

# Boost Your State GDL

## Recommendation:

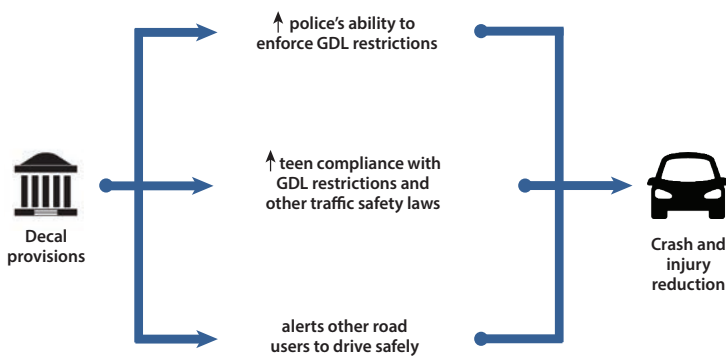
Enact a Decal Provision as Part of a Comprehensive Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Program

States with comprehensive GDL programs generally have lower fatality rates than those with less robust ones. Further reductions in teen crash rates will rely on strengthening specific provisions of GDL, as well as greater enforcement of and compliance with these provisions.

Recent research\* from The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) assessed the effect of decals (or vehicle identifiers) and suggests US states should consider decals as a potential way to enhance the effectiveness of their GDL programs.

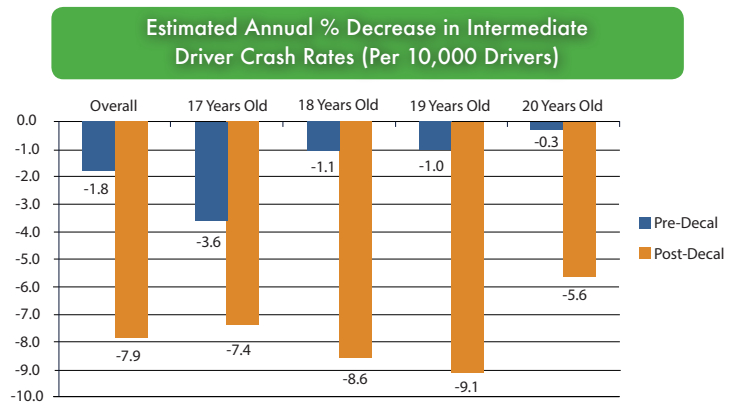
Using a linked dataset of New Jersey's (NJ) licensing and crash records databases, CHOP assessed the long-term changes in crash rates before and after NJ implemented a GDL decal provision (Kyleigh's Law) in May 2010.

### How Decals Might Work



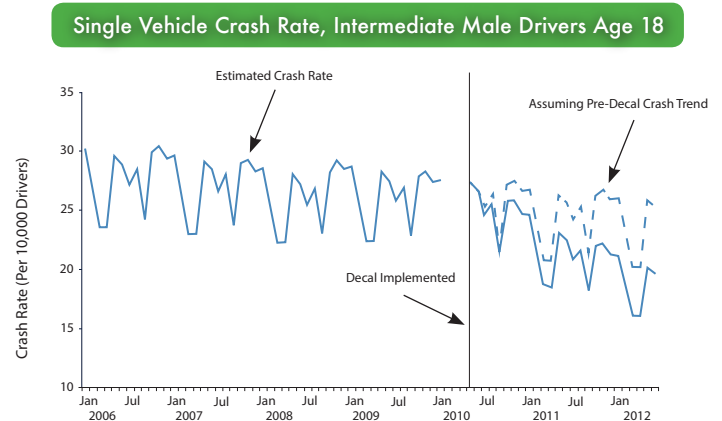
- Experts believe decals may increase the ability of police to enforce GDL and teens' willingness to comply with GDL restrictions, as well as alert others to drive safely around a novice.
- Decal provisions may also make teens more willing to comply with other important traffic safety laws and be more mindful of driving safely.
- Further research is needed to determine causal pathways.

### Long-term Decrease in NJ Crash Rates Post-decal



- NJ had a modest annual decrease in teen crash rates pre-decal. Crash rates dropped more steeply post-decal and were sustained for intermediate drivers, especially for 18- and 19-year-olds.
- Overall, the adjusted crash rate for intermediate drivers was 9.5% lower in the two-year post-decal period than in the four-year pre-decal period, relative to 21- to 24-year-old drivers.

