



**BLANK CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**
IOWA HEALTH - DES MOINES

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™
Iowa Chapter



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Contact: Amy Varcoe, Media Specialist
(515) 241-5057 | (515) 205-6090
varcoeae@ihs.org

Maximize Experience. Minimize Risks. For All New Young Drivers

-Pediatricians Express Concern Over Weak of Graduated Driver Licensing Laws in Iowa-

DES MOINES, IA – Pediatricians are among America’s most trusted allies for information on the health of our children. Now they are lending their expertise to a public health crisis affecting thousands of families—teen driving deaths. The Allstate Foundation and eight chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics, chosen through competitive proposals, have joined forces to combat this epidemic and educate communities on the value and importance of stronger graduated driver licensing laws. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that states adopt, improve and enforce these laws for teen drivers.

In February, three Iowa teens lost their lives in car accidents within hours of each other. In the past five years, 162 Iowa teen drivers, ages 14-17, have lost their lives in crashes (CDC, 2009). A report released by the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) reveals that the number of 16- and 17-year-old driver deaths in passenger vehicles increased 11 percent. If the trend continued, it will mark the end of eight straight years of cumulative declines in deaths for this age group.

Research has shown that teen driver crashes can be reduced by improving the structure of driver licensing systems. Graduated Driver Licensing, or GDL, is an approach that allows young drivers to gain experience while minimizing risks to themselves and others with whom they share the road.

Through a grant provided by The Allstate Foundation, the Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics has partnered with Blank Children’s Hospital to educate Iowa’s pediatricians and lawmakers on current Graduated Driver’s License laws and changes that can be made to improve teen driving safety in Iowa.

Join Blank Children’s Hospital pediatricians, Dr. Jennifer Groos and Dr. Amy Shriver, *Cassler Family and Kathy Leggett*, Blank Children’s Advocacy and Outreach, on **February 21 at 10 a.m.** in the Blank Children’s Hospital lobby to address the needed improvements in current laws regarding teen driving and the lasting effects motor vehicle crashes can have on families and society.

“Allstate and The Allstate Foundation are committed to making sure that no American family has to deal with the loss of a loved one due to a teen driving crash,” stated Vicky Dinges, vice president of public social responsibility at Allstate. “The American Academy of Pediatrics lends a valuable and respected voice to this movement and will help to give communities the tools and education needed to protect our most valuable asset—our children.”

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About The Allstate Foundation

Established in 1952, The Allstate Foundation is an independent, charitable organization made possible by subsidiaries of The Allstate Corporation (NYSE ALL). Through partnerships with nonprofit organizations across the country, The Allstate Foundation brings the relationships, reputation and resources of Allstate to support innovative and lasting solutions that enhance people's well-being and prosperity. With a focus on teen safe driving and building financial independence for domestic violence survivors, The Allstate Foundation also promotes safe and vital communities; tolerance, inclusion, and diversity; and economic empowerment. For more information, visit www.allstatefoundation.org.

About Blank Children's Hospital

Blank Children's Hospital was built in 1944 by A.H. and Anna Blank in honor of their son. Since that time, the hospital has grown and undergone several renovations to accommodate sick and injured children. Today, Blank Children's is an 88-bed facility that is committed to family-centered healing, caring and teaching for children across Iowa. With more than 80 pediatric specialists and hundreds of pediatric nurses who care "just for kids," Blank Children's is a hospital unlike any other. The number of medical specialists, programs and services is constantly growing to improve care and meet the changing health needs of children. The dedicated doctors, nurses and staff at Blank Children's help care for more than 60,000 patients each year, and another nearly 80,000 children and adults are impacted through the Center for Advocacy and Outreach programs. Blank Children's is part of Iowa Health – Des Moines which includes Iowa Methodist, Iowa Lutheran, Methodist West hospitals, John Stoddard Cancer Center and its affiliated physicians and clinics.

About the Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. The Iowa Chapter supports positive changes in children's healthcare through community education, communication and legislative advocacy. The Chapter believes all children from infancy to young adulthood should attain their full potential for physical, mental, emotional and social health.