

A new study of teen driving by Liberty Mutual Insurance and Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) found 87 percent of teen drivers would refrain from street racing -- which caused 804 deaths from 2001 to 2005 -- if they were asked to by their passengers. However, only 57 percent of teen passengers said they would ask the driver to stop racing other cars.

The study involved 3,580 tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders at 29 high schools across the country. It found 38 percent of teen drivers admit they have engaged in street racing, although 73 percent of those drivers said they feel the behavior is at least "somewhat dangerous."

"The results from this study reveal that teens continue to take risks behind the wheel, yet their friends could have a greater impact in reducing those activities, if only they felt empowered to speak up," said Dave Melton, director of Transportation Technical Consulting Services at the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety in Hopkinton, Mass. "Racing, texting while driving, talking on the cell phone -- there is a preponderance of so many behaviors and distractions that it is becoming alarmingly rare to find drivers who squarely focus on the one thing they should: the road." While 76 percent of teens who have engaged in texting-while-driving said they would stop if asked by the passenger, only 46 percent of teen passengers said they would speak up. Only 41 percent said they would ask a driver not to speed, and just 18 percent said they'd ask him not to talk on a cell phone. Parents and teens can develop responsible driving habits by visiting [www.LibertyMutualTeenDriving.com](http://www.LibertyMutualTeenDriving.com).