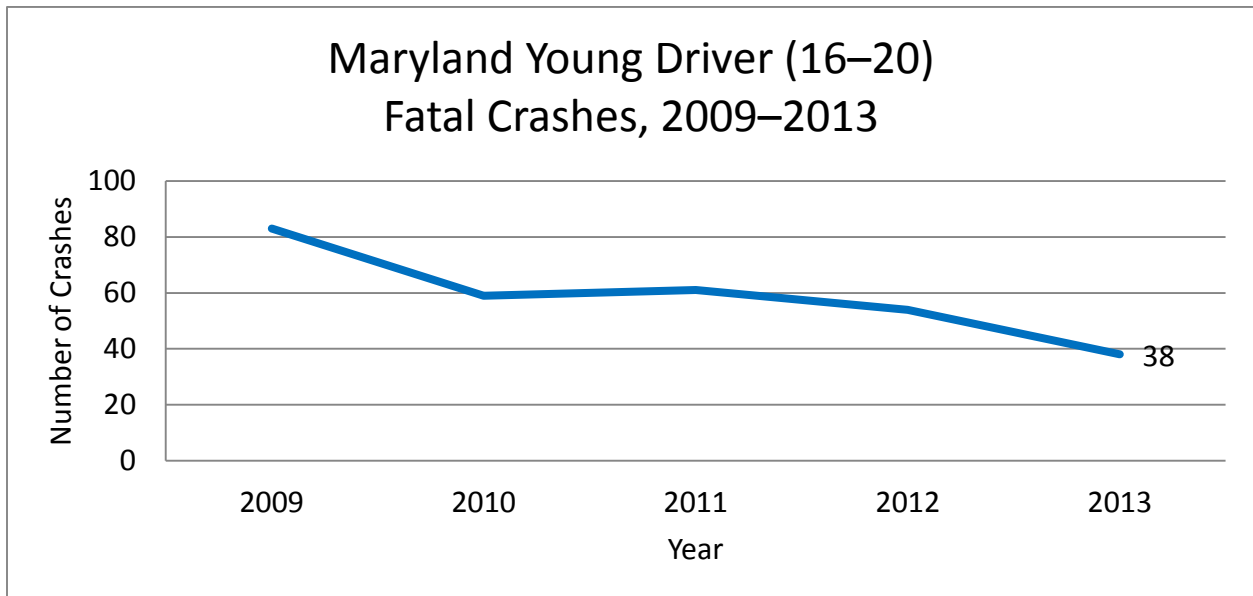
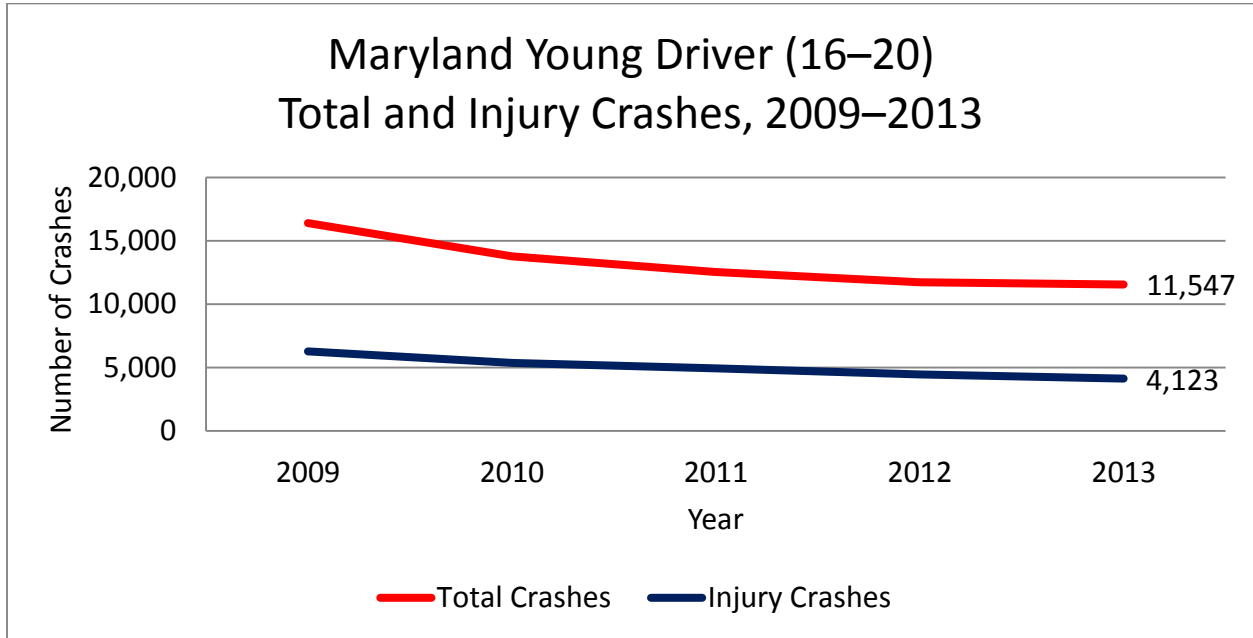


## YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY IN MARYLAND

### THE FACTS

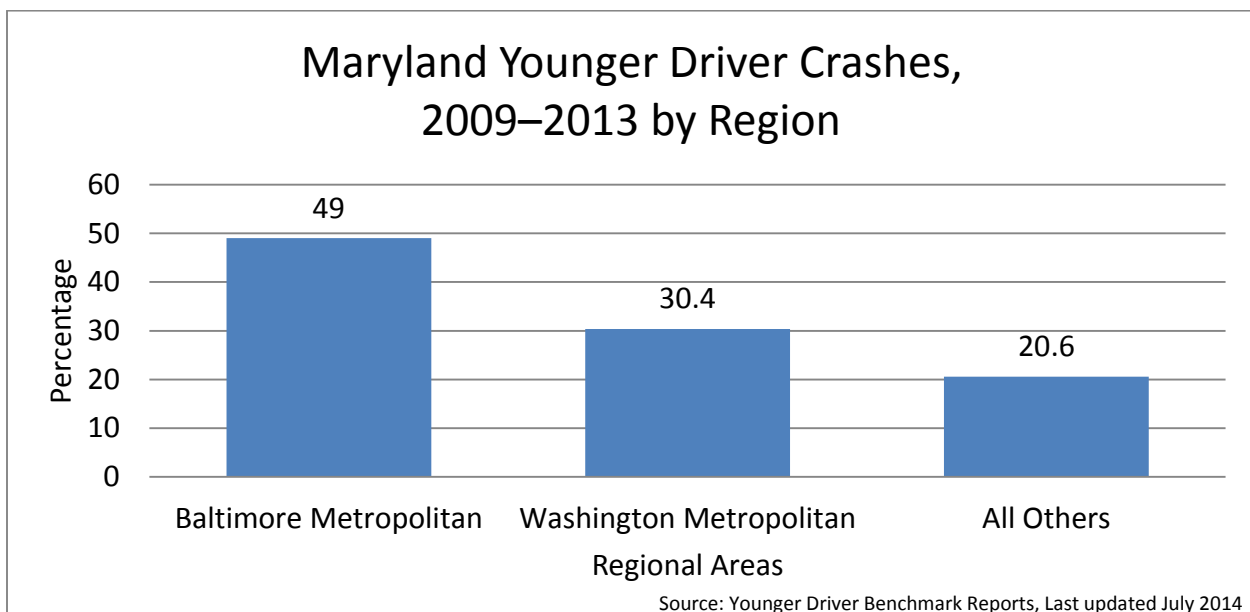


- **Motor vehicle crashes are a huge threat to public health.** Over the past decade, the number of crashes reported on the nation’s roadways has declined annually. However, motor vehicle crashes continue to be a leading cause of death in the United States<sup>1</sup>. In 2012, approximately 5.6 million crashes were reported; approximately 30 percent resulted in an injury or fatality<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> CDC National Vital Statistics Reports – 10 Leading Causes of Death, United States, 2012

<sup>2</sup> NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts – Overview DOT HS 812 016

- **The number of young driver-involved crashes is declining.** Consistent with Maryland’s statewide trend, average annual crashes involving young drivers (16–20) have steadily declined since 2009. However, injury crashes among younger drivers, on average, remained higher than the annual state average (36 percent vs. 33 percent).
- **Fatal crashes are more prevalent among young drivers as compared to the state.** In 2013, drivers age 16–20 were involved in over 11,500 crashes, with over 36 percent resulting in an injury or fatality.
- **Metropolitan areas have the highest concentration of crashes involving young drivers<sup>3</sup>.** From 2011 to 2013, crashes involving young drivers were most concentrated in Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties. On average, nearly 16 percent of all young driver-related crashes occurred in Baltimore County.



