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Risky Business Packet

PLEASE READ THE ARTICLES AND PROVIDE A SUMMARY OF EACH TOPIC AS THEY RELATE TO YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

- 1. High School Dropout**
- 2. Making Ethical Decisions**
- 3. Graduated Drivers Licenses**

You may use the standard essay format or something unique and creative. The essay has to be at least 600 words. The essay must encompass every point made in the articles so it is clear that the packet was thoroughly read and understood.

If you have any questions, please call our office.

Sincerely,

The Staff of Teen Court

High School Dropout

Breadth of Problem

More than 1,300 students drop out of school every day.

30% of Hispanic youths are dropouts.

14% of African American youths are dropouts.

8% of Caucasian youths are dropouts.

41-46% of all prisoners are dropouts.

High school dropouts make 42% less money in the workplace than high school graduates.

50% of dropouts are unemployed.

Dropouts are three times as likely to face poverty and to receive public assistance than are high school graduates.

72% of students aged 10-13 say they would like to talk to their parents more about schoolwork.

Key Insights

Each day, thousands of young men and women give up on their high school education, and, in many cases, on themselves. This means that thousands of young adults enter the working world without the most basic requirement for a decent job - a high school diploma. Dropping out of high school is strongly related to many troubling factors facing kids: substance abuse problems, unplanned pregnancies and involvement in criminal behavior can all cause students to prematurely withdraw from school and never return. Conversely, once a student drops out, he is at higher risk for substance abuse, risky sexual activity, suicide attempts, fighting and weapon carrying.

In many cases, dropping out of high school is precipitated by other problems, such as stressful family situations or personal life crises. In particular, family background and involvement plays an important part in a child's academic achievement. There are greater chances for students to stay in school when their parents are actively involved with their lives.

Making Ethical Decisions

Say you are the widowed parent of three children. You have no immediate family or close friends. A severe recession has left you jobless for 18 months. Your skills are not in demand. Six months ago you started looking outside your field, increasingly willing to take anything. But even minimum wage positions were scarce and did not pay enough for one person to live on, much less four. You're deep in debt and have filed for bankruptcy. The stress has triggered your diabetes; you have no medical coverage. You are three months overdue on the rent and have been served with an eviction notice. You've been trying to keep a cheerful, hopeful attitude for your children, who so far don't know the extent of the family's woes.

Now a job you applied for 12 months ago has come up. The salary is higher than any you've ever received and the benefits package would cover your whole family. You are told the choice is between you and one other person, but you have to swear in writing that you have never taken illegal drugs. Trouble is, you have. You used to smoke marijuana, not a lot, but regularly. You have never taken any other illegal drug and you don't use marijuana anymore either — but that hasn't changed your opinion that it is absurd and hypocritical that marijuana is illegal while alcohol and nicotine — which every year kill millions and cost society billions — aren't.

So, do you lie on the application?

Few choices we face are so difficult, but you get the point: being ethical isn't always easy. Yet it is always important. For we live with a common truth: everything we say and do represents a choice, and how we decide determines the shape of our lives.

Making ethical decisions requires the ability to make distinctions between competing choices. It requires training, in the home and beyond. That's where this booklet comes in. *Making Ethical Decisions* is a blueprint to help the reader arrive at sound decisions. For more than a dozen years, various versions of this publication have served as the basic primer of the Josephson Institute of Ethics, a nonprofit teaching, training and consulting organization based in Marina del Rey, California, and active nationwide. The Institute advocates principled decision-making based on six values that cut across time, culture, politics, religion, ethnicity and other human division. These values, called the "Six Pillars of Character," are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship (responsible participation in society). The Six Pillars are the basis of ethically defensible decisions and the foundation of well-lived lives.

This edition of *Making Ethical Decisions* represents a substantial re-working of earlier editions, offering new examples and intensifying the focus on discernment, discipline and effectiveness as vital elements of ethical decision making.

Yet however much the material is reworked, the real work remains with you. No one can simply read about ethics and become ethical. It's not that easy. People have to make many decisions under economic, professional and social pressure. Rationalization and laziness are constant temptations. But making ethical decisions is worth it, if you want a better life and a better world. Keep in mind that whether for good or ill, change is always just a decision away.

— *Wes Hanson, editor*

The Six Pillars of Character

Trustworthiness. Respect. Responsibility. Fairness. Caring. Citizenship. The Six Pillars of Character are ethical values to guide our choices. The standards of conduct that arise out of those values constitute the ground rules of ethics, and therefore of ethical decision-making.

There is nothing sacrosanct about the number six. We might reasonably have eight or 10, or more. But most universal virtues fold easily into these six. The number is not unwieldy and the Six Pillars of Character can provide a common lexicon. Why is a common lexicon necessary? So that people can see what unites our diverse and fractured society. So we can communicate more easily about core values. So we can understand ethical decisions better, our own and those of others.

The Six Pillars act as a multi-level filter through which to process decisions. So, being trustworthy is not enough — we must also be caring. Adhering to the letter of the law is not enough — we must accept responsibility for our action or inaction.

The Pillars can help us detect situations where we focus so hard on upholding one moral principle that we sacrifice another — where, intent on holding others accountable, we ignore the duty to be compassionate; where, intent on getting a job done, we ignore how.

In short, the Six Pillars can dramatically improve the ethical quality of our decisions, and thus our character and lives.

1. TRUSTWORTHINESS

When others trust us, they give us greater leeway because they feel we don't need monitoring to assure that we'll meet our obligations. They believe in us and hold us in higher esteem. That's satisfying. At the same time, we must constantly live up to the expectations of others and refrain from even small lies or self-serving behavior that can quickly destroy our relationships.

Simply refraining from deception is not enough. Trustworthiness is the most complicated of the six core ethical values and concerns a variety of qualities like honesty, integrity, reliability and loyalty.

Honesty: There is no more fundamental ethical value than honesty. We associate honesty with people of honor, and we admire and rely on those who are honest. But honesty is a broader concept than many may realize. It involves both communications and conduct.

Honesty in communications is expressing the truth as best we know it and not conveying it in a way likely to mislead or deceive. There are three dimensions:

Truthfulness. Truthfulness is presenting the facts to the best of our knowledge. Intent is the crucial distinction between truthfulness and truth itself. Being wrong is not the same thing as lying, although honest mistakes can still damage trust insofar as they may show sloppy judgment.

Sincerity. Sincerity is genuineness, being without trickery or duplicity. It precludes all acts, including half-truths, out-of-context statements, and even silence, that are intended to create beliefs or leave impressions that are untrue or misleading.

Candor. In relationships involving legitimate expectations of trust, honesty may also require candor, forthrightness and frankness, imposing the obligation to volunteer information that another person needs to know.

Honesty in conduct is playing by the rules, without stealing, cheating, fraud, subterfuge and other trickery. Cheating is a particularly foul form of dishonesty because one not only seeks to deceive but to take advantage of those who are not cheating. It's a two-fer: a violation of both trust and fairness.

Not all lies are unethical, even though all lies are dishonest. Huh? That's right, honesty is not an inviolate principle. Occasionally, dishonesty is ethically justifiable, as when the police lie in undercover operations or when one lies to criminals or terrorists to save lives. But don't kid yourself: occasions for ethically sanctioned lying are rare and require serving a very high purpose indeed, such as saving a life — not hitting a management-pleasing sales target or winning a game or avoiding a confrontation.

