

MISSING MOMENTS



2015 Teen Memoriam
Remembering 10 Lives Lost On Utah Roads





Too soon taken are the ones we have lost. Who could they have become? What amazing things could they have accomplished? We cannot forget them, nor can we replace their potential.

All we can do is hold onto their memory. We can remember their dreams and their passions. We can remember their good deeds. We can remember the moments we shared together. And most importantly, we can learn from their departure. The pictures of those we've lost remind us of the lives they lived, while the blank photos represent moments that will never be. No one has to die on our roads. Remember that it's never worth the risk. Drive smart—drive safe.

We would like to thank all the courageous families for sharing their stories to help prevent other teens from dying in motor vehicle crashes.





ASHLEY HANSEN

Age 18

Roosevelt, UT

Ashley, the youngest of four girls, was born on October 3, 1997 in Price, UT. Ashley was always full of energy and ready to take on the world. A teacher described her as “an explosion of hair and personality.” Nothing slowed her down. She was a senior at Union High School in Roosevelt, UT where she excelled in academics and sports, including tennis and softball. Ashley spared no effort as she ran and dove for those hard hit balls and danced the bases as she hit home runs. She found her love, however, in tennis. Ashley was Union’s number one singles player and captain of the Varsity tennis team. Her goal was to make all the girls, especially the new team members, feel a part of the team. She played hard and expected excellence in herself. She spent hours upon hours improving her skills on the court and put the same energy into finding the perfect college to attend.

Ashley loved being with her friends and three older sisters. She loved laughing and doing crazy things. Life for Ashley was not dull. If there was a spare minute she would fill it. Living in a rural area meant finding friends in neighboring towns; she and her friends would meet in a central location between homes, go on dates and make the drive home afterward. This was the case the

afternoon of November 13, 2015. As she was getting ready to leave the house for her double date, she teasingly laughed and flipped her head of blond curls, which her sister had just braided, “Because my hair won’t do anything; but, my complexion is gorgeous!”

That night, as Ashley drove home, she was involved in a fatal head-on collision with a semi-truck. She fell asleep at the wheel, crossing into oncoming traffic. The driver of the truck didn’t have time to react before the impact. His truck caught fire and the cab was completely destroyed. He was lucky enough to escape without injury.

Ashley had just turned 18 the month before. She was so looking forward to graduation and college.

Having Christmas . . . Watching her softball team play without her . . . Seeing her sister marry without one of her bridesmaids . . . Listening, as her best friend spoke of the crazy things they had done together and then reading a funny poem Ashley had written during her Valedictorian speech . . . Seeing her sisters, step siblings, and friends struggle through the sorrow . . . We will always miss her.



Our lives and the lives of the community were completely changed that day. Ashley could be described by the words of Shakespeare, "And though she be but little, she is fierce." Ashley was barely 4' 11", but her spirit was mighty. She was a spitfire, who had compassion and love for her family and her friends. Finding others who seemed sad or alone, she would step in and find a new friend.

Lives change so quickly. Our lives changed simply because our beautiful girl was tired. Please, if you're tired, don't drive. Accept a ride home with a friend, phone home and change plans, or simply pull over and rest. Returning home safely is far better than pushing to be home on time. Please don't let these be the unanswered texts on your phone: Text me when you get home, yeah? -11:47 p.m. A cop just passed me in a big hurry, are you alright? -12:05 a.m. Two cops, I'm kind of sweating it out. Are you alright? -12:12 a.m. Please tell me you're alright -12:22 a.m. Are you okay -12:33 a.m.

In Ashley's honor, her tennis coach renamed the annual UBIC tennis tournament to the Ashley Hansen Memorial Tennis Tournament and Camp. "To honor our #1 high school player, who tragically passed away in an auto crash this past year. All proceeds from the tournament and camp will be put into a scholarship fund

for future players from the Uintah Basin that go on to college and participate on their respective college tennis teams." How grateful we are as her family to the wonderful people of this community who have shared their love with us.

We will always remember you. We love you baby doll!

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was tired. Please, if you're
tired, don't drive.*

ALEXIS ANTHONY ALONZO

Age 19

West Valley City, UT

Alexis was born on February 5, 1996 in California. He was a happy boy and you could always find him with his headphones in listening to music. He used to sing in the kitchen and would also sing to his little sister, Ruby. His favorite bands were Los Tigres del Norte and Amor Platonico. He used to watch a video of a girl dancing to the song “La Del Moño Colorado” and he would start dancing and singing to the song. Ruby loved the way he sang.

Alexis was a great help around the house. He had the utmost respect for everyone he met and would try to be the peacemaker in an argument. He was a great big brother. He liked to play basketball and attended Cyprus High School. He wanted to be a policeman, a fire fighter, or a therapist.

His favorite foods were enchiladas and tamales with mole sauce. He especially loved his grandmother’s mole sauce. He wanted his grandmother to come over and teach us the recipe so that I could make it just like her—extra spicy, but still sweet. But I was always too busy and we never got to do that.

Alexis’ favorite color was red. He always wore red and black clothing and a hat that said “California” on the top. We bought him a red Honda civic and he absolutely loved that car.

I remember seeing that car, his favorite thing, on the side of the road absolutely demolished as we drove to the hospital the day of the crash.

Sunday, April 5, 2015 at 7:00 in the morning we received information that he was in a car crash. We were told to go to the hospital where he was having surgery on his hip. We waited at the hospital for an hour until someone came and told us that he had passed away. How could that be? We were told it was “just a surgery.” They told us there had been internal bleeding and brain damage and there was nothing they could do.

I miss my son so much. Everywhere I go I miss him. Sometimes I think he is still around, but then I remember that he’s not. I hope he is doing well alongside our Heavenly Father.

Alexis had lots of friends growing up but as he got older, he just had one close friend, Ruben Fierro. He was like his brother. After the crash, we expected many people to bring flowers to his grave or come visit, but I think all of his friends forgot about him.

We wanted to share his story so that people do not forget him. We don’t know the details of the crash but we would just ask that all drivers be so careful. In just one moment, the thing you love the most can be taken away without warning.

