

CHP offers online Start Smart youth program to learn safe driving

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The California Highway Patrol (CHP) has been awarded a grant to help young drivers learn how to eliminate high-risk actions and decrease their chances of being in a crash.

Designed for newly licensed teen drivers and their parents or guardians, the “Start Smart” program is currently being conducted online for 2020-21 because of the coronavirus pandemic. The two-hour course has been developed specifically to reduce vehicle crashes that cause serious injuries and fatalities. The free program incorporates innovative techniques to capture the attention of teens and parents, while addressing common driving dangers.

“The ‘Start Smart’ program is an effective tool for teens and their parents to combat young drivers’ risky driving behaviors,” CHP Commissioner Warren Stanley said. “The department is committed to making a difference in the future of California’s youth through continued traffic safety educational efforts.”

The “Start Smart” curriculum is based on collision statistics, teen driver and passenger behaviors, Graduated Driver License (GDL) laws, cultural changes and the need for stronger parental involvement. Parents and guardians are reminded of their responsibility to teach their new driver and model good driving behaviors.

Parents and teenagers can register for a “Start Smart” class by the Crescent City CHP office at (707) 218-2000. More information about “Start Smart” and the GDL program can be found on the free CHP Start Smart mobile app, which is available on Android and iOS devices. The app also includes access to the California Driver Handbook and a trip logger to keep track of the user’s driving time to help them prepare to obtain their license.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.