### Single Vehicle Crash Rates Declined Post-decal



- Monthly estimated single vehicle crash rates are shown pre- and post-decal for 18-year-old male drivers (excludes Feb.-April 2010 implementation period).
- The solid line shows the estimated decrease in the crash rate. The dotted line shows the predicted crash rate assuming continuation of pre-decal trends in the post-decal period.
- In the four years pre-decal, single vehicle crashes involving intermediate drivers did not decrease significantly. However, note the shift post-decal. The crash rate decreased an estimated 13.4% per year in the two-year post-decal period.

\*Source: Long-term changes in crash rates after... GDL decal provision. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Nov 3 2014.

## Did You Know?

Over two years, crash involvement of an estimated **3,197** intermediate drivers was prevented in NJ.

## Kyleigh's Law, P.L. 2009, c. 037 (S2314)

Kyleigh's Law is associated with a sustained two-year reduction in crash rates among intermediate drivers. Implemented on May 1, 2010, this first-in-the-US provision requires all teens 16 through 20 years of age holding a permit or intermediate license to display a decal on the front and rear plates of the vehicles they are operating. Failure to do so results in a \$100 fine. Decals are available for \$4 per pair from local motor vehicle agencies. The decals are 1.5 inch x 1 inch, red, reflectorized, and removable with a Velcro-like technology.

## Precedence for and Safety of Vehicle Identifiers

While NJ is the first jurisdiction in the US to require vehicle identifiers (i.e., decals, L- and P-plates), its decal provision is modeled after international jurisdictions. Decals have been used by other countries for decades, including Australia, Canada, France, and Great Britain. L- and P-plates are accepted as part of the licensing process, with no reports of any negative safety outcomes for novice drivers resulting from their display. To address NJ parents' concerns for the personal safety of their teens in displaying their driver status, a 2012 NJ Division of Criminal Justice report concluded that the provision had not jeopardized the safety of teen drivers.

## Communicating a Decal Provision

In a 2012 survey, just over half of NJ intermediate drivers reported always or sometimes using the decal. To encourage compliance with and positive perceptions of decals, states that pass a law should prepare a statewide communications blitz to precede the implementation of the decal law and to reach key constituents: teens, parents, legislators, state and local officials (licensing centers, etc.), and law enforcement. As with other traffic safety priorities, regular outreach following implementation is also important. Reach out through partnerships and presentations to state and local groups, schools, media, social media, etc. Provide consistent messaging on:

- purpose of the decals— to increase enforcement of and compliance with GDL, and to increase the safety of novice drivers
- evidence and precedence for decals
- how GDL works to decrease crash risk

*Source: Views of NJ Teenagers About Their State's Policies for Beginner Drivers. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. 2013.*

## Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Provisions

Stages of GDL	MAP-21 Recommended Provisions*	Boost Your GDL**
Learner's Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Apply to any novice driver under 21 years of age</li> <li>- Minimum 6 month holding period; does not expire before age 16</li> <li>- Pass vision and knowledge tests</li> <li>- Adult licensed driver (at least 21 years old) must supervise new driver at all times</li> <li>- Minimum 40 hours of behind-the-wheel training (with a licensed driver who is at least 21 years of age, including 10 hours at night)</li> <li>- No use of personal wireless communications device while driving</li> <li>- Driver education and testing should be integrated into GDL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Require a GDL vehicle identifier/decal</li> <li>- Require more diversity of supervised driving practice environments as well as varied conditions</li> <li>- Increase access to and affordability of DE/Training options</li> </ul>
Intermediate License	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completed a Learner's Permit stage, passed driving skills test, and is conviction free for prior consecutive 6 months</li> <li>- Minimum 6 month holding period; does not expire before age 18</li> <li>- No more than one non-familial passenger younger than 21, unless accompanied by licensed driver at least 21 years old</li> <li>- No nighttime driving between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.</li> <li>- No use of personal wireless communications device while driving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Require a GDL vehicle identifier/decal</li> <li>- Extend GDL Intermediate License to all novice drivers up to age 21</li> <li>- Require a minimum licensing age of 17 years</li> <li>- Require a minimum holding period of 12 months</li> </ul>
Full License	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conviction free for prior consecutive 6 months</li> <li>- Must obey jurisdiction's traffic laws and have clean driving record</li> <li>- No use of personal wireless communications device while driving</li> </ul>	

\* Column reflects an abridged version of the MAP-21 provisions. Refer to [NHTSA.gov](http://NHTSA.gov) for complete language.

\*\* Column reflects research conducted by CHOP and other leading teen driver safety research organizations.

**Go to [teendriversource.org](http://teendriversource.org) to request a list of select references for this fact sheet.**

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