*In just one moment, the thing
you love the most can be taken
away without warning...
We would just ask that all
drivers be so careful.*





CHEYENNE ELIZABETH BAGLEY

Age 16

Sandy, UT

From the moment Cheyenne was born, she was spunky, genuine, positive, and so full of life. She grew up loving the world of Disney and you could find her wiggling through the grocery store in her Snow White dress even though her favorite princess was Aurora from Sleeping Beauty. Anything Disney-related became “our thing.” One time we rode the Pirates of the Caribbean ride nine times in a single day.

Cheyenne loved food. She used to say she would marry pizza. That girl had to have her Krispy Kreme doughnuts—because nothing else was good enough. She loved Starbucks, as all teenagers do, and she’d make me stop to take a selfie whenever she found the perfect light. She wanted to live in California because she loved the ocean and the beach. Her favorite time of year was Halloween with haunted houses, costumes, and pumpkin spice lattes.

Cheyenne had so much energy and she started dance when she was just 3 years old. Her passion was contemporary dance and in high school she would choreograph many routines for the school assemblies. Two days before the car crash, she performed in a dance concert with her best male friend, Hunter. The two of them had been practicing to get ready for the high school dance tryouts. Unfortunately, Cheyenne never had the chance to attend tryouts.

On the morning of May 20, 2015, I drove Cheyenne to school. That was the last time I saw her. I was with my husband that night at a Boy Scout event when Cheyenne called me to ask if she could get ice cream with her friends. I was about to say no, but she mentioned she had finished the dishes and that her homework was done, so I said yes. As I drove home, I saw police cars and ambulances on the corner of my road. It literally happened right there.



I called Cheyenne 15 times but she didn't pick up. A Jeep had t-boned the car she was in. Her friend, Hunter Kelson, was also killed. I will always remember driving past the scene and seeing that sheet on the back window of the car. What I didn't know at the time, was that it was my daughter's body the sheet was covering.

Cheyenne was friends with everyone. I didn't realize exactly how sweet she was until her funeral. There were so many stories from people who didn't know her that well, but said she had left an imprint on their lives.

Cheyenne was my only child. She was my best friend and my only family. But more than that, she was my dreams, my laughter, my pride, my future. I lost myself when I lost her and now there is just silence. I go grocery shopping and there's Cheyenne's favorite cereal or her favorite drink. No one says, "Mom I'm hungry. Can we go to Krispy Kreme?" No one calls me on my cell phone. And no one makes me stop to take selfies. Everywhere I go, I'm reminded that I don't have my child; and every morning I wake up, it's May 20th all over again.

It amazes me how people become mundane to how they drive. We see it every day—people on their phone, cars swerving, or tailgating. In one heartbeat you can destroy someone's life by not paying attention. Slow down. Don't race lights and don't be distracted. You are accountable for everyone's life when you step in a vehicle.

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destroy someone's life by not
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Don't race lights and
don't be distracted.*



HUNTER "LOU" KELSON

Age: 17

Midvale, UT

Hunter was our miracle baby, in a hurry to get to this world. Weighing 2 lbs and 15 ounces, he was born 3 months early. He surprised us all and was our little fighter. By the time he was three months old, he had caught up to all the other kids his age and since then, he was always on the go.

Hunter danced for Hillcrest High School and was looking forward to trying out for the dance company the week of the crash. We had just finished his modeling portfolio so he could start with Stars Agency in Sandy. He loved dance, shopping, and modeling, but at the same time, he would go hunting with his dad, stepdad, and grandpa. He actually got the "once in a lifetime" bull tag the year before he passed away. He definitely got a trophy that year.

He was so compassionate. He did everything with his siblings and loved to torment them. Hunter was like the rock of the family. He loved his family and friends. He'd do anything for them and he had a special bond with each of his siblings in different ways.

Every one of the kids had a part of them taken away when Hunter passed. He loved his Grandma Jaymie and his grandpa whom he affectionately called "Poppy," much to grandpa's dislike. He was secretly amazing. He had acted in a student film on suicide prevention and would do anything for anyone. I had no idea how much he impacted people until I saw the line standing outside the door for his funeral. I've never seen anything like it.

Getting his driver license was the coolest thing in the entire world for Hunter. We looked for four months for a car because he was so picky. I remember when we found his tan colored Plymouth Neon, he was like "Oh yeah!" He had saved his money for two years to buy the perfect car and he absolutely loved it.

On May 20th, the whole family was packing for a camping trip. I remember he was wearing a red shirt, black joggers, and Jesus sandals, which is odd because he never wore anything but Levis. After school, he came home to pack his bag and, while waiting for



My message would be to never assume that the other driver sees you. Never assume anything.

his sister, we talked about dance tryouts and how nervous he was. I assured him how amazing he was and that I just knew he would make it. I reminded him to turn in all of his assignments before we left for the trip.

After his sister finished, I walked the two of them to the car since they were headed to their dad's house for the night. Later that night, I reminded him via text again to make sure all of his assignments were ready. I never received a text back. Five minutes later, we heard a knock on our door. I'll never forget that knock.

The cops told us that Hunter had been in a car crash and had passed away, along with another girl, named Cheyenne Bagley. I remember calling his dad and asking him to come over and bring our daughter, Hailey. We called his grandparents. The kids were in shock. I can still hear my son, Elijah, scream, "That was my best friend!" It was horrible to watch and horrible to listen to. I remember my daughter, Hailey, falling into her uncle's arms

and sobbing. I remember sitting there shaking in shock and looking at my kids, feeling so helpless.

They were only going to get an ice cream and coming right back.

My message would be to never assume that the other driver sees you. Never assume anything. Hunter didn't do anything that the rest of us don't do on a daily basis. He stopped at the stop sign and looked both ways to make a left hand turn. We will never know if he saw the Jeep coming or not.

We want to keep Hunter's memory alive. And keep his kind actions going. So now we do the #hunterchallenge. Anytime you do anything Hunter would have liked to do, you hashtag it. Sushi, shopping, spending time with family; do something you normally wouldn't do. Go out of your way to help someone. Make a difference in a life. That is what Hunter would have done.



CADEE CELESTE CONNER "3C"

Age 16

Herriman, UT

Our Cadee Bug, Cadee Celeste Conner, "3C," was born to be an athlete and at 5'11" tall with long, blonde hair, she could have been a princess if she wanted to. But instead she drove a truck, swam, surfed, longboarded, and could hip hop like nobody's business. She was a proud Lady Mustang at Herriman High School where her school spirit always shined. She played on the Varsity lacrosse team, was a team captain for the sophomore basketball team, and also a member of the Junior Varsity team. She was a 4.0 student and never accepted anything less than 100%.