Integrity The word integrity comes from the same Latin root as "integer," or whole number. Like a whole number, a person of integrity is undivided and complete. This means that the ethical person acts according to her beliefs, not according to expediency. She is also consistent. There is no difference in the way she makes decisions from situation to situation, her principles don't vary at work or at home, in public or alone.

Because she must know who she is and what she values, the person of integrity takes time for self-reflection, so that the events, crises and seeming necessities of the day do not determine the course of her moral life. She stays in control. She may be courteous, even charming, but she is never duplicitous. She never demeans herself with obsequious behavior toward those she thinks might do her some good. She is trusted because you know who she is: what you see is what you get.

People without integrity are called "hypocrites" or "two-faced."

Reliability (Promise-Keeping): When we make promises or other commitments that create a legitimate basis for another person to rely upon us, we undertake special moral duties. We accept the responsibility of making all reasonable efforts to fulfill our commitments. Because promise-keeping is such an important aspect of trustworthiness, it is important to:

Avoid bad-faith excuses. Interpret your promises fairly and honestly. Don't try to rationalize noncompliance.

Avoid unwise commitments. Before making a promise consider carefully whether you are willing and likely to keep it. Think about unknown or future events that could make it difficult, undesirable or impossible. Sometimes, all we can promise is to do our best.

Avoid unclear commitments. Be sure that, when you make a promise, the other person understands what you are committing to do.

Loyalty: Some relationships — husband-wife, employer-employee, citizen-country — create an expectation of allegiance, fidelity and devotion. Loyalty is a responsibility to promote the interests of certain people, organizations or affiliations. This duty goes beyond the normal obligation we all share to care for others.

Limitations to loyalty. Loyalty is a tricky thing. Friends, employers, co-workers and others may demand that we rank their interests above ethical considerations. But no one has the right to ask another to sacrifice ethical principles in the name of a special relationship. Indeed, one forfeits a claim of loyalty when he or she asks so high a price for maintaining the relationship.

Prioritizing loyalties. So many individuals and groups make loyalty claims on us that we must rank our loyalty obligations in some rational fashion. For example, it's perfectly reasonable, and ethical, to look out for the interests of our children, parents and spouses even if we have to subordinate our obligations to other children, neighbors or co-workers in doing so.

Safeguarding confidential information. Loyalty requires us to keep some information confidential. When keeping a secret breaks the law or threatens others, however, we may have a responsibility to "blow the whistle."

Avoiding conflicting interests. Employees and public servants have a duty to make all professional decisions on merit, unimpeded by conflicting personal interests. They owe ultimate loyalty to the public.

2. RESPECT

People are not things, and everyone has a right to be treated with dignity. We certainly have no ethical duty to hold all people in high esteem, but we should treat everyone with respect, regardless of who they are and what they have done. We have a responsibility to be the best we can be in all situations, even when dealing with unpleasant people.

The Golden Rule — do unto others as you would have them do unto you — nicely illustrates the Pillar of respect. Respect prohibits violence, humiliation, manipulation and exploitation. It reflects notions such as civility, courtesy, decency, dignity, autonomy, tolerance and acceptance.

Civility, Courtesy and Decency: A respectful person is an attentive listener, although his patience with the boorish need not be endless (respect works both ways). Nevertheless, the respectful person treats others with consideration, and doesn't resort to intimidation, coercion or violence except in extraordinary and limited situations to defend others, teach discipline, maintain order or achieve social justice. Punishment is used in moderation and only to advance important social goals and purposes.

Dignity and Autonomy: People need to make informed decisions about their own lives. Don't withhold the information they need to do so. Allow all individuals, including maturing children, to have a say in the decisions that affect them.

Tolerance and Acceptance: Accept individual differences and beliefs without prejudice. Judge others only on their character, abilities and conduct.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

Life is full of choices. Being responsible means being in charge of our choices and, thus, our lives. It means being accountable for what we do and who we are. It also means recognizing that our actions matter and we are morally on the hook for the consequences. Our capacity to reason and our freedom to choose make us morally autonomous and, therefore, answerable for whether we honor or degrade the ethical principles that give life meaning and purpose.

Ethical people show responsibility by being accountable, pursuing excellence and exercising self-restraint. They exhibit the ability to respond to expectations.

Accountability: An accountable person is not a victim and doesn't shift blame or claim credit for the work of others. He considers the likely consequences of his behavior and associations. He recognizes the common complicity in the triumph of evil when nothing is done to stop it. He leads by example.

Pursuit of Excellence: The pursuit of excellence has an ethical dimension when others rely upon our knowledge, ability or willingness to perform tasks safely and effectively.

Diligence: It is hardly unethical to make mistakes or to be less than "excellent," but there is a moral obligation to do one's best, to be diligent, reliable, careful, prepared and informed.

Perseverance: Responsible people finish what they start, overcoming rather than surrendering to obstacles. They avoid excuses such as, "That's just the way I am," or "It's not my job," or "It was legal."

Continuous Improvement: Responsible people always look for ways to do their work better.

Self-Restraint: Responsible people exercise self-control, restraining passions and appetites (such as lust, hatred, gluttony, greed and fear) for the sake of longer-term vision and better judgment. They delay gratification if necessary and never feel it's necessary to "win at any cost." They realize they are as they choose to be, every day.

4. FAIRNESS

What is fairness? Most would agree it involves issues of equality, impartiality, proportionality, openness and due process. Most would agree that it is unfair to handle similar matters inconsistently. Most would agree that it is unfair to impose punishment that is not commensurate with the offense. The basic concept seems simple, even intuitive, yet applying it in daily life can be surprisingly difficult. Fairness is another tricky concept, probably more subject to legitimate debate and interpretation than any other ethical value. Disagreeing parties tend to maintain that there is only one fair position (their own, naturally). But essentially fairness implies adherence to a balanced standard of justice without relevance to one's own feelings or inclinations.

Process: Process is crucial in settling disputes, both to reach the fairest results and to minimize complaints. A fair person scrupulously employs open and impartial processes for gathering and evaluating information necessary to make decisions. Fair people do not wait for the truth to come to them; they seek out relevant information and conflicting perspectives before making important judgments.

Impartiality: Decisions should be made without favoritism or prejudice.

Equity: An individual, company or society should correct mistakes, promptly and voluntarily. It is improper to take advantage of the weakness or ignorance of others.

5. CARING

If you existed alone in the universe, there would be no need for ethics and your heart could be a cold, hard stone. Caring is the heart of ethics, and ethical decision-making. It

is scarcely possible to be truly ethical and yet unconcerned with the welfare of others. That is because ethics is ultimately about good relations with other people.

It is easier to love "humanity" than to love people. People who consider themselves ethical and yet lack a caring attitude toward individuals tend to treat others as instruments of their will. They rarely feel an obligation to be honest, loyal, fair or respectful except insofar as it is prudent for them to do so, a disposition which itself hints at duplicity and a lack of integrity. A person who really cares feels an emotional response to both the pain and pleasure of others.

Of course, sometimes we must hurt those we truly care for, and some decisions, while quite ethical, do cause pain. But one should consciously cause no more harm than is reasonably necessary to perform one's duties.

The highest form of caring is the honest expression of benevolence, or altruism. This is not to be confused with strategic charity. Gifts to charities to advance personal interests are a fraud. That is, they aren't gifts at all. They're investments or tax write-offs.

6. CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship includes civic virtues and duties that prescribe how we ought to behave as part of a community. The good citizen knows the laws and obeys them, yes, but that's not all. She volunteers and stays informed on the issues of the day, the better to execute her duties and privileges as a member of a self-governing democratic society. She does more than her "fair" share to make society work, now and for future generations. Such a commitment to the public sphere can have many expressions, such as conserving resources, recycling, using public transportation and cleaning up litter. The good citizen gives more than she takes.

Groundwork for Making Effective Decisions

Whether or not we realize it at the time, all our words, actions and attitudes reflect choices. A foundation to good decision-making is acceptance of two core principles:

We all have the *power* to decide what we do and what we say, and

We are morally *responsible* for the consequences of our choices.

Sometimes the power to choose is not self-evident. Outside control and inner emotions can leave one feeling powerless. Especially when one is young or immature, feelings of joy and depression, anger, fear, frustration, grief, anxiety, resentment, jealousy, guilt, loneliness, love and lust seem to come and go on their own, creating moods that may seem beyond control. The intensity of our feelings can encourage us to act and react impulsively as if we had no choice. We may not have the power to do everything we want to do, but we still have the power to decide what to do with what we have. And that is power enough.

Often people think the responsibility is avoidable. Young or immature individuals are notorious for laying the blame for their actions on others: "You made me lie," "I had to take the car without your permission," "I had no choice," or "It just happened." We need to teach our children that even though they may not like their choices they still have choices — and the responsibility to make them wisely. What is more, the power and responsibility associated with choice exists even when it is extremely difficult to be reflective. Anger, frustration, fear and passion are not acceptable excuses for bad choices (including bad attitudes).

Let's look at the components of good choices more closely.

Taking Choices Seriously

We all make thousands of decisions daily. Most of them do not justify extended forethought. They are simple, repetitive or without significant consequence. In such cases, it may be safe to just go with our feelings. It's OK to decide spontaneously what to wear and eat and what to say in casual conversations. When the issues are not morally complex and the stakes are small, our normal instincts are sufficient.

The problem comes when we don't distinguish between minor and potentially major issues, when we "go with the flow" in situations that demand a much more careful approach.

Recognizing Important Decisions

Reflection does not come naturally to everyone. That is why it is so important for parents to sharpen their children's instincts about what matters and what doesn't. This will serve them all through their lives.

The simple formula is: the greater the potential consequences, the greater the need for careful decision-making. To help identify important decisions, ask yourself these four questions:

1. Could you or someone else suffer physical harm?
2. Could you or someone else suffer serious emotional pain?
3. Could the decision hurt your reputation, undermine your credibility, or damage important relationships?
4. Could the decision impede the achievement of any important goal?

Good Decisions Are Both Ethical and Effective

Ethical Decisions. A decision is ethical when it is consistent with the Six Pillars of Character – ethical decisions generate and sustain trust; demonstrate respect, responsibility, fairness and caring; and are consistent with good citizenship. If we lie to get something we want and we get it, the decision might well be called effective, but it is also unethical.

Effective Decisions. A decision is effective if it accomplishes something we want to happen, if it advances our purposes. A simple test is: are you satisfied with the results? A choice that produces unintended and undesirable results is ineffective.

For example, if we make a casual remark to make someone feel good but it makes him feel bad instead, we were ineffective. If we decide to do something we really don't want to do just to please a friend and the decision ends up getting us in serious trouble, it's ineffective.

The key to making effective decisions is to think about choices in terms of their ability to accomplish our most important goals. This means we have to understand the difference between immediate and short-term goals and longer-range goals.

Effectiveness Example: Suzy and Sue

Suzy is both worried and furious. Her friend Sue is more than two hours late. As the clock ticks away, Suzy is going over in her mind all the things she can say and do to make Sue understand that her behavior is unacceptable. She reviews in her mind a direct confrontation that may well involve raised voices and heated tempers. This type of setting is the breeding ground for bad decisions.

If Suzy wants to make an effective and ethical decision and avoid doing something foolish and impulsive, she must set aside emotions long enough to allow her to think clearly about her objectives, both short-term and long-term. Her most immediate desire may be to vent her anger and frustration in the belief that it will teach a lesson. Yet her longer-term goal is to help Sue become more responsible and respectful. And she would like to strengthen rather than weaken their relationship and the quality of their communications.

If Suzy thinks about these potentially conflicting goals she will realize how important it is to choose her words and tone carefully. Her decision on how to handle this situation is an important one that could significantly affect her relationship with Sue.

Among the questions that arise are: Is Suzy more concerned about being sure Sue knows how angry she is or is she more interested in trying to get Sue to think and act differently in the future? Does Suzy want a forced apology or real remorse? Does she want to make Sue feel bad or angry? How important is it that Suzy shows that she is in control as opposed to developing a more respectful, mature relationship with Sue? Obviously the answers to these questions greatly affect the way Suzy reacts.

Suzy is trying to make an effective decision. If we fail to adequately consider our choices in terms of longer-term consequences, we might accomplish short-term objectives (expressing anger), but at the cost of our long-term goals. Good decisions help us achieve our major goals, poor ones impede us from doing so.

And keep in mind that at this stage Suzy doesn't even know why Sue is late. Perhaps there are good and persuasive reasons (e.g., she had to take a friend to the hospital or her car broke down). In any event, to react without first asking for an explanation is unfair.

Discernment and Discipline

There are two critical aspects to ethically sound decisions: knowing what to do and doing it.

Discernment. The first requirement of good decisions is *discernment*. It is not obvious to everyone, for example, that it is just as dishonest to deliberately deceive someone by half-truths and omissions as to tell an outright lie. It's also not always clear how to respond most effectively. Discernment requires knowledge and judgment.

Discipline. Good decisions also require *discipline*, the strength of character to do what should be done even when it is costly or uncomfortable. It's not enough that we discern the ethical and effective course; we must follow it. This often takes will power or moral courage: the willingness to do the right thing even when it is inconvenient, scary, difficult or costly.

In the example above, discernment and discipline play crucial roles. Suzy may know she should control her temper and develop a thoughtful strategy. But knowing and doing are two different things. It will take a tremendous amount of discipline to overcome her anger. Yet isn't that precisely what we want others to do? If Suzy handles the situation effectively she will model good decision-making and increase the likelihood that Sue will learn to do likewise.

Stakeholders Each person affected by a decision has a stake in the decision and a moral claim on the decision-maker. Good decisions take into account the possible consequences of words and actions on all those potentially affected by a decision ("stakeholders").

Being thoughtful or considerate about the way our choices affect others is one aspect of using the stakeholder concept. Another is to be systematic and disciplined in thinking about whom a decision could affect. The stakeholder concept reinforces our obligation to make all reasonable efforts to foresee possible consequences and take reasonable steps to avoid unjustified harm to others.

Stakeholders Example: Charlie and the "Harmless" Prank

Suppose Charlie, a high school senior and member of the football team, is being pressured by friends to take part in a major prank involving putting glue in the door locks of classrooms. Preventing entry to the school may seem funny at first, but he might be less likely to participate if he thinks about all the stakeholders and consequences. It is likely to cost a great deal of money to fix the problem and it will disrupt the lives and plans of hundreds of teachers and students. In addition, if Charlie is caught, it's likely that he will be disciplined in ways that involve lots of others. If he isn't allowed to play in the next football game his teammates and school supporters will be disappointed. If he is suspended he may not be able to attend the senior prom and his date will be upset. His parents could be greatly embarrassed and the school may receive negative publicity that affects the reputation of all students. Finally, it is hard to estimate all the personal costs – it may affect graduation, the ability to get into a college, the possibility of getting or keeping an athletic scholarship and the need to go to summer school. If Charlie thinks of all these things before he chooses, a good decision is more likely.

