

Passenger casualties in Gloucestershire make up about 15% of all those killed or seriously injured, and the most alarming peak is amongst passengers aged 15-19.

The most common characteristic in these cases is that they were being driven by a relatively inexperienced driver - usually aged themselves between 17-24 years old.

Best Mate...?

Extensive national, regional and local research amongst young drivers has shown that they have little or no fear of killing or injuring themselves in a collision, but the idea of killing or seriously injuring their friends is a worry...

If you, or your child, is a regular passenger of a young driver, make sure you have, or you give them, the confidence to speak up if they feel unsafe.

What's the alternative?

If your teenager finds him or herself in a situation where they're frightened of getting into a car with an irresponsible, dangerous or possibly even drunk or incapable driver, they need to know that they've got a real alternative...

- By simply ensuring that your child has got the telephone number of a reliable taxi service in their phone, wallet or purse, they have an alternative...
- Go one better, and promise your child that you will reimburse the taxi fare if they take one in an emergency situation.

This way, they have an alternative...

- If you don't have plans, offer to pick them up to ensure they get home safely with a safe driver.

This might mean a late night, or a detour all round town, but at least they have an alternative...

Failing this (and we admit that late nights and driving for driving's sake is not appealing after the age of 25!), make sure you equip yourself and your child with the stark facts:

- More teenage girls die as passengers, than as drivers
- Research shows that young male drivers aged 17-20 years old are 7 times more at risk of a collision than male drivers of other ages - but between the hours of 2am-5am, their risk is 17 times greater
- Carrying one passenger makes a collision twice as likely, but carrying two or more passengers makes a collision five times more likely
- Over half of all fatal and seriously injured passenger casualties in Gloucestershire in the last three years were aged between 15 and 24 years old.