Cadee's favorite things were texting friends, making people laugh, painting her nails, sleeping in, cuddling with her dog, "7Q," horseback riding, eating blue frosting until her teeth turned the same color, shopping at The Buckle, and all things basketball. Cadee's favorite colors were teal and pink. Her favorite saying was, "Be the change you want to see." She dreamed of earning a basketball scholarship to either Notre Dame or UConn where she would then move on to dominate in the WNBA. She also dreamed of becoming a pediatrician, or a tattoo artist. Cadee always had chapstick and gum with her because, as she said, "You never know when you're gonna get the kiss of a lifetime." Piña Colada was her favorite chapstick . . . it smelled like the beach. She was full of energy and sincerely loved living life.

Nothing about her was ordinary.

In Cadee's last basketball game, she scored 21 of the team's 32 points before she sustained a season-ending ankle injury.

After surgeries on both ankles, her hard work and determination throughout her recovery and rehab prepared her for the start of this year's season. She was killed on October 29, 2015. She lived 16 years, one month, and 6 days. It was nine days before basketball tryouts.

That morning, we let Cadee ride with a friend to school. It was the first time we'd let her go with another teenage driver and I was sick with worry. She was blasting her hip hop music at 6 a.m. when I opened her bedroom door. She was straightening her hair. I gave her a hug and smelled her and wrapped my arms around her and told her how lucky I was to have her. She came skipping down the stairs when her friend got there to pick her up. . . it was the last time I would see my little girl skip down those steps.

I was at work when the phone rang about 1 p.m. A detective was on the line and I asked if everything was OK. He said no. I screamed and ran to my car. I prayed I was wrong, but I knew she was gone.

Cadee and two of her friends had gone out to lunch. They were stopped at a red light at an intersection on Mountain View Corridor, just a half mile from home. The light turned green and the person behind them impatiently honked at them to go. As they started to cross the intersection, they were hit by cross traffic, causing the truck to roll. The car hit the side of the truck that Cadee was riding in. We waited three days before we could see her body because of the brutality of the crash.



It's our obligation that the minute we accept the privilege of sitting behind the wheel, we realize that we are taking everyone's lives into our hands. Driving distracted, speeding, or being an aggressive driver are not optional. We watched a community mourn our daughter. But now they've forgotten that each one of us could be the next cause of destroying someone's life. It's infuriating to see people forget the pain and go back to old habits.

We miss her noise; the house is so quiet without her. She brought life with her. Cadee illuminated our lives with her love, joy, beauty, kindness, compassion, and talent for 16 wonderful years. We know our angel is now waiting for us to one day join her in heaven. She will be deeply missed, but her memories will be everlasting.

My sister was my best friend. Our bedrooms were right next to each other, and at night, we'd sing songs back and forth to see if the other one was awake. We used to sing the song, "Do You Want to Build a Snowman," from the movie, "Frozen." I really miss that.

We went to the rec center during basketball season every night. I'd help her work on her moves. We played lacrosse and golf together. And she could beat me at everything, even XBOX. She was perfect at everything she did except Spanish class, which we had together. We sat by each other and I'd write as big as I could on my tests so she could copy my answers.

I always gave my sister a hug and told her I loved her each morning before school. But the morning of the crash, I was

running really late and I didn't get to say goodbye or even see her. I didn't get to tell her, "I love you," and that was completely not normal. You just never know when your last word, your last action is going to be your last.

If I could say one thing to other drivers, it would be that you need to be aware of others around you on the road. You always have to be a defensive driver and defensive passenger because just like that, you can flip someone's whole world around. And for us, we don't get a rewind button.

David "Buddy" Conner

(Cadee Conner's 15-year-old brother and best friend)

KAITLYN HANSEN

Age 15

Price, UT

Kaitlyn was everyone's favorite friend, favorite cousin and favorite daughter. She had a special gift for making those around her feel loved, valued and accepted. She would stick up for kids who were being bullied and would always be a friend to the lonely. She was honestly loved by all who knew her. Her death has left a deep void in all of our hearts.

Friday, May 1, 2015. The last day I spent time with my daughter. We had a wonderful day at the Payson Temple open house with our extended family members. Kaitlyn loved every second she spent with her family. After the open house, we went to eat dinner together as a family. Kaitlyn and her sister-in-law, Brecca, wanted food from a different restaurant across the parking lot. As Brecca started to drive, Kaitlyn reminded her to "buckle up" despite only moving the car a few hundred feet. Following rules was very important to Kaitlyn and she always wore her seat belt. When we got home, Kaitlyn wanted me to watch TV with her. I was busy cleaning and a little ornery because I had to work a long shift the next day. I wish I could go back and just enjoy being with her and hearing her laugh a little longer. Later that evening, we were sitting outside and Kaitlyn had brought out her yearbooks and she was reminiscing and laughing over the memories. She was texting her friends and seemed to be amused and enjoying herself. As I was getting ready to go out for my evening walk, Kaitlyn was packing to go stay the night with her sister-in-law, Crystal. I told Kaitlyn goodbye as I went out for my walk and this was the last time I saw or spoke to my daughter. The next time I'd see her would be nearly four days later at the mortuary, lying on a gurney.

Saturday, May 2, 2015. I had been at work all day and from what I understand, Kaitlyn had a great day with friends. Her day was spent working at the ball park in the concession stands, then riding ATVs with her friend, Liv. Kaitlyn hung out with her friends that night. As I was

getting ready for bed, I sent her a text to let her know the door was unlocked. She was always responsible and I never had to worry about her. I fell asleep and shortly after I heard car doors shut and thought to myself, "Kaitlyn must be home." Then there was a knock at the door. I had a very uneasy feeling as my husband went to answer the door. I heard the deputy ask him if he was Kaitlyn's step-dad and my husband replied that he was. They proceeded to tell him that there had been a crash . . . all I heard was that dreaded word, "deceased." All I could do was scream, as my world was forever changed. Kaitlyn had been killed in a crash. The driver of the vehicle had swerved to miss a deer and the vehicle rolled off the road into a riverbed. Kaitlyn was not wearing a seat belt. She was ejected from the truck and killed instantly.