If we consider the likely impact of actions and words — including physical and emotional harm to others — we'll make better choices and have better relationships. But intelligent decision-making has more far-reaching effects than avoiding immediate harm. Bad choices lead to unhappy, unfulfilled lives; good choices lead to greater happiness and satisfaction in everything one does.

The Seven-Step Path to Better Decisions

1. STOP AND THINK

One of the most important steps to better decisions is the oldest advice in the world: think ahead. To do so it's necessary to first stop the momentum of events long enough to permit calm analysis. This may require discipline, but it is a powerful tonic against poor choices.

The well-worn formula to count to 10 when angry and to a hundred when very angry is a simple technique designed to prevent foolish and impulsive behavior. But we are just as apt to make foolish decisions when we are under the strain of powerful desires or fatigue, when we are in a hurry or under pressure, and when we are ignorant of important facts.

Just as we teach our children to look both ways before they cross the street, we can and should instill the habit of looking ahead before they make any decision.

Stopping to think provides several benefits. It prevents rash decisions. It prepares us for more thoughtful discernment. And it can allow us to mobilize our discipline.

2. CLARIFY GOALS

Before you choose, clarify your short- and long-term aims. Determine which of your many wants and don't-wants affected by the decision are the most important. The big danger is that decisions that fulfill immediate wants and needs can prevent the achievement of our more important life goals.

3. DETERMINE FACTS

Be sure you have adequate information to support an intelligent choice. You can't make good decisions if you don't know the facts.

To determine the facts, first resolve what you know and, then, what you need to know. Be prepared to get additional information and to verify assumptions and other uncertain information.

Once we begin to be more careful about facts, we often find that there are different versions of them and disagreements about their meaning. In these situations part of making sound decisions involves making good judgments as to who and what to believe.

Here are some guidelines:

Consider the reliability and credibility of the people providing the facts.

Consider the basis of the supposed facts. If the person giving you the information says he or she personally heard or saw something, evaluate that person in terms of honesty, accuracy and memory.

Remember that assumptions, gossip and hearsay are not the same as facts.

Consider all perspectives, but be careful to consider whether the source of the information has values different than yours or has a personal interest that could affect perception of the facts.

Where possible seek out the opinions of people whose judgment and character you respect, but be careful to distinguish the well-grounded opinions of well-informed people from casual speculation, conjecture and guesswork.

Finally, evaluate the information you have in terms of completeness and reliability so you have a sense of the certainty and fallibility of your decisions.

4. DEVELOP OPTIONS

Now that you know what you want to achieve and have made your best judgment as to the relevant facts, make a list of options, a set of actions you can take to accomplish your goals. If it's an especially important decision, talk to someone you trust so you can broaden your perspective and think of new choices. If you can think of only one or two choices, you're probably not thinking hard enough.

5. CONSIDER CONSEQUENCES

Two techniques help reveal the potential consequences.

"Pillar-ize" your options. Filter your choices through each of the Six Pillars of Character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Will the action violate any of the core ethical principles? For instance, does it involve lying or breaking a promise; is it disrespectful to anyone; is it irresponsible, unfair or uncaring; does it involve breaking laws or rules? Eliminate unethical options.

Identify the stakeholders and how the decision is likely to affect them. Consider your choices from the point of view of the major stakeholders. Identify whom the decision will help and hurt.

6. CHOOSE

It's time to make your decision. If the choice is not immediately clear, see if any of the following strategies help:

Talk to people whose judgment you respect. Seek out friends and mentors, but remember, once you've gathered opinions and advice, the ultimate responsibility is still yours.

What would the most ethical person you know do? Think of the person you know or know of (in real life or fiction) who has the strongest character and best ethical judgment. Then ask yourself: what would that person do in your situation? Think of that person as your decision-making role model and try to behave the way he or she would. Many Christians wear a small bracelet with the letters WWJD standing for the question "What would Jesus do?" Whether you are Christian or not, the idea of referencing a role model can be a useful one. You could translate the question into: "What would God want me to do?" "What would Buddha or Mother Teresa do?" "What would Gandhi do?" "What would the most virtuous person in the world do?"

What would you do if you were sure everyone would know? If everyone found out about your decision, would you be proud and comfortable? Choices that only look good if no one knows are always bad choices. Good choices make us worthy of admiration and build good reputations. It's been said that character is *revealed* by how we behave when we think no one is looking and *strengthened* when we act as if everyone is looking.

Golden Rule: do unto to others as you would have them do unto you. The Golden Rule is one of the oldest and best guides to ethical decision-making. If we treat people the way we want to be treated we are likely to live up to the Six Pillars of Character. We don't want to be lied to or have promises broken, so we should be honest and keep our promises to others. We want others to treat us with respect, so we should treat others respectfully.

7. MONITOR AND MODIFY

Since most hard decisions use imperfect information and "best effort" predictions, some of them will inevitably be wrong. Ethical decision-makers monitor the effects of their choices. If they are not producing the intended results or are causing additional unintended and undesirable results, they re-assess the situation and make new decisions.

Obstacles to Ethical Decision Making: Rationalizations

We judge ourselves by our best intentions, our noblest acts and our most virtuous habits. But others tend to judge us by our last worst act. So in making tough decisions, don't be distracted by rationalizations. Here are some of the most common ones:

If It's Necessary, It's Ethical

This rationalization rests on the false assumption that necessity breeds propriety. The approach often leads to ends-justify-the-means reasoning and treating non-ethical tasks or goals as moral imperatives.

The False Necessity Trap

As Nietzsche put it, "Necessity is an interpretation, not a fact." We tend to fall into the "false necessity trap" because we overestimate the cost of doing the right thing and underestimate the cost of failing to do so.

If It's Legal and Permissible, It's Proper

This substitutes legal requirements (which establish minimal standards of behavior) for personal moral judgment. This alternative does not embrace the full range of ethical obligations, especially for individuals involved in upholding the public trust. Ethical people often choose to do less than the maximally allowable, and more than the minimally acceptable.

It's Just Part of the Job

Conscientious people who want to do their jobs well often fail to adequately consider the morality of their professional behavior. They tend to compartmentalize ethics into two domains: private and occupational. Fundamentally decent people thereby feel justified doing things at work that they know to be wrong in other contexts. They forget that everyone's first job is to be a good person.

It's All for a Good Cause

People are especially vulnerable to rationalizations when they seek to advance a noble aim. "It's all for a good cause" is a seductive rationale that loosens interpretations of deception, concealment, conflicts of interest, favoritism and violations of established rules and procedures.

I Was Just Doing It for You

This is a primary justification for committing "little white lies" or withholding important information in personal or professional relationships, such as performance reviews. This

rationalization pits the values of honesty and respect against the value of caring. An individual deserves the truth because he has a moral right to make decisions about his own life based on accurate information. This rationalization overestimates other people's desire to be "protected" from the truth, when in fact most people would rather know unpleasant information than believe soothing falsehoods. Consider the perspective of people lied to: If they discovered the lie, would they thank you for being thoughtful or would they feel betrayed, patronized or manipulated?