- **Young driver-involved injury and fatal crashes increased during the warmer months.** Over the past five years, young drivers involved in crashes were spread relatively evenly over the calendar year, similar to the statewide distribution. However, during the spring and summer, the number of young driver-involved in crashes resulting in injuries increased beginning in May. Nearly 20 percent of all injury crashes involving a young driver occurred between May and June.

Nearly **38 percent** of all injury crashes involving a **young driver** occurred between **May to August.**

<sup>3</sup> Baltimore Metropolitan area is comprised of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard Counties, and Baltimore City as designated by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. The Washington Metropolitan Area is defined as Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties as designated by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

- **Young male drivers are involved in more deadly crashes than females.** Over 55 percent of all young drivers involved in crashes were male. Young male drivers were involved in nearly 4 times as many fatal crashes as female drivers of the same age.

## BACKGROUND

Young driver crashes, injuries, and fatalities in Maryland have been generally declining the past few years. However, young driver issues remain a concern in many communities across the state and country. The focus of young driver traffic safety programs involves Maryland's Graduated Licensing System (GLS).

This system goes beyond traditional driver education to involve young people and their parents, law enforcement, safety professionals and educators in addressing this high-risk demographic. Approximately 1,500 skills are needed to drive a motor vehicle including: observation, perception, interpretation, reaction and anticipation.

Scientific research supports that these important cognitive and motor skills do not occur in adults until the mid-to-late 20's. Through Maryland's GLS, young drivers are able to get knowledge and experience to help them become safer behind the wheel and driving well into adulthood.

## YOUNG DRIVER LAWS

- **Maryland's Rookie Driver/Graduated Driver's Licensing System (GLS) Laws**
  - GLS laws provide a solid foundation for protecting Maryland's newest and most inexperienced drivers. GLS has been shown to reduce crashes by young drivers.
  - Maryland GLS laws currently specify the following controls for young drivers:
    - The holding period for a learner's permit is nine months;
      - All passengers of a learner's permit driver must be properly restrained by a seat belt or in a child safety seat.
    - The Provisional License Age is 16 years, six months;
      - Drivers with a Provisional License are not allowed to have passengers under the age of 18 during the first five months (151 days) of the provisional period, unless accompanied by a **qualified supervising driver** or the passengers are **direct family members**.
    - The Full Licensure Age is 18 years of age;
      - Everyone must be properly restrained by a seat belt or in a child safety seat.
- **Underage Drinking and Fake ID Laws**
  - Drivers under age 21 that are found to have purchased, possessed or consumed alcohol, face a fine of \$500 for a first offense and \$1,000 for subsequent offenses.
    - If under 21 and in possession of a fake ID, an offender faces:
      1. A fine of up to \$500;

- 2. Up to two months in prison;
  - 3. 12 points assessed to a license; and
  - 4. Driver's license suspension or revocation.
- If caught selling fake IDs, an offender faces:
  - 1. A fine of up to \$2000 for **each** fake ID sold;
  - 2. Up to two years in jail for **each** fake ID sold; and
  - 3. The offender is subject to prosecution for violating federal and homeland security laws.
- If over 21 and knowingly furnishing alcohol to a minor, an offender faces:
  - 1. A fine of up to \$2,500 for the first violation; and
  - 2. A fine of up to \$5,000 for a second or subsequent violation.
- **Ignition Interlock**
  - Anyone under age 21 who violates the alcohol restriction must automatically participate in the ignition interlock program or face suspension.
  - An ignition interlock is a device that is installed in vehicles of people who have been convicted of driving while impaired, which prevents the vehicle from starting if alcohol is detected on the driver's breath.
  - The driver must blow into the device, to start the ignition, and if his or her breath alcohol level exceeds the accepted level set on the device, the vehicle will not start.
  - Ignition interlocks are associated with about a 70 percent reduction in arrest rates for impaired driving, while the device is installed in the vehicle.
  - Young drivers convicted of DUI **MUST** participate in the MVA Ignition Interlock Program.
  - If an assignment to install an ignition interlock is for a second alcohol violation in 5 years, the duration of participation in the ignition interlock program is determined by how many times they have been assigned to interlock due to one of these violations.

## YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY PROGRAMS

- **Existing young driver programs focus on four major areas:**
  - Driving skill and decision-making
  - Occupant protection
  - Impaired driving
  - Maryland's Graduated Licensing System (GLS)
- A wide variety of high school-based programs have been implemented to address impaired driving, including mock crashes, impaired driving simulators, Fatal Vision goggles simulation exercises, crash dynamics and promotion of alcohol-free after-Prom parties.
- Various high schools across Maryland also participate in the *Make It Click* program in partnership with local law enforcement to promote safety belt use in those schools.

- High school parking permit programs are also conducted in various high schools throughout Maryland:
  - Parents and student drivers are encouraged to sign a parent-teen driving agreement to help teens commit to safe driving and respect parental limits.
  - Drivers who receive citations for unsafe driving are subject to progressive sanctions in some programs, including the potential loss of parking privileges.
  
- Alcohol Compliance Enforcement actions and saturation patrols targeting underage drinking are conducted across the State, with particular focus from April through June – the high school Prom and Graduation season.
  
- **MARYLAND’S ROOKIE DRIVER/GRADUATED LICENSING SYSTEM (GLS)**
  - A critical element in young driver safety is parent involvement.
  - Parents of teen drivers need to be actively involved in the young driver learning process – and not depend on driver education alone.
  - Parents should continue to practice driving with their young driver even after they get their provisional licenses so they can gain as much experience as possible with different road conditions and situations.
  - The Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration encourages the use of a parent/teen driving contract clearly outlining expectations and repercussions.
  - Maryland’s GLS law system is designed to work with continual proactive enforcement by parents.

## YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY TIPS

- **TIPS FOR PARENTS**
  - **Don’t rely solely on driver education.** Driver’s education is only ONE piece of learning to drive – It does provide the basic skills necessary to drive, and then it’s up to parents to provide additional practice and close monitoring of their teen’s driving to help them gain experience.
  
  - **Require seat belt use all the time.** Although a teen may buckle up with a parent in the car, seat belts may not be used all of the time, especially when a teen is with peers. Seat belt use is lowest among teens than any other age group.
  
  - **Restrict night driving.** Most young drivers’ nighttime fatal crashes occur from 9 p.m. to midnight. So, limit your teen’s driving after 9 p.m. with a parent teen driving agreement.
  
  - **Restrict passengers.** Teen passengers can distract a novice driver or lead to increased risk taking. About six of every ten teenage passenger deaths occur in crashes involving teen drivers.
  
  - **Supervise practice driving.** Plan practice sessions in a variety of scenarios, including nighttime driving and driving in inclement weather. Supervised practice should be

spread over at least nine months and continue after a teen graduates from a learner's permit to a provisional license.

- **Discuss and instill zero tolerance for driving after drinking.** Make it clear that it's illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to drink and it is extremely dangerous and illegal for anyone to drive after drinking alcohol or using any drug.

- **TIPS FOR TEENS**

- **Always wear a seat belt.** Make sure all passengers buckle up, too.
- **Obey all speed limits for both maximum and minimum speeds.** Slow down in bad weather and use good judgment.
- **Come to a complete stop at red lights and stop signs.**
- **Use a turn signal to indicate the intention to turn, merge or change lanes.**
- **When a light turns green, make sure the intersection is clear before proceeding.**
- **Don't blast the radio.** Excessive noise might cause a driver to miss a siren or a horn that could warn of possible danger.
- **Don't drive distracted.** The following can all be dangerous distractions: cell phone use, texting, other passengers, eating, drinking, smoking and personal grooming.
- **Don't drink or take drugs and drive, and don't ride with anyone who has been drinking or using drugs.** Even some over-the-counter medications can cause drowsiness or have other side effects. Always check the warning labels of medication and consult a health care provider for more information.

## CONTACTS FOR YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY IN MARYLAND

### MARYLAND MOTOR VEHICLE ADMINISTRATION (MVA)

- Contact: MVA's Press Information at 410-762-5188