I miss her so much! I miss her walking through the front door, lighting up the entire room with her presence. Kaitlyn lived life to the fullest. In junior high she was a cheerleader, the Science Student of the Year, and in the National Jr. Honor Society. She was an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and received her Young Womanhood Recognition before turning 14. She attended Carbon High School where she was active in the drill team, serving as an officer. She excelled in math and science and was a member of the National Honor Society. Her goal was to be the Math Sterling Scholar at Carbon High.

Kaitlyn will always be remembered as a happy, energetic, loving individual who loved serving others. She loved her family and friends more than anything. Kaitlyn loved everyone and was loved by all. She always had a beautiful smile for everyone. Kaitlyn knew to wear her seat belt, but there was one time she didn't and she was taken from us. Please protect your precious lives and wear a seat belt. Always.



*Please protect your precious lives
and wear a seat belt. Always.*



KRISTAN REANN MILLMAN

Age 19

Church Wells, UT

Kristan was always very loving and loved by many. She was the youngest of four children and is missed very much by her family, especially her sister and best friend, Brittany and two little cousins that adored her like crazy. Kristan got engaged to the love of her life, Robert, and two soon-to-be step daughters that she loved very much. Her life was coming together perfectly.

On March 31, 2015 around 10:20 p.m., I got a phone call as I was driving home from the airport after picking up my husband. The person on the other end was a Utah Highway Patrol officer asking me if I knew Kristan Millman and if I was her mother.

In that moment, I wasn't sure what to think. The officer let me know as caringly as possible that my daughter had been in a car crash and was very sorry to tell me that she passed away. Not only did our daughter pass away, so did her fiancé, Robert, and her dog, Patada. We were told Robert passed a semi-truck and then pulled over to make a U-turn. As he did, they were hit by the semi-truck. Robert was a very cautious driver. We don't know why they decided to turn around.

Kristan had called our family the day of the crash and everyone, except her grandmother, had missed her call. None of us got to say goodbye. Regretting the missed calls is a struggle every day for us. Kristan loved life and was always excited to let us know how they were doing and how her new home was coming together. Brittany has really struggled with the loss of her best friend and sister. The two girls were very close with each other.

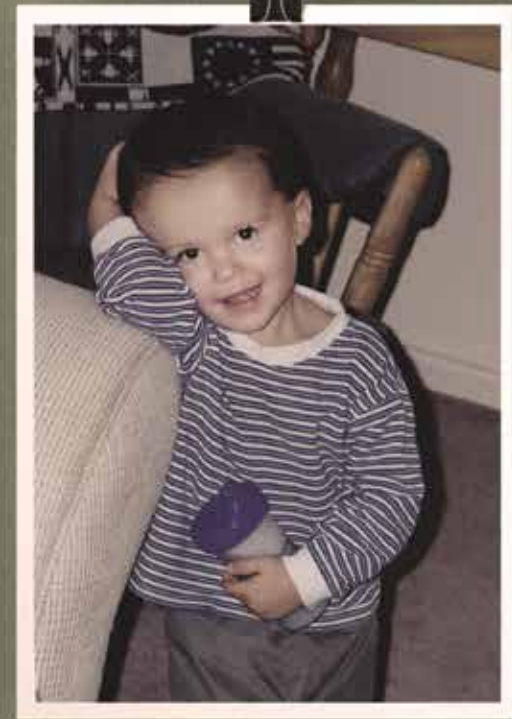
I hope that sharing Kristan's story helps to keep other families from experiencing such a tragedy. Please always buckle up and check to see if there is oncoming traffic before making a turn.

Always in our hearts and with us. We love you to the moon and back, Baby Girl.

Love always,

Dad, Mom and Brittany

I hope that sharing Kristan's story helps to keep other families from experiencing such a tragedy. Please always buckle up.



LANDEN PARKER HICKMON

Age 17

Herriman, UT

Landen Parker Hickmon was born on October 26, 1997. He was a very beautiful baby. He was loud and let you know when he needed something. He was independent, determined and charming, even as a little boy. He made friends easily and always rooted for the underdog.

He enjoyed playing football and watching his favorite NFL team play, the Carolina Panthers. He was passionate about writing and often wrote inspirational quotes. One of his favorites was, "No regrets, just love." He loved fast cars, especially Ford Mustangs. He liked to cook, expressing that joy through his job at Taco Time. He liked hanging out with his numerous friends and family, especially his two brothers and two sisters. He loved music, everything from Bob Marley to Wiz Khalifa. He was known and loved (sometimes envied!) for his thick, dark hair and his long eyelashes.

Landen had things figured out and wanted to do things on his own. He'd argue for days trying to get you to see his point of view. He didn't like to be told what to do or how to do it. He thought he'd make a great lawyer because of these traits.

On October 19, 2015, he was driving home from work. He was on his motorized scooter and wasn't wearing a helmet. I was getting ready for bed when my cell phone rang. It was Landen calling. My immediate thought was, "It is 11:30 at night . . . he must be in trouble!" I answered the phone and it was a police officer asking if I was Landen's mom. I thought to myself, "Oh dear, what did he do?" I didn't expect the officer to say that Landen had been in a crash and that he was in pretty bad shape. He told me to get to the hospital. So many thoughts were going through my mind as I was driving there . . . What happened? Was he going to be okay? Would he be confined to a wheelchair?

When I arrived at the hospital, Landen had already passed away. I couldn't believe it. My beautiful boy was gone. I expected to go into the room and see his body torn apart, but it wasn't. He was on the bed looking as perfect and beautiful as he did the day he was born. How could he still look that way and no longer be living? It was incomprehensible to me.



Landen was driving straight, heading northbound on 5600 West in Kearns. The other driver was driving south on the same road. She made a left hand turn and ran into Landen. He was thrown from his scooter, suffering blunt force trauma to his chest and other injuries throughout his body.

Several people stopped at the scene, staying with Landen and covering him with a blanket. A girl who was a nursing assistant stopped and took his vital signs until emergency personnel arrived. Knowing Landen was not alone in his final moments is comforting to me.

That night changed our lives forever. We won't get to see Landen go to college, get married or have children. We didn't get to see him graduate from high school. We don't get to hug him, hear him laugh, see his beautiful smile or even argue with him. The pain, tears and loss may lessen, but they will never fully be gone. Every day is difficult. We are grateful Landen chose to be an organ donor. Because of his donation, someone else will have sight.

