



**For Immediate Release**

## **Not Buying Your Teenager A Car Can Save Their Life And Your Money**

Since crashes are the leading cause of death for older teenagers and the small cars they commonly drive are two or three times deadlier than a large car, why don't parents do something to avoid that lethal risk?

That's the question the co-authors of a book about car safety want to raise while Americans are thinking about a car for their kids to use at high school or college. It's especially urgent since recent studies show texting may be the greatest driver distraction ever, and teens are perhaps the most ardent texters.

The authors of *Car Advice For Women (and Smart Men)* believe that parents should consider not getting their kids a car at all, or at least choose a large model if they have to buy a car.

Authors Susan Winlaw and Alex Law also believe that, in many situations, not buying a car can save money as well as lives.

"The desire to buy a car for a newly-licensed high school student or someone headed for college is strong," Winlaw acknowledges, "since issues of freedom and tradition are involved. But a lot of parents also want to stop chauffeuring their kids so they can have more time for themselves."

Parents are absolutely entitled to do what they think best for their kids, of course. But Winlaw says "We'd like them to think about what really is the safest thing for their children, since the risks for teen drivers and passengers are enormous."

Car crashes have been the number one cause of death for thousands of kids from 15 to 19 years for a long time, and the risk could be growing because of texting, which is now known to be one of the worst driver distractions ever.

The danger increases because so many parents and teens favor "cute little cars." From a safety perspective, says Law, small cars are the worst choice, regardless of how many "crash rating" stars or "safety pick" awards they have. In head-on crash tests, those ratings only apply against vehicles of roughly the same weight.

"Vehicle weight has a direct impact on vehicle safety," Law says, "and the major crash-testing organizations make that clear in their test results. But the most important safety truth comes from statistics gathered by the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety (IIHS)."

Based on millions of real-world crashes in the United States, the IIHS knows that people in compact cars are twice as likely to be killed in a multi-vehicle crash than people in large sedans, and three times as likely to die in a single-vehicle crash. It's also true that drivers and passengers usually sustain more and greater injuries if they're not killed.

"A compact car like a Honda Civic with a five-star front crash rating is not as safe as a large car with a five-star front crash rating," says Law, "and parents need to understand that when they're shopping for a car."

Law suggests that parents buy the largest car they can, and to look for one with a built-in safety-security system (such as GM's OnStar) that will bring an ambulance or cop car to a precise location if the driver can't make a call, after a crash.

But before parents start looking at larger cars, Law and Winlaw want them to think about the no-car option for their teens, either as drivers or passengers.

"The late teens are the most dangerous years for your kids to be in a car without an adult driver," Law says, "and the concerned parent might want to do whatever she can to stop that from happening."

The best solution would depend upon a family's personal situation, but it's always worth considering the cost benefits of your kids riding in cabs or limos or some other professional transit service.

Such services aren't cheap, but when you calculate the true cost of letting a teen drive her own car it quickly adds up. "Insurance alone can be an enormous expense," says Winlaw, "and repair costs are always unknown."

For high school kids, more chauffeur duty could be the best answer. "Parents could form a pool of adults from among their kids' friends who feel the same way," Winlaw says, "or agree to split the cost of cabs or limos, or do anything they can think of. Regardless of their personal situation, they should at least try to do more. The question is, how much is your child's life worth?"

Law says he and Winlaw decided to write *Car Advice For Women (and Smart Men)*, because the truths of many life-threatening issues aren't widely known to consumers.

"For more information on real-world safety tips, or to buy the book," Law says, "concerned consumers should go to [www.CarAdviceForWomen.com](http://www.CarAdviceForWomen.com)."

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For more information on any part of this release or to arrange an interview with Susan Winlaw or Alexander Law, write to [KeepTeensSafe@aol.com](mailto:KeepTeensSafe@aol.com) or call Lynn Marie Town at 416-981-3404 to leave voicemail. For bio information on the authors or for more information about the book, go to [www.CarAdviceForWomen.com](http://www.CarAdviceForWomen.com).