I'm Just Fighting Fire With Fire

This is the false assumption that promise-breaking, lying and other kinds of misconduct are justified if they are routinely engaged in by those with whom you are dealing. Remember: when you fight fire with fire, you end up with the ashes of your own integrity.

It Doesn't Hurt Anyone

Used to excuse misconduct, this rationalization falsely holds that one can violate ethical principles so long as there is no clear and immediate harm to others. It treats ethical obligations simply as factors to be considered in decision-making, rather than as ground rules. Problem areas: asking for or giving special favors to family, friends or public officials; disclosing nonpublic information to benefit others; using one's position for personal advantage.

Everyone's Doing It

This is a false, "safety in numbers" rationale fed by the tendency to uncritically treat cultural, organizational or occupational behaviors as if they were ethical norms, just because they are norms.

It's OK If I Don't Gain Personally

This justifies improper conduct done for others or for institutional purposes on the false assumption that personal gain is the only test of impropriety. A related but narrower view is that only behavior resulting in improper financial gain warrants ethical criticism.

I've Got It Coming

People who feel they are overworked or underpaid rationalize that minor "perks" — such as acceptance of favors, discounts or gratuities — are nothing more than fair compensation for services rendered. This is also used as an excuse to abuse sick time, insurance claims, overtime, personal phone calls and personal use of office supplies.

I Can Still Be Objective

By definition, if you've lost your objectivity, you can't see that you've lost your objectivity! It also underestimates the subtle ways in which gratitude, friendship and the anticipation of future favors affect judgment. Does the person providing you with the benefit believe

that it will in no way affect your judgment? Would the person still provide the benefit if you were in no position to help?

Being the Person You Want to Be

*"Character is knowing the good,
loving the good and doing the good."*

— Thomas Lickona

"Character is what you are in the dark."

— Rev. Dwight Moody

Ethical decisions have consequences, and one long-term consequence is to make you into a person of character. But what is character? It is the sum of one's distinctive traits, qualities and predilections, and amounts to one's moral constitution. Everyone has a character of some sort, but not everyone "has character." *Having character* is shorthand for having *good* character, and that means being a person who is admirable because of his self-assured, ethical behavior. Character is ethics in action.

"One's character is one's habitual way of behaving," education scholars Thomas Lickona, Eric Schaps and Catherine Lewis have written. "We all have patterns of behavior or habits and often we are quite unaware of them. When Socrates urged us to 'Know thyself,' he clearly was directing us to come to know our habitual ways of responding to the world around us."

Character is not the same thing as reputation. Character is what you are. Reputation is what people say you are. Abraham Lincoln likened character to a tree and reputation to its shadow.

Conscience is the awareness of a moral or ethical aspect to one's conduct; it urges us to prefer right over wrong. Because not everyone has good character, not everyone has a reliable conscience. After all, a bad person with no conscience at all feels just as good as a person with a clear conscience. Having a bad conscience is not necessarily a bad thing — it's a sign that one at least knows right from wrong. As Elvis Presley said, "When your intelligence don't tell you something ain't right, your conscience gives you a tap on the shoulder and says, 'Hold on.' If you don't listen, you're a snake." More people would listen to their conscience if they liked what it had to say.

Where Does Character Come From?

No one is born with good character. It's not hereditary. Yet everyone, regardless of background, enters the world with the opportunity to become a person of exemplary character.

Character has to be developed. "We are born with a potential for good character — and for the dispositions and habits that make up bad or weak character," writes education scholar Edwin Delattre. "Because we are born in ignorance of moral ideals, we must be instructed or trained if we are to achieve a good second nature."

Whether we give in to or overcome the negative messages and influence we face often depends on whether our parents, teachers, mentors and friends have exposed us to their own good example and morally inspiring ideas.

"Building character" refers to the process of instilling within a person positive, ethical traits based on principles that can be expressed many ways. For reasons of convenience and ease of recognition, they are summarized as the Six Pillars of Character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

On Happiness

Ask struggling adolescents why they get high on drugs or alcohol or seek sex without intimacy or commitment and they're likely to tell you they just want to be happy. Ask young professionals why they're so driven to make money and they'll talk about all the things they'd get if they were rich, things that will make them happy. Ask adults why they had affairs or left their families and you'll hear it again: "I just want to be happy." So, why aren't more people happy?

One problem is unrealistic expectations. Some people think of happiness as a continuous series of pleasurable emotions, as feeling good all the time. Others expect a much more intense or lasting feeling of joy when they achieve a desired goal. As a result, when getting what they want doesn't produce the feelings they expected they fall into despondency.

There's great danger in confusing a sustainable state of happiness with fleeting sensations of pleasure and fun. Those who make pleasure-seeking the focus of their lives soon find themselves needing new and different sources of pleasure. It's like a drug addict who needs continually higher doses to get high.

Happiness is a kind of emotional resting place of quiet satisfaction with one's life. It has been said that the art of living a happy life is a balance between getting what you want and learning to want what you get.

Traditionally, there are four main sources of real happiness: loving relationships, enjoyable work, service to others and faith.

Let's start with relationships. Are you spending enough time and energy nurturing this dimension of life? It may be possible to love what you do so much that you don't need other people, but more often than not, those who fail to develop and sustain meaningful relationships — with friends, family, life partners — regret their priorities when they find themselves alone. And it's not just success-obsessed executives who lament the lost opportunities of loving and being loved. Ministers, teachers, police officers and politicians — people who devote their lives to serving others — may be especially apt to neglect the people they need (and who need them) the most.

Is your work likely to make you happy? Of course, not everyone has the luxury of having a job they love. Unfortunately, these kinds of jobs don't often pay well and, after all, a job is how one makes a living. Still, many people put up with boring or unpleasant work situations because they place too much weight on what they earn and where they work and too little on what they do. If work is not emotionally rewarding you may want to consider trade-offs as an investment in happiness.

Helen Keller said, "True happiness is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose." Albert Schweitzer said, "One thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to

serve." These observations should remind us of the potency of peace of mind and sense of value one can get from devoting oneself to a worthy cause.

<http://www.josephsoninstitute.org/MED/MED-intro+toc.htm>

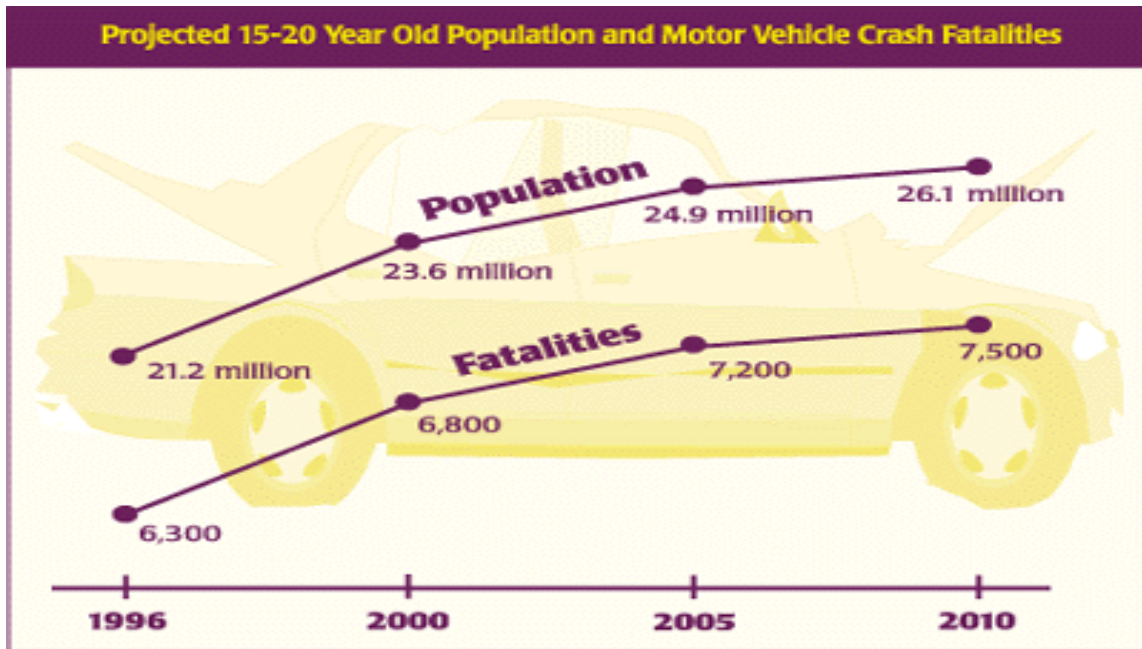
Introduction: The Need for Graduated Driver Licensing