Drivers, please focus on one thing—DRIVING YOUR VEHICLE! Don't drive distracted. Put down your phone. Don't drive sleepy. Focus on the road. Getting behind the wheel of a vehicle is a lot of responsibility that affects other people, NOT JUST YOU!

"No regrets, just love."

*Drivers, please focus on one thing—
DRIVING YOUR VEHICLE!
Don't drive distracted. Put down
your phone.*



MAYLEE CHRISTINE ANDERSON

Age 16

Highland, UT

Our daughter Maylee was a shining example of goodness to those around her. We could not have been more proud of her. She was a fun-loving, positive, friendly, kind, thoughtful and grateful teenager with a funny, infectious and contagious laugh. She was very smart and did well in school—most of the time achieving “straight A’s.”

Maylee was born in Mesa, AZ on February 11, 1999. Within a few weeks, we moved to Cincinnati, OH, where Maylee was raised until she was 5 years old. In 2004, our family moved to Draper, UT. In 2013, we moved to Highland, UT. It was in Highland that Maylee flourished. We actually moved in large part for her—to be closer to family, friends, school, church and her dance studio.

Maylee loved her family, friends and her Heavenly Father. She was a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She had earned her Young Woman medallion and was an inspiration to those in her classes. It didn’t take much to keep her entertained or happy. She was always so grateful for all that she had—whether in abundance or not.

She loved her friends, and since her passing, we have come to realize that the lives she touched and the impact she had on her friends was more than we knew. Maylee, was a “true friend” and she was often regarded as a “best friend” to those who knew her. Maylee saw beyond people’s flaws and imperfections, she loved people for who they were. With Maylee there were no qualifications and no pretext. She was true and genuine. She accepted others at face value and she didn’t try to be something she wasn’t.

Maylee had a great sense for fashion. She loved “bling” and sequins or anything that was sparkly. She loved life.

Maylee died as the result of injuries sustained in a car crash on Memorial Day, May 25, 2015. She made a mistake, and as a result in an instant, her life, our lives and the lives of countless other friends and family were changed forever. She was one day away from completing her sophomore year at Lone Peak High School. Maylee was driving and her mother, Christine, was in the front passenger seat of the vehicle. While turning left onto Highland Blvd. from 11800 North, they were t-boned on the driver’s side of the vehicle. Maylee’s head and left side of her body absorbed most of the impact. She was kept alive for nine minutes by three passerbys (a police sergeant, a doctor and a nurse), until a helicopter could arrive. Maylee and her mom were both taken by helicopter to separate hospitals. Maylee had extensive brain trauma and injuries to her body. She died in the hospital four days later, on Friday, May 29, 2015.

To say that Maylee’s death has had a profound impact on our family and community would be a gross understatement. People from around the world reached out to us and to Maylee while she was in the hospital, which provided a small, but insightful glimpse into the kind of special girl we had in our family. Our lives were forever changed. While we continue in faith, our hearts are broken and each day is difficult. At times the pain is so great that we simply don’t know how we can possibly move on, but we do . . . one day at a time—faithful that we’ll see our sweet Maylee again and be able to see her smile, hear her ever-infectious laugh, and feel her warm embrace. We love and miss you Maylee.

At times the pain is so great that we simply don't know how we can possibly move on, but we do.

STEPHANY KARINA VILLEGAS

Age 16

West Jordan, UT

Stephany was born in California on May 20, 1999. She was a straight-A student and on the soccer team at West Jordan High School. She loved chemistry and reading. Her favorite books were the Twilight series and Hunger Games. She'd read them over and over again and then spoil the movies for us because she was so excited to tell us what happened next. Stephany was persistent and worked at something until she got it: a go-getter, full of talent and kind. We were so proud of her for being a good girl and such a protective big sister. Her closet was so clean and organized; everything sorted by color. She loved her dog, Daisy.

Our family loved to take vacations to California to visit the beach and Six Flags Magic Mountain. Stephany loved rollercoasters and the bigger and scarier they were, the better. But all of that changed on August 2, 2015.

We were driving home from California and it was really late. We had stopped at Zions National Park to go sightseeing and then tried to find a hotel nearby. We called 18 hotels but they were all full so we decided to keep driving home. My 10-year-old daughter, Valerie, decided to ride back to Utah with my brother who was driving ahead of us, so it was just my husband and I with Stephany in the back seat. My husband was tired from driving so I said I would drive. The next thing I knew the car was going in circles, rolling. When it stopped, I looked back and called her name but she wasn't there. I got out of the car and started running until I saw her. There was blood. We crashed about 2:30 a.m. The closest fire station was 40 minutes away.

Stephany was thrown from the car and then struck by another vehicle on the road. On long road trips she would often take her seat belt off and lay down on the back seat. Valerie always told her big sister to keep her seat belt on and to sit up straight in the seat.



I feel so guilty every single day. I knew better. I shouldn't have driven sleepy. I shouldn't have let her lie down on the back seat without her seat belt on. Don't take the chance; your life can change in a second. And ours did change. Forever. Don't drive sleepy. Wear a seat belt. A seat belt saved my life and my husband's life.

We were best friends and talked about everything. My husband is devastated. He can't talk about her. Her best friend, Melissa, still calls me and we visit the cemetery and cry together. I see everyone picking up their kids at school and I dream about being able to pick her up from school again. I miss listening to my girls laugh on the couch together while they watch movies. They were so close.

I believe that Stephany is in heaven and that I will see her again. That she's OK. I talk to her every morning and I feel her presence. The "Fight Song" was her song and sometimes on hard days that song will come on the radio and it's a sign that she's there, watching over us.

Two weeks before the crash, Stephany told me she wanted to be an organ donor. When I asked her why, she said she wanted to save lives. Stephany wanted to be a doctor or ER nurse and help save people. That's why I'm sharing her story in this book . . . maybe someone's life will be saved.

Stephany had a mole on her forehead. I thought it made her look so pretty but she hated it and had it removed. We liked to watch movies together and she would tell me to grab the pillow and cover my eyes during the bad parts. But my favorite thing about my sister is that she'd let me sleep with her. When I had nightmares, she would hug me. She always said, "Hug me, hug me!" to me every night. I miss her the most at night.

The night of the crash, I was in my uncle's car. I remember waking up in bad traffic and the police asking us about my mom, dad, and sister. They kept asking me when Stephany's birthday was and I didn't understand why. We had gone to Magic Mountain and Stephany made me go on the scariest ride there, but we don't do that stuff anymore. If I had been in the car with her, I would have told her to put her seat belt on. My sister is an angel now.

