

Teenagers may or may not do as you say, but they are very likely to do as you do. From the time they are born and even into adulthood, children model their parents' behavior, which is why it is so important to instill good habits in them. This is especially true with driving a vehicle.

How can parents be better role models for their teenage drivers? It starts with your attitude toward driving safety. Ask yourself:

- Are you emotionally ready to drive every time you get behind the wheel? Do you drive when you are emotionally distressed (e.g. angry, distraught, etc.) or do you make sure you have calmed yourself down before you start the vehicle – even if it makes you a little late to your destination?
- Are you physically ready to drive every time you get behind the wheel? Do you drive when you are excessively fatigued?
- Do you drink and drive? Do you ride with drivers who do?
- Do you always wear your safety belt? Do you insist all your passengers wear their safety belts?
- Being a good role model continues with your actions in the vehicle:
  - Are you calm, attentive and confident when you drive?
  - Are you respectful of other drivers even when they are in the wrong?
  - Do you maintain a safe speed in all conditions?
  - Do you tailgate or do you leave the proper following distance (3-5 seconds) between you and the vehicle in front of you?
  - Do you avoid distractions? Do you text, use your cell phone, eat, or put on makeup while driving?
  - Are you an aggressive driver? Do you cut others off? Do you race through traffic?

Your teen is watching you. How you behave in these situations greatly effects your teen's driving behaviour. Help your teen become an Intelligent Driver by being a good role model driver yourself.