



Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Michigan Teen Safe Driving Program Enters 10<sup>th</sup> Year**

*Applications now being accepted for a teen-led traffic safety awareness campaign*

Students at every Michigan high school have the opportunity to help make their fellow teens better drivers by participating in this year's *Strive for a Safer Drive* (S4SD) campaign. This public-private partnership between Ford Driving Skills for Life (DSFL) and the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning aims to reduce the leading cause of death for teens: traffic crashes. Started in Michigan in 2011, this will be the program's 10<sup>th</sup> year.

In 2019, teens and young adults age 15-20 accounted for 8 percent of all traffic deaths in Michigan, with 55.7 percent of those deaths being the driver. Inexperience and risk-taking behavior are the primary factors contributing to teen driver fatalities.

The S4SD campaign encourages teens to talk to other teens, along with community members, about making safe driving choices. Schools will develop and implement a student-led, peer-to-peer traffic safety awareness campaign. Campaign topics may include distracted driving, seat belts, underage drinking/impaired driving, speeding and winter driving. This project does not need face-to-face instruction to work. It can be done successfully in a virtual environment.

Participating schools will each receive \$1,000 to conduct their campaign. Once the campaigns are completed and a final project is submitted, cash prizes will be awarded to the top five schools.

All participating schools will have the opportunity to send students to a free Ford DSFL hands-on driving clinic in the spring. Professional driving instructors from across the country will teach teens key skills such as hazard recognition, speed and space management, and vehicle handling with hands-on instruction. A station highlighting the dangers of distracted and impaired driving will also be taught at the Ford DSFL event.

Every Michigan high school is encouraged to apply for the S4SD campaign. Last year, 57 high schools participated, more than triple the number that participated in the first year (16). Since its start, 168 different Michigan high schools have participated.

Application information, including examples of winning campaigns and tips for success is available on [Michigan.gov/s4sd](http://Michigan.gov/s4sd). Applications are due November 20.

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