

SafeDriver Monthly Newsletter

March 2021



Worst States For Pedestrians

Florida Ranks #1

Smart Growth America, an organization committed to providing technical design assistance to communities in order to create safer roadways for vulnerable roadway users such as pedestrians and cyclists, has come out with their latest study that lists the states and cities in America that are most dangerous for pedestrians.

The study, titled [Dangerous by Design](#), looked at traffic data for the years 2010 to 2019 to compile the list of most dangerous places for pedestrians. The study shows that Florida leads the nation with 2.8 deaths per 100,000 of population. During the study years, a total of 5,893 pedestrians were killed in Florida.

In the list of most dangerous municipalities nationwide, Florida also takes first place and has seven out of the top ten most dangerous cities in the nation:

1. **Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL**
2. Bakersfield, CA
3. Memphis, TN-MS-AR
4. **Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville, FL**
5. **Deltona-Daytona Beach-Ormond Beach, FL**
6. **North Port-Sarasota-Bradenton, FL**
7. Jackson, MS
8. **Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL**
9. **Lakeland-Winter Haven, FL**
10. **Jacksonville, FL**

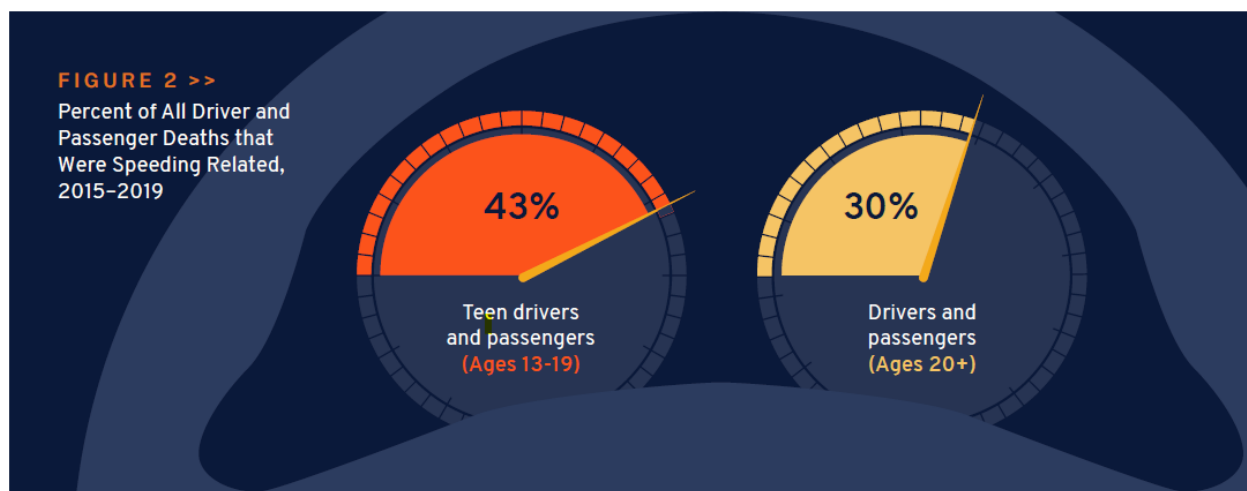
The study blames states and municipalities that place moving traffic at top speeds over pedestrian safety when designing roadways. Streets can be designed with sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes that make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

Drivers should be aware of pedestrians, especially on roadways with no sidewalks or marked crosswalks. Drivers in Florida should also be aware that vacation hot spots along the coast and in the Orlando area have more pedestrian traffic than usual and that those pedestrians may be looking at the sights more than the road. Drivers should also be aware that speed limits are set for ideal conditions and may not take heavy pedestrian traffic into account.

Teen Drivers and Speeding

In January the Governor’s Highway Safety Association (GHSA) published a study that shows that teen drivers die in speed-related crashes at a rate disproportionately higher than drivers of all other age groups.