Valerie

(Stephany Villegas' 10-year-old sister)





FAMILIES AREN'T THE ONLY ONES AFFECTED

Throughout any career, there will be many pivotal moments. Likely, over time, these pivotal moments will change who you are in ways you can't predict. As your work life advances and your personal life evolves, you can only hope to balance the two, and use the symbiotic relationship between them to mature in a healthy manner.

Similarly, as you advance through adulthood there will be waypoints of significance that will slowly define the person you are to become. In my youth, I often doubted whether these points in time could be as mentally altering as those around me claimed. The most significant of these moments may be the birth of a child. I never thought I would have kids, and in my

arrogance didn't understand exactly how it would change my perspective. Other EMTs and paramedics would talk of how difficult pediatric calls were, and though I was sympathetic to it, it wasn't until I had those paternal bonds that I could truly understand how disheartening these calls were.

When responding to an emergency situation, firefighters, EMS and police often become task-oriented, maintaining an objective level of detachment from the emotional stress that we often have to witness. This is what allows us to perform our trade and help in situations that, at times, feel helpless. With this detachment comes a certain burden however. At some point, the pensive load of emotions needs to be addressed and dealt with, or else it can change who you are in ways that can have long lasting effects.

Regardless of whether a responder is a parent or not, any time a scene involves youth (be it child, adolescent or teenagers) it's particularly trying. This is even more true in cases of traumatic injury that can lead to the worst of possible outcomes. In the moment, we'll do anything and everything within our training and capabilities, but that isn't always enough. It is these moments, when not even a fully staffed emergency room teleported to the scene could have overcome the tragic crash that has occurred, that leave a scar on our emotions. The times that I've had to look at a small human, damaged by circumstances outside their limited

scope of control, and make the call that "injuries are not compatible with life" have left me in a state of emotional numbness that can't be properly articulated.

If anything can interrupt this introspective paralysis of emotion, it's the presence of family and loved ones on scene. The realization that there are other victims of this devastating happenstance will bring me back to task quickly. Regardless of their level of injury, they want to know how their companion has fared.

The conversations that follow are the most emotionally draining that I can possibly imagine. They are what stay with me long past clearing the scene and intrude into my thoughts when I've returned to my family. As callous as it may seem, I don't spend much time dwelling on the victim. It's the network of loss left behind that lingers in my thoughts.

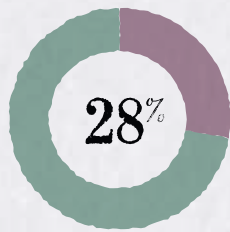
I take these emotions to heart when I'm with my children, having those moments of happiness that I didn't know existed prior to being a father. As my life evolves, I can't help but think of those who have experienced loss, leaving a void in their own personal progression. I don't wish that upon any person. So stop before you drive and consider those around you. These life-shattering moments are preventable. Be smart. Drive safe.

MATHEW MCFARLAND
Firefighter Paramedic—Unified Fire Authority

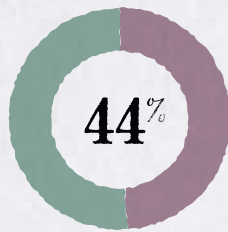
2015 TEEN CRASH STATISTICS

25 teens lost their lives on Utah roads*

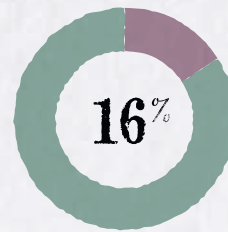
*A fatal crash is defined as a crash involving a motor vehicle traveling on a traffic way resulting in the death of at least one person within 30 days of the crash (Utah Department of Public Safety)



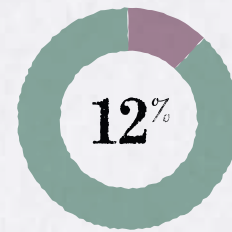
Drivers



Passengers

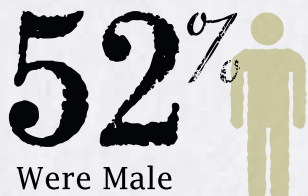


Pedestrians

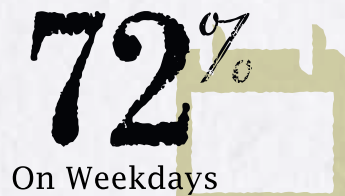


Motorcycle Drivers

Of the 25 teens killed in 2015



Were Male



On Weekdays



Single Vehicle

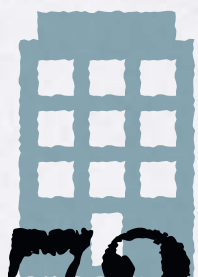
ALMOST 60%

of all teen occupants killed were

 **NOT BUCKLED UP** 

Teens have the lowest seat belt use of any age.

Since the Utah Graduated Driver License (GDL) laws went into effect in 1999, there has been a 65% decrease in the rate of teens ages 15-17 killed in motor vehicle crashes (Utah Department of Health).



72%

Urban

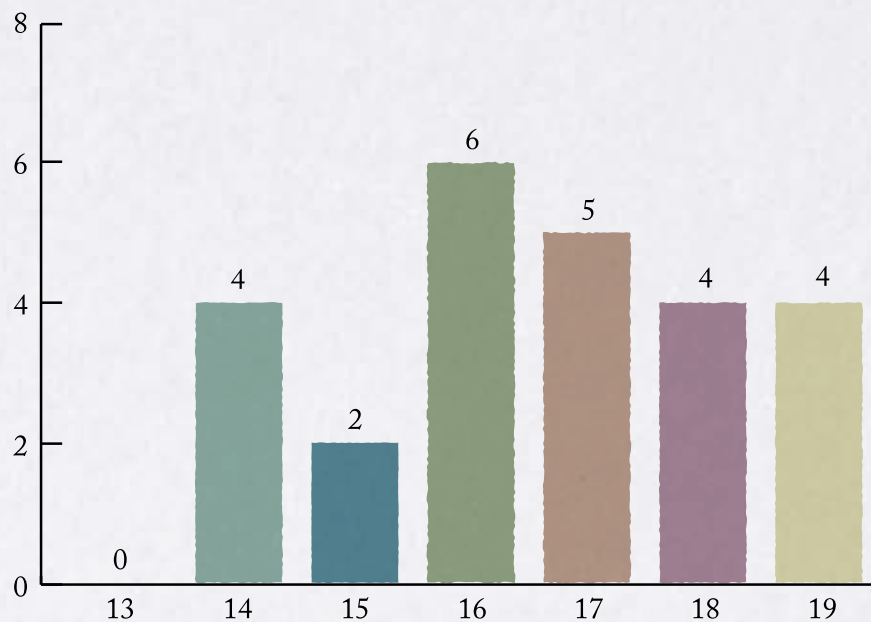
VS.