In 1996, 6,319 young people age 15-20 died in motor vehicle crashes. Even though this age group makes up only seven percent of the driving population, they are involved in 14 percent of all traffic fatalities.

The Teen Driving Problem

It has been said many times that children are our most precious resource. While parents throughout time have loved their children enormously, today's parents have taken this saying to heart in more visible ways than previous generations. From the "Caution Baby on Board" window decals of the early 1980s to the ubiquitous "My child is an honor student at" bumper stickers of today, modern parents use the family car as a billboard to showcase their parental pride and their children's accomplishments.

But the same motor vehicle that goes from school to soccer to piano in which Mom, Dad and the kids seem to live may also be the vehicle in which our teenagers die. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for young people 15 to 20 years of age, causing roughly one-third of all fatalities in this age group. In 1996, 6,319 young people age 15-20 died in motor vehicle crashes. Even though this age group makes up only seven percent of the driving population, they are involved in 14 percent of all traffic fatalities. In 1996, teens were involved in more than two million non-fatal traffic crashes. Based on population projections, these numbers will go up unless we intervene. (See chart below.)



Source: AAA

On the basis of miles driven, teenagers are involved in three times as many fatal crashes as are all drivers. Why do young drivers have such poor driving performance? Three factors work together to make the teen years so deadly for young drivers:

Inexperience

Risk-taking behavior and immaturity

Greater risk exposure

Inexperience: All young drivers start out with very little knowledge or understanding of the complexities of driving a motor vehicle. Like any other skill, learning to drive well takes a lot of time. Technical ability, good judgment and experience all are needed to properly make the many continuous decisions, small and large, that add up to safe driving. By making it so easy to get a driver license by literally handing teenagers the car keys without requiring an extended period of supervised practice-driving time we are setting them up for the risk of making a fatal mistake.

Risk-taking behavior and immaturity: Adolescent impulsiveness is a natural behavior, but it results in poor driving judgment and participation in high-risk behaviors such as speeding, inattention, drinking and driving, and not using a seat belt. Peer pressure also often encourages risk taking.

Greater risk exposure: Teens often drive at night with other teens in the vehicle, factors that increase crash risk.

Teen drivers are different from other drivers, and their crash experience is different. Compared to other drivers, a higher proportion of teenagers are responsible for their fatal crashes because of their own driving errors:

A larger percentage of fatal crashes involving teenage drivers are single-vehicle crashes compared to those involving other drivers. In this type of fatal crash, the vehicle usually leaves the road and overturns or hits a roadside object such as a tree or a pole.

In general, a smaller percentage of teens wear their seat belts compared to other drivers.

A larger proportion of teen fatal crashes involve speeding, or going too fast for road conditions, compared to other drivers.

More teen fatal crashes occur when passengers usually other teenagers are in the car than do crashes involving other drivers. Two out of three teens who die as passengers are in vehicles driven by other teenagers.

Crash Involvement Rates by Driver Age				
Age	All Crashes Per Million Miles	Fatal Crashes Per 100 Million Miles	All Crashes Per 1,000 Population	Fatal Crashes Per 100,000 Population
16	43	17	84	33
17	30	13	101	42
18	16	8	103	52
19	14	7	95	48
16-19	20	9	96	44
20-24	10	5	81	41
25-29	6	3	64	33
30-34	5	2	51	26
35-39	4	2	47	23
40-44	4	2	42	20
45-49	4	2	39	18
50-54	4	2	34	18
55-59	4	2	31	16
60-64	4	3	27	16
65-69	7	4	27	16
70-74	8	5	25	17
75+	12	12	18	17

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (Transportation Research Board Circular #458 – April 1996)

Effective remedies exist for controlling these risk factors and reducing traffic crash fatalities among young drivers without seriously encroaching on their need to get around. Graduated driver licensing combines a number of measures proven to be effective in fostering safer driving behavior in young drivers. In Ontario, Canada, and in New Zealand where graduated driver licensing is in effect crash deaths and injuries for teenage drivers have been reduced. Maryland, which has a nighttime driving restriction and California have shown reductions in both fatal crashes and traffic violations among young drivers.

With graduated driver licensing, new drivers typically go through a three-stage process that involves their gradual introduction to full driving privileges. By restricting when teenagers may drive, and with whom, graduated driver licensing allows new drivers to gain much-needed on-the-road experience in controlled, lower-risk settings. It also means that a teenager will be a little older and more mature when he or she gains a full, unrestricted license. After the young driver demonstrates responsible driving behavior, restrictions are systematically lifted until the driver "graduates" to full driving privileges.

This manual explains what graduated driver licensing is and why it is so important for every jurisdiction to take steps towards its implementation.

Traditional Driver Licensing vs. Graduated Driver Licensing

Driver licensing is a function of state government. Each state has different rules and regulations, but the essential steps are similar. An individual applies to the Department of Motor Vehicles or other licensing agency for a driver license. He or she usually must pass a written knowledge test and a vision test before scheduling a road test with the driver license examiner. New drivers must demonstrate basic driving skills in a road test.

In 35 states, a learner's permit is required for novice drivers. Teens under 18 must have parental permission to apply for a learner's permit. Learner's permits automatically expire in all states except Virginia. The expiration ranges from 60 days to six years. Most states place only minimal limitations on driving with a learner's permit. For instance, only 19 have any limits on nighttime driving.¹

A comprehensive evaluation of state driver licensing codes by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety concluded that current driver licensing practices "allow a quick and easy route through the learning phase" and place too little emphasis on supervised

practice and training.¹ Most highway safety experts agree that it is too easy to get a driver license in this country. Driving a motor vehicle is dangerous, yet the requirements and testing are minimal. It is entirely conceivable that an inexperienced young driver could pass a road test and receive a full, unrestricted driver license with almost no "real world" driving experience. A graduated driver licensing system addresses this problem by controlling the circumstances under which beginning teenage drivers may get behind the wheel.

The Graduated Driver Licensing Process

A graduated driver licensing system allows young drivers to acquire safe driving practices and attitudes as they progress through a three-stage process of licensure. This system has several distinct advantages over the traditional driver licensing system. Graduated driver licensing gives young, novice drivers:

Practice in developing driving skills over an extended period of time, leading to greater experience, maturity and judgment; Increased time in supervised behind-the-wheel training during daylight and nighttime hours;

Education in basic and advanced driving skills and safety knowledge; and

Motivation to practice safe driving skills and behavior by requiring a crash-free/conviction-free driving performance prior to full licensure.

