



Safety Corner

Topic: Responsible Passengers

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Learning Objective: Students will learn how to be a responsible passenger.

Students will participate in a role play scenario about being a responsible passenger in a vehicle after a group discussion about responsible drivers and passengers. There is also a responsible passenger pledge form at the end if students want to sign it.

Some of you are not driving yet, but you have certainly had the opportunity to ride with others as a passenger.

Have you ridden in a car with a responsible driver? How do you know? What are the characteristics of a responsible driver?

Good drivers:

- Focus on the road
- Are calm and patient – despite the road conditions
- Anticipate possible dangers or problems before they
- Follow the traffic laws
- Know the limits of their vehicles.

Are there any others to add?



As important as it is to be a responsible driver, it is equally important to be a responsible passenger by doing the following:

- Help the driver focus on the road. Responsible passengers limit any activity that could be distracting to a driver. Cell phone conversations are kept at a minimum. They use inside voices that are calm and encouraging. They ensure that any other passengers are not doing or saying things that will distract the driver. They do not make any requests of the driver that are not related to concentrating on the road. They choose to have the most important conversations after they have reached their destination – not during.
- Are calm and patient. Responsible passengers monitor the tone and volume of their voice so it is not distracting. They do not encourage the driver to drive faster than the speed limits or road conditions allow, even if they are late to their destination. They understand it is better to arrive late than not at all.
- Point out potential problems. Responsible passengers are watching the road and road conditions too. If they foresee a potential problem, they may bring it to the attention of the driver. Even if the driver already foresaw the problem, they will be grateful to have another set of eyes looking out for safety.



- Help navigate by reading maps, GPS, street signs, traffic signs, and paying attention to street lights. Responsible passengers support the driver by being another set of eyes. They may be able to read the GPS or maps so the driver can focus on the road. Passengers may see street signs or traffic signs before the driver notices them, allowing the driver to monitor inclement weather conditions, unusual road work, or heavy traffic that require a high level of concentration.
- Limit conversations unrelated to traffic. Lively conversations can be distracting mentally. To help drivers remain focused, responsible passengers limit conversations on topics outside of driving and choose to have serious conversations when the car is parked.

Are there any other ideas you can think of that would make a responsible passenger?



Activity (Role Play):

Stacey and Sissy's Not So Safe Ride

There are three characters: Stacey, Sissy and Sam. Stacey and Sam are high school students. Stacey is the driver. Sissy is in middle school and is Stacey's younger sister.

Stacey (driver): If you don't hurry up, I'm going to leave you and you're going to have to find your own ride to school.

Sissy: All right, all right. I'm ready.

Stacey (driver): Are you wearing my scarf?

Sissy: Oh, please. It's so cute.

Stacey (driver): No! Now take it off and throw it in the back seat. I'm going to be late for my first period class waiting on you.

Sissy: Wait! I haven't buckled my seat belt yet.

Stacey (driver): Well you better hurry up 'cause I'm not waiting for that.

Sissy: Dad said you are not supposed to drive until all the passengers are safely buckled up.

Stacey (driver): Well, Dad's not here right now, is he? And if you tell him, you better get used to walking to school.

Sissy: Why are we stopping? Whose house is this?

Stacey (driver): I'm picking up my friend, Sam.

Sissy: Sam?!!!! I thought Dad said you couldn't have more than one passenger in your car right now. You just got your license last week.

Stacey (driver): Be. Quiet.

Sam: Hey, Stacey. Thanks for the ride. Hi Sissy, you mind sitting in the back seat?

Sissy: Why?



Stacey (driver): Get in the back seat.

Sam: Oh! That's my favorite song. Turn up the radio! (Starts snapping and dancing to the music) Come on, Stacey!

Stacey (driver): That's my favorite song too! (Starts snapping and dancing to the music.)

Sissy: Stacey! Shouldn't both hands be on the steering wheel at all times?

Sam & Stacey: Be. Quiet.

Sam: This is the move I'm going to do at the dance next week. Watch this! (Snapping and dancing to the music)

Sissy: Stacey! Shouldn't your eyes be on the road?

Sam: Geesh, Stacey. Your little sister talks a lot. Don't you have a donut or something you can feed her?

Stacey (driver): Yeah, let me just reach behind the back seat and get my lunch.

Sissy: I don't want a donut! Yikes, Stacey, you just ran a stop sign!

Stacey (driver): Oops, sorry, I was just reaching for my lunch.

Sissy: I don't know how you can even think with the music so loud! Sam, turn it down!

Sam: Where's that donut?

Sissy: I'm calling Dad.

Stacey (driver): Sam, get her phone.

Sam: No, you get her phone. I don't know why but your dad doesn't like me driving with you. I'm sure he wouldn't like it if I took her phone.

Stacey (driver): I'm trying to drive!

Sam: Well, we will never get there at the speed you are driving. Step on the gas! Here, I'll steer while you get her phone.

Sissy: Dad?! Sam is in the car and he is not being a responsible passenger! How can I tell? Well . . .



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Responsible Passengers



Find and point out potential problems.

Own a calm and patient demeanor.

Collaborate with the driver to focus on the road.

Uppdate driver by reading maps, GPS, street signs, traffic signs, and paying attention to street lights.

Save distracting and unrelated conversations for later.

I pledge to be a responsible passenger. I will collaborate with the driver to keep everyone safe.

X

Safe Student





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Sources:

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