

Problem-Solution Essay

Weak Student Model

Why We Should Limit Teen Drivers

A big problem is facing teenagers today. It is one they try not to think about, never mind do something about. I am discussing here teenagers and driving. The most unsafe group of drivers on the road. Car accidents are the leading cause of death for teenagers in the United States. Teenagers account for more car accidents than they should, considering they are such a small percentage of all drivers. Most of us know at least one teenager who has been in an automobile accident, and we certainly read about bad accidents involving teenagers. A lot of the accidents involve just one car that slides off the road or hits a tree. Most of those accidents are the result of reckless driving—a guy showing off for his friend or just not paying attention. The time has come to do something about this epidemic.

Some people think that the driving age should be raised. This seems like a punishment without a good reason. Even if people who begin driving at 21 are involved in few crashes, you just have to ask how many drivers there are who start at 21. The number of such drivers is going to be small. Which explains why there are so few accidents with such drivers. And anyone who waits until he or she is 21 before getting behind the wheel of a car is obviously a person who is timid. Such people are unlikely to cause accidents because they are so afraid. This is hardly a reason to punish teens—not to mention their parents, who would have to drive them everywhere.

Other people suggest that students just need better driver's education classes or else more classes or more time behind the wheel. We can all see how our education could be bettered but even this is wrong, statistics show that teens who take driving classes are in as many accidents as teens who never take driving classes oddly enough. So it is not a matter of education, leaving us to ask: What can we do to limit accidents caused by teens in cars?

The problem might just be that teenagers are teenagers. How do you cure that? Teenagers are foolhardy, don't pay good attention, and want to look cool which works against driving safely. They don't think nothing of tailgating, speeding, not wearing seat belts, or

Name _____

Problem-Solution Essay

Weak Student Model *continued*

driving their car as though they are playing video games. How are they going to learn to be cautious and pay attention? Caution and attention are not taught in schoolbooks; they are the result of experience. So how can they get these qualities?

There is a proposal in the news that would address this problem of teenagers being teenagers. I'm sure you've heard about it. This proposal would restrict teens' driving privileges, only giving them new privileges as they become more experienced in driving a car. The more experienced a teen driver becomes, the more privileges he or she would get as a driver.

Acquiring a license would be pretty much the same as it is now: for three to six months, a teen would have a learner's permit that would require a licensed adult driver to be present in the car. After that, a teen could drive alone during the day, but would have to have an adult in the car at night when most teenage accidents occur because of illegal drinking and joy riding and drag racing and that sort of risky business. This goes on for maybe a year before the teen is given an unrestricted license.

Several states have already started programs like this one, and they have been good at saving lives. Teen accidents are down and most teens are complying with the rules. If the program can work in other states, I'm sure it can work well in ours.

A few complainers whine about having their "rights" violated by the graduated license system, but what right do they have to endanger others? I mean, our constitutional rights are protected as long as they don't step on someone else's rights, and driving unsafely really steps on the rights of people who are hit and killed. So let's give up a few rights, I say.