The Three Stages of Graduated Licensing

Learner's permit:

Supervision is required at all times, and other restrictions also apply. This period includes basic driver education and requires that no crashes or convictions occur before the learner advances. There are restrictions on carrying teenage passengers, there can be no violations for failing to wear a seat belt and there is zero alcohol tolerance.

Intermediate license (or provisional license or junior license):

Fewer restrictions are imposed; for example, unsupervised driving is permitted during daylight hours. This period may include advanced driver education and continues to require zero alcohol tolerance and no at-fault crashes or convictions before advancing the driver to the final stage.

Full license (or unrestricted license):

All driving restrictions are removed (except for applicable laws, such as zero alcohol tolerance for drivers under 21).

Core and Recommended Components

All graduated driver licensing systems contain certain core components in order to be effective. Other components are recommended and should be considered for any new or expanded program.

Stage 1 - Learner's Permit

This stage allows the young novice driver the opportunity to practice basic driving skills and safe driving practices under totally supervised conditions.

Minimum eligibility requirements:

Meet the minimum age required by the state (currently varies from age 14 to age 17; no younger than age 16 is recommended);

Pass vision and knowledge tests, including rules of the road, signs and signals.

Core components:

All driving must be supervised by a licensed parent, guardian or adult at least 21 years old;

Permit holder must complete basic driver education including behind-the-wheel/vehicle skills training;

All vehicle occupants must wear seat belts;

Zero alcohol tolerance for those under age 21;

Permit is cancelled if applicant is convicted of any alcohol-related offense;

Applicant must remain free of at-fault crashes and convictions for at least six consecutive months in order to move to the next stage; and

Minimum holding period of six months;

Permit is visually distinctive from other driver licenses.

Recommended components:

Parental participation in the driving process (for instance, certifying that the novice driver has had a minimum number of supervised hours of driving);

Youth-oriented and more rapid driver improvement actions are taken in the event of violations or at-fault crashes;

Limitations on speed and types of roads where driving is allowed; and

Limitations on carrying teenage passengers.

Stage 2 - Intermediate License

This stage gives the young driver behind-the-wheel practice under less restrictive circumstances and exposes the driver to more demanding driving situations. It provides an opportunity for the new driver to use newly acquired driving and decision-making skills by allowing unsupervised driving during daylight hours.

Minimum eligibility requirements:

Successfully complete the learner's permit stage;

Meet the minimum age required by the state; and Pass on-road driving test.

Core components:

Restricted nighttime hours of driving unless supervised by a licensed parent, guardian or adult at least 21 years old (for instance, only supervised driving from 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m.);

All vehicle occupants must wear seat belts;

Zero alcohol tolerance for those under age 21;

Successfully complete driver education;

License revocation for any alcohol-related offense;

Youth-oriented and more rapid driver improvement actions are taken in the event of violations or at-fault crashes; and

Applicant must remain free of at-fault crashes and convictions for at least twelve consecutive months in order to move to the next stage.

License is visually distinctive from other driver licenses.

Recommended components:

Parental participation in the driving process (for instance, certifying that the novice driver has had a minimum number of supervised hours of driving);

Limitations on speed and types of roads where driving is allowed; and

Limitations on carrying teenage passengers.

Stage 3 - Full License

This stage allows unlimited driving privileges.

Minimum eligibility requirements:

Successfully complete the intermediate license stage;

Meet the minimum age required by the state; and

Zero alcohol tolerance for those under age 21.

Recommended components:

Downgrade to a provisional license for drivers whose licenses have been suspended or revoked, and require a crash-free/violation-free period of time prior to re-obtaining full license until age 21;

Pass second level knowledge test and on-road driving test; and

Successfully complete advanced driver education.

How Graduated Driver Licensing is Effective

Addressing the Problems

Young novice drivers are a highway safety problem for many reasons, primarily a combination of immaturity, inexperience and high-risk driving exposure. This is true for teenagers everywhere, but it is a particular problem in the United States, where more teenagers have cars or have access to a family car than in any other nation. Teenagers are also more likely to drive older and smaller cars, are less likely to wear seat belts, and are more likely to have multiple teenage passengers.

Traditional approaches high school driver education, a learner's permit and perhaps stepped up penalties for infractions have not had as great an impact on reducing the incidence of teen crashes and convictions as anticipated. In fact, there is some evidence that early driver education classes may encourage younger licensure, thereby increasing risk exposure.

On the other hand, graduated driver licensing has been shown to be effective by:

Expanding the learning process;

Reducing risk exposure;

Improving driving proficiency; and

Enhancing motivation for safe driving.

Let's look at each of these four benefits.

Expanding the learning process

Graduated driver licensing lengthens the learning process. The longer the period of time that elapses between issuance of the first permit to the full, unrestricted license, the more maturity and experience the novice driver will accumulate and the better his or her driving performance will be. The learning experience for driving cannot be rushed. As with any complex task, it takes time to assimilate the skills and information needed to perform the job adequately.

Reducing risk exposure

Graduated driver licensing allows young drivers to gain much-needed driving experience in controlled, lower risk circumstances, such as nighttime driving restrictions, passenger limitations, required restraint use for all occupants, and license sanctions that kick in at a lower threshold (e.g., first conviction for a serious violation).

These exposure-reducing components work in two ways. First, they catch young drivers early when they make mistakes or errors in judgment and allow correction. Second, they serve as a motivating factor for teens to study for tests, drive safely and avoid risks in the first place.

Percentage of Fatal Crashes With Various Characteristics, by Driver Age, 1993

	Driver Age		
	16	17-19	20-49
Single Vehicle	44	37	29
Driver Error	82	74	62
Speeding	37	33	62
3+ Occupants	33	27	18
0.10+ Percent BAC*	5	28	48
Female Driver	34	27	29

*BAC=Blood Alcohol Concentration. In most states, 0.10 percent is the legal BAC threshold.

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (Status Report December 17, 1994)

Improving driving proficiency

Placing limits on teen mobility may reduce driving exposure, but driving proficiency can be improved through measures that emphasize getting teens behind the wheel to practice. These components encourage the intermediate licensee to make safe driving decisions while driving to reduce risk. They include: multi-level instruction coupled with multi-level testing (giving inexperienced drivers the opportunity to first learn then practice the basics before moving on to learning and practicing more advanced skills); parental guidance; driver improvement courses; and delayed re-testing after failure.

Enhancing motivation for safe driving

Graduated driver licensing not only helps the novice driver better cope with risks, but also enhances the motivation to drive safely and "play by the rules." Restrictions are lifted as rewards for good driving, and sanctions are imposed for violations. For young drivers, the worst sanction may be the delay that keeps them in an earlier stage longer, while their peers advance to the next level. By making relief from restrictions contingent upon a good driving record, graduated driver licensing provides incentive toward drive safely.

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Underage Drinking

More than five million high schoolers binge drink at least once a month
The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.