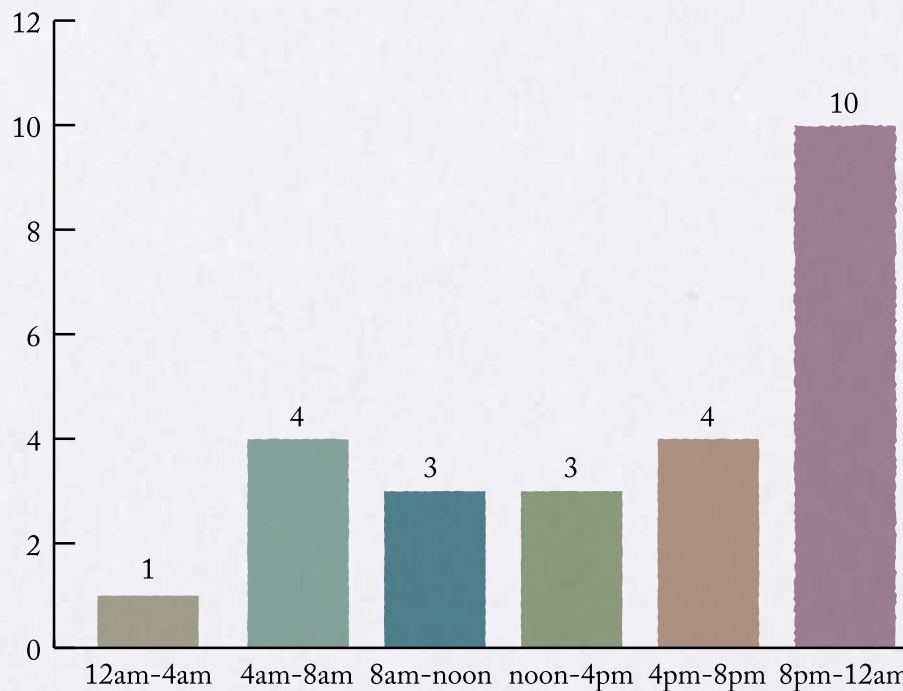
28%

Rural

Age of teen deaths



Time of day



TEEN DRIVER STATISTICS

In 2015, 28 teen drivers were involved in fatal car crashes. A total of 30 people were killed in these crashes, including the 10 teen drivers featured in this book. In 2015, teen drivers were two times more likely to have a contributing factor in a fatal crash than drivers of other ages.

