



News Release

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SHERIFF PROVIDES SCHOLARSHIPS FOR TEEN DRIVER SAFETY PROGRAM

Lexington County Sheriff James R. Metts will provide scholarships to 35 Lexington County teen-agers to attend a teen driver safety program that is conducted by the South Carolina chapter of the National Safety Council.

The Lexington County Sheriff's Department received \$1,000 from the Wal-Mart Foundation and \$250 from Mishoe's Tow Service to provide scholarships for 35 Lexington County teen-agers to attend the Alive at 25 program conducted by the National Safety Council, Metts said. Parents and teen-agers who want to obtain the scholarships, which will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis, can contact Lt. Jim Crawford with the Sheriff's Department Traffic Division on his voice mail at 785-0814 or via e-mail at [**jcrawford@lex-co.com**](mailto:jcrawford@lex-co.com).

Metts supports the Alive at 25 program, which was first implemented more than a decade ago, because the four-hour program effectively teaches teen-agers how to drive safely. The Colorado State Patrol has used the program to educate teen-age motorists and dramatically reduced the number of teen-agers who are killed in vehicle collisions in Colorado.

Young motorists are nearly twice as likely as other motorists to be involved in fatal vehicle crashes, Metts said. Each year, nearly 6,000 teen-agers are killed in vehicle crashes, which are the leading cause of death for teen-agers in the United States.

The most common mistakes in fatal vehicle crashes involving teen-agers are driving faster than the posted speed limit and driving at unsafe speeds, Metts said. Nearly one-third of the fatal vehicle crashes involving teen-agers are alcohol-related.

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Parents need to remember that teen-agers are learning about life as well as driving, and they need to help their teen-age children learn how to be good, safe drivers, Metts said. Teen-age motorists can be overwhelmed when faced with the tasks of making safe driving decisions, managing passengers in their vehicles and avoiding traffic hazards.

Metts said parents can help their children become safer drivers by enforcing the following common-sense safety tips:

- ❖ Parents should implement a contract with their teen-age children who have been given the privilege of driving and strictly enforce the rules that have been agreed upon concerning the teen-agers' driving privileges.
- ❖ Teen-age motorists and all passengers in their vehicles must wear seat belts.
- ❖ Parents should enforce a zero tolerance policy for driving in excess of the speed limit and driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs.
- ❖ Teen-age motorists should not be allowed to drive with teen-age passengers in their vehicles unless an adult passenger also is present to supervise.
- ❖ Teen-age motorists should be allowed to drive at night only with an adult passenger in the vehicle to supervise.
- ❖ Teen-age motorists should not be allowed to use cell phones for talking or text messaging while they are driving. They also should not be allowed to listen to music while driving. Unnecessary distractions can lead to vehicle collisions.
- ❖ Teen-age motorists should be allowed to drive in inclement weather only if an adult passenger is present in the vehicle to supervise.
