

Media Contacts:

Alex Koroknay-Palicz (Director) 301-738-6769

Dr. Mike Males 831-426-7099

E-mail AKPalicz@youthrights.org

Website: <http://www.youthrights.org>

Study: <http://youthrights.org/docs/teendriving.pdf>



National Youth Rights Association
1703 Farragut Ave
Rockville, MD 20851
<http://www.youthrights.org>

News Release

Poverty, Not Age the Main Factor in Teen Driving Accidents, New Study Shows

Santa Cruz, CA, April 6, 2006: The National Youth Rights Association (NYRA), in cooperation with Dr. Mike Males at UC Santa Cruz, has released a new study concerning teenaged drivers that disputes the notion that teens are reckless killers behind the wheel. The study shows that the largest risk factor for driving is poverty, not age.

They hope that the study will help combat misconceptions about teen driving that have been perpetuated by the AAA, and what NYRA perceives as a hostile media who have not given a critical eye to often hysteric anti-teen view points.

The study, which looks at the records of all fatal traffic accidents in California between 1995 and 2004, shows that young people are far less dangerous behind the wheel than previously believed, and that accidents that do happen are more likely the fault of poverty and not age. "Young people are far more likely to live in poverty," said Dr. Males, "When teen and middle-aged poverty rates are equalized, teens are no more at risk on the highways than middle-agers."

"We hear all the time how teens are a menace to society, yet the facts don't match the hype." said NYRA Executive Director Alex Koroknay-Palicz, "Dr. Males' study shows that looking at age alone gives an inaccurate, and indeed an irresponsible picture of teen driving."

The study also looked at the effects of graduated licensing restrictions placed on California's teen drivers in 1998. The statistics indicated that these restrictions merely delayed, and perhaps even increased, the danger posed to young drivers. "It is true that the number of fatalities falls in the short term, but it just moves all the problems to another demographic" said Scott Davidson, a youth rights activist in New York, "They have to get the experience sooner or later. If protectionism reduces the fatalities among seventeen year olds, it increases fatalities among twenty year olds."

The Full Study is available at <http://www.youthrights.org/docs/teendriving.pdf>

About NYRA:

Founded in 1998, NYRA is the largest youth rights organization in the country. Based in the Washington, D.C. area, the organization is committed to fighting for increased rights of young people. NYRA has over 6,000 members nationwide, and it has appeared on Fox News, CNN and on numerous radio shows. Dr. Males is the author of *Framing Youth*, and *Scapegoat Generation*.

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For Immediate Release