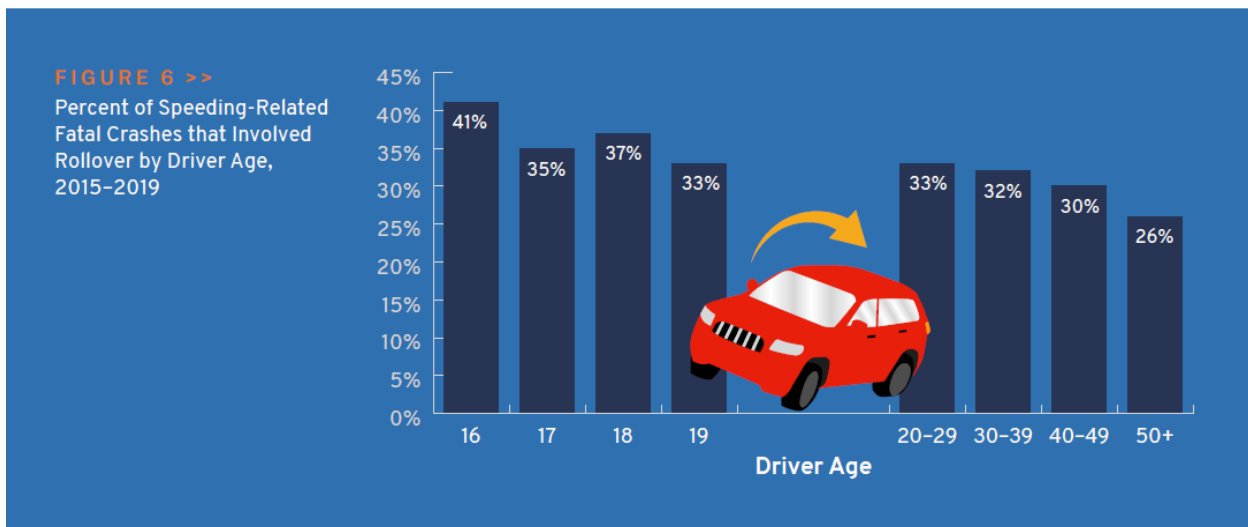
The study, titled “[Teens and Speeding: Breaking the Deadly Cycle](#),” looked at teen crash data from the years 2015 to 2019. The study showed that teen drivers age 13 to 19 years old were responsible for 43% of all speeding-related traffic fatalities. Among the 20+ age group, speeding was responsible for 30% of fatalities.



Governor’s Highway Safety Association

Several factors come into play in speed-related crashes:

- At higher speeds, it's harder to scan the road ahead and see not only what is ahead but what may be coming from crossroads and driveways.
- Higher speeds give drivers less time to react to hazards ahead.
- At higher speeds, it's much more difficult to recover in a lane departure situation, leading to rollovers.
- The greater the speed, the greater the crash forces.



Governor's Highway Safety Association

Male drivers are responsible for the greatest proportion of speed-related deaths (36%) but female drivers are closing the gap with 28%.

The problem has been made worse by the pandemic. With fewer cars on the road, many drivers feel that it is safer to speed without fear of consequences. The fact is that speed-related deaths have increased since the beginning of the pandemic.

Parents need to set the example when teaching teens to drive and drive home the message that speed kills.

Teen Drivers and Alcohol

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drinking any amount of alcohol before driving increases the crash risk compared to older drivers. Teens have a greater risk of being involved in a crash than older drivers with the same blood alcohol concentration (BAC) even at BAC levels below the legal limit for intoxication.

According to the CDC's 2019 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey:

- Among U.S. high school students who drove, 5.4% drove when they had been drinking alcohol at least once during the 30 days before the survey.
- Driving after drinking alcohol was higher among students who were older, male, Hispanic, or had lower grades.
- 16.7% of U.S. high school students rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol at least once during the 30 days before the survey.
- Riding with a drinking driver was higher among Hispanic students or students with lower grades.
- Students who engaged in any of the other transportation risk behaviors measured by the survey were approximately 3–13 times as likely to have also engaged in driving after drinking alcohol at least once during the 30 days before the survey.

In spite of laws making it illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to drink or drive with any amount of alcohol in their blood, almost 25% of all drivers aged 15 to 20 who were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2017 had been drinking.

In that same year, 58% of drivers aged 15 to 20 who were killed in crashes weren't wearing a seat belt.

Male drivers make up a greater proportion of 20% compared to 15% of female teens who had been drinking prior to a fatal crash.

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