The gender gap in alcohol consumption that for generations separated girls and boys has disappeared among younger teens: male and female ninth graders are just as likely to drink (40 percent vs. 41 percent) and to binge drink (22 percent vs. 20 percent).
The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

83 percent of adults who drink had their first drink of alcohol before age 21.
The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

Individuals who begin drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to become alcohol dependent than those who begin drinking at age 21.
The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

The prevalence of lifetime alcohol abuse is greatest for those who begin drinking at age 14.
The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

One-third of sixth and ninth graders obtain alcohol from their own homes.
The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

Children cite other people's homes as the most common setting for drinking.
The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

Four out of every five (80%) students have consumed alcohol (more than a few sips) by the end of high school.
Monitoring the Future

Two-thirds of twelfth graders report having been drunk.
Monitoring the Future

Impaired Driving

Motor vehicle crashes remain the number one cause of death among youth ages 15 to 20. There were 6,131 youth motor vehicle deaths in 2000.
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

In 2000, there were 2,339 alcohol-related fatalities among youth ages 15-20.
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

It is estimated that more than 20,000 lives have been saved by minimum drinking age laws since 1975.
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

The highest number of youth motor vehicle fatalities occurs in the summer. In 2000, there were 664 fatalities in July.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Although there are more youth fatalities during the week, the percentage of alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes is higher on the weekends. In 2000, 1,319 of 2,776 weekend fatalities were alcohol-related while 1,015 of 3,602 weekday fatalities were alcohol-related.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Drug Use

Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug. In 2001, it was used by 76 percent of current illicit drug users.

SAMHSA

In 2001, an estimated 8.1 million (3.6 percent) of Americans aged 12 or older had tried "ecstasy" at least once in their lifetime.

SAMHSA

Among youths aged 12 to 17, the rate of current illicit drug use was higher for boys (11.4 percent) than for girls (10.2 percent)

SAMHSA

In 2002, 53% of twelfth graders reported having used an illicit drug in their lifetime.

Monitoring the Future

Drug	8th Graders reporting use	10th Graders reporting use	12th Graders reporting use
Marijuana	19.2%	38.7%	47.8%
Cocaine	3.6%	6.1%	7.8%
Heroin	1.6%	1.8%	1.7%
Tobacco	31.4%	47.4%	57.2%
Tranquilizers	4.3%	8.8%	11.4%
Methamphetamine	3.5%	6.1%	6.7%
Ecstasy	4.3%	6.6%	10.5%

Violence

17.4% of students carried a weapon to school in 2001.

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System

33% of students were in a physical fight in 2001.

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System

9.5% students were hurt as a result of dating violence in 2001.
Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System

Homicide is the second leading cause of death among 15- to 24-year-olds overall.
Centers for Disease Control, 2001

In 1999, 4,998 youths ages 15 to 24 were murdered -- an average of 14 per day.
Centers for Disease Control, 2001

Suicide

In 2001, 19% of high school students considered suicide.
Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Summary, 2001

14.8% of high school students in 2001 made a plan to commit suicide.
Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Summary, 2001

8.8% of high school students attempted suicide in 2001.
Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Summary, 2001

Every 15 minutes a suicide occurs in the United States.
National Mental Health Awareness Campaign

Suicide has ranked among the 10 leading causes of death since 1975.
National Mental Health Awareness Campaign

For every two victims of homicide in the U.S. there are three deaths from suicide.
National Mental Health Awareness Campaign

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among youths ages 15 to 20.
National Center for Health Statistics

Males ages 15 to 19 are five times as likely as females are to commit suicide.
National Institute for Mental Health

The strongest risk factors for suicide in youth are depression, substance abuse and aggressive behavior.
National Institute for Mental Health

Eating Disorders

More than 5 million Americans experience eating disorders.
Harvard Eating Disorders Center

Anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder are diseases that affect the mind and body simultaneously.
Harvard Eating Disorders Center

Three percent of adolescent and adult women and 1% of men have anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, or binge eating disorder.
Harvard Eating Disorders Center

A young woman with anorexia is 12 times more likely to die than are other women her age without anorexia.
Harvard Eating Disorders Center

Fifteen percent of young women have substantially disordered eating attitudes and behaviors.
Harvard Eating Disorders Center

Between 10% and 15% of those diagnosed with bulimia nervosa are men.
Harvard Eating Disorders Center

Forty percent of fourth graders report that they diet either "very often" or "sometimes."
Harvard Eating Disorders Center

About half of those with anorexia or bulimia have a full recovery, 30% have a partial recovery, and 20% have no substantial improvement.
Harvard Eating Disorders Center

In the United States, conservative estimates indicate that, after puberty, 5-10 million girls and women and 1 million boys and men are struggling with eating disorders including anorexia, bulimia, binge eating disorder, or borderline conditions.
National Eating Disorders Association

Approximately 90-95% of anorexia nervosa sufferers are girls and women.
National Eating Disorders Association

Between 1-2% of American women suffer from anorexia nervosa.
National Eating Disorders Association

Anorexia nervosa is one of the most common psychiatric diagnoses in young women.
National Eating Disorders Association

Anorexia nervosa typically appears in early to mid-adolescence.
National Eating Disorders Association

Bulimia nervosa affects 1-3% of middle and high school girls and 1-4% of college age women.
National Eating Disorders Association

Approximately 80% of bulimia nervosa patients are female.
National Eating Disorders Association

Sex, Teen Pregnancy, STDs, HIV/AIDS

Teen Pregnancy

The United States has the highest rates of teen pregnancy and births in the western industrialized world. Teen pregnancy costs the United States at least \$7 billion annually.
National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Nearly four in 10 young women become pregnant at least once before they reach the age of 20 - nearly one million a year. Eight in ten of these pregnancies are unintended and 79 percent are to unmarried teens.

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

The teen birth rate has declined slowly but steadily from 1991 to 2001, with an overall decline of 26 percent for those aged 15 to 19.

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

The younger a teenage girl is when she has sex for the first time, the more likely she is to have had unwanted or non-voluntary sex. Close to four in ten girls who had first intercourse at 13 or 14 report it was either non-voluntary or unwanted.

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Teen mothers are less likely to complete high school (only 33% receive a high school diploma) and more likely to end up on welfare (nearly 80% of unmarried teen mothers end up on welfare).

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

One of every 3 girls has had sex by age 16 and 2 out of 3 by age 18. Two of 3 boys have had sex by age 18.

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

A majority of both girls and boys who are sexually active wish they had waited. Eight in ten girls and six in ten boys say they wish they had waited until they were older to have sex.

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Fewer than half of high school students have had sex.

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

STDs

Every year 3 million teens--about 1 in 4 sexually active teens -- get a sexually transmitted disease (STD).

American Social Health Association

Chlamydia is more common among teens than among older men and women.

American Social Health Association

Teens have higher rates of gonorrhea than do sexually active men and women aged 20-44.

American Social Health Association

Some studies show that up to 15% of sexually active teenage women are infected with the human papilloma virus (HPV), many with the type of HPV that is linked to cervical cancer.

American Social Health Association

HIV/AIDS

Young Americans between the ages of 13 and 24 are still contracting HIV at the rate of 2 per hour.

Office of National AIDS Policy

Half of all new infections are thought to occur in people under 25.

Office of National AIDS Policy

Each year 3,000 adolescents contract sexually transmitted diseases, which is about one in four sexually experienced teens.

Office of National AIDS Policy

Almost 50% of teachers who teach about HIV/AIDS reported spending only one or two class periods on the topic.

Office of National AIDS Policy

Twenty-five percent of U.S. high school students said that they were under the influence of alcohol or drugs when they last engaged in sexual activity.

Office of National AIDS Policy

In a recent survey, 87% of young Americans said they do not believe they are at risk for HIV infection.

Office of National AIDS Policy

www.saddonline.com/stats.htm