17.9% Failed To Yield The Right Of Way

14.3% Excessive Speed

14.3% Disregarded A Traffic Signal

10.7% Overcorrected

10.7% Fatigue

7.1% Driver Was Distracted

7.1% Driver Was Under The Influence

7.1% Improper Lane Change

7.1% Driving On Wrong Side Of The Road

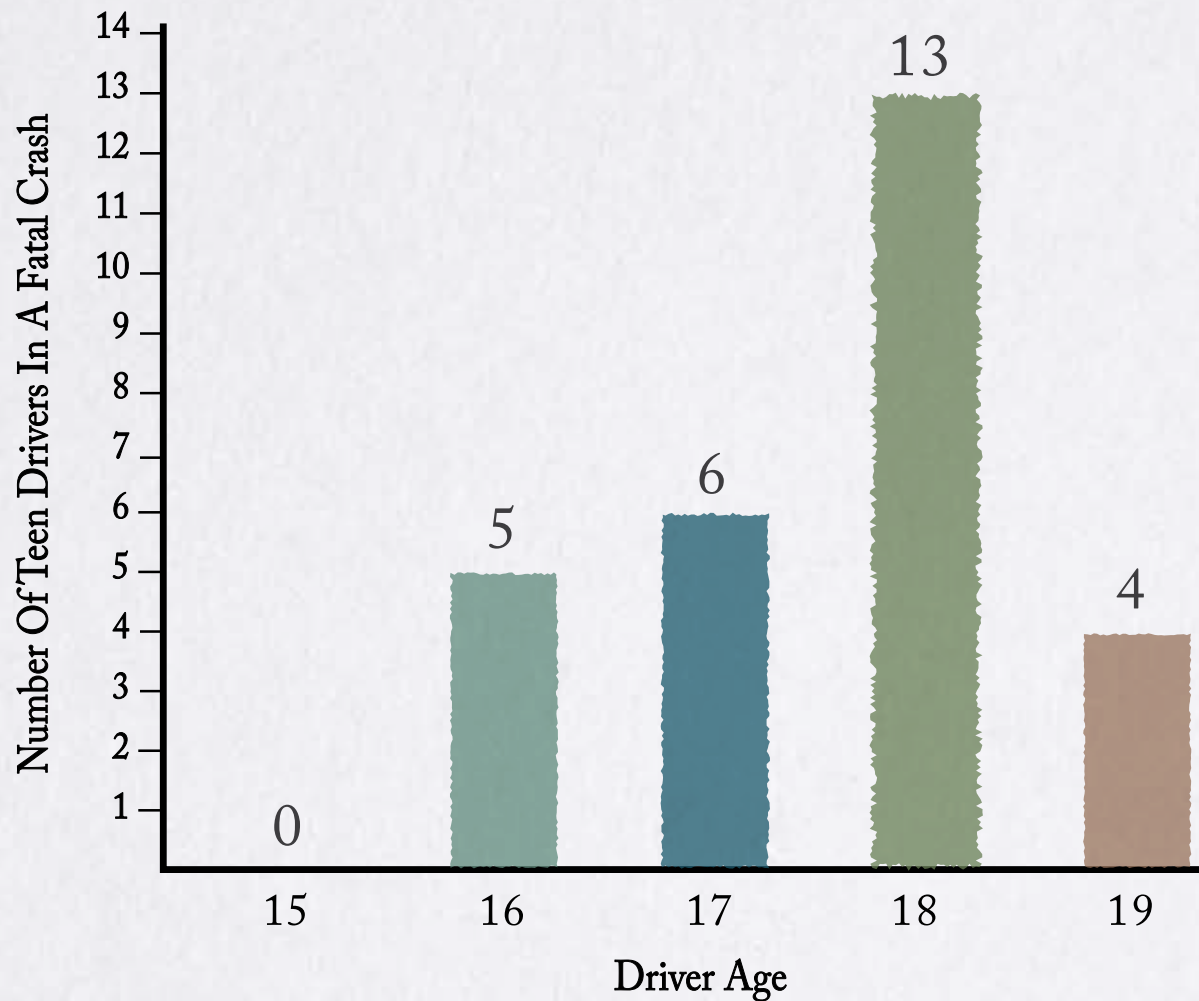
6.0% Driver Suffered A Medical Illness

3.6% Erratic/Negligent/Reckless Driving

3.6% Vehicle Defect

3.6% Emotional Driver

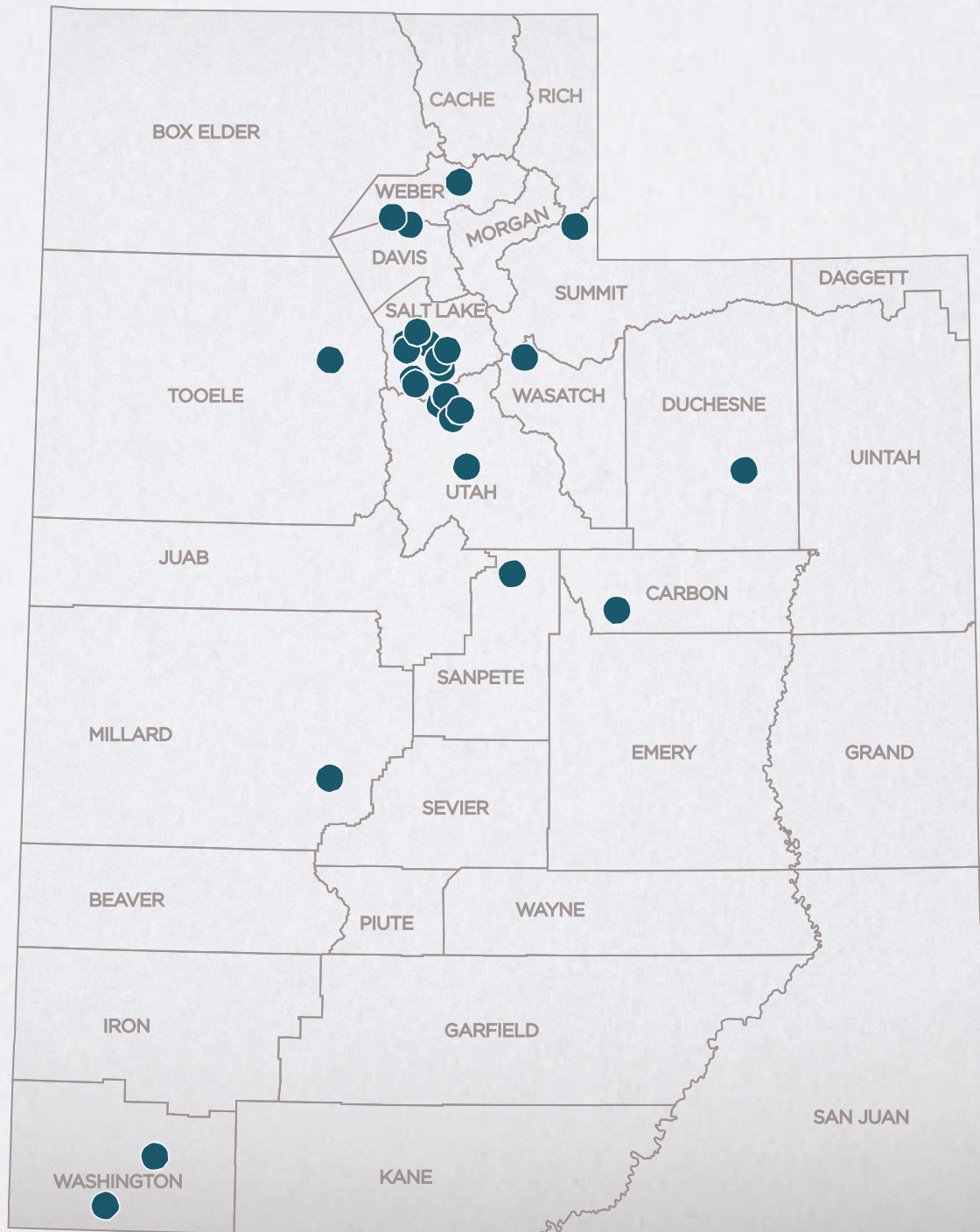
AGE OF TEEN DRIVERS IN FATAL CRASH



Nationally, crash fatalities (crash fatalities/10,000 population) are highest for 16 to 17-year-olds within the first six months after getting their license—and remain high through age 24.

Source: The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research institution and State Farm Insurance Companies® 2013.

2015 UTAH TEEN MOTOR VEHICLE FATALITIES



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK TO SAVE LIVES

For the past eight years, families have courageously shared their stories about how they lost their teen on a Utah road. Their hope in sharing these stories is that others never have to feel the pain of losing a loved one in a car crash. Please learn from these stories. Talk with your loved ones, friends, classmates and students about these tragic stories and set rules for your car and whenever you ride in a car.

When reading these stories, please consider the following questions:

- What caused the crash?
- Could it have been prevented?
- What rules can you set while you are driving or riding in a car that can help avoid this type of crash?

Remember to be sensitive and not to place blame on any one person. Rather, focus on the principles that can be applied to encourage safe driving. Point out actions that are dangerous and should be avoided.

This book would not be possible without support from the following organizations:

Utah Department of Health

Utah Department of Transportation

Utah Department of Public Safety

Utah Teen Driving Task Force

To view Teen Memoriams from previous years, visit

DontDriveStupid.com



2014



2013



2012



2011



2010



2009



2008



2007

**DON'T DRIVE
STUPID**

ZERO Fatalities® *A Goal We Can All Live With*

DontDriveStupid.com