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Bridgestone Americas' Teens Drive Smart Driving Experience teaches new drivers potentially life-saving skills

Free program focuses on smart driving choices, eliminating distracted driving

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (July 27, 2012) – Bridgestone Americas' newest teen driver safety initiative is geared to help America's newest drivers become our smartest.

The Bridgestone Teens Drive Smart Driving Experience is a free, half-day program designed to equip teens with the skills to handle the challenges of today's roadways. Each session combines classroom instruction with hands-on driving exercises to teach defensive driving skills and reinforce smart decision making on the road. The program offers new drivers the opportunity to become better, smarter drivers in a fun and interactive driving experience.

Bridgestone's Teens Drive Smart program puts teens behind the wheel and creates real-life distractions to showcase distracted driving and the negative effects it can have on driving ability. Drivers also learn basic vehicle dynamics and how to navigate less-than-ideal driving situations. The program's curriculum is designed to:

- Define and identify distracted driving behaviors
- Identify the dangerous driving situations caused by distracted driving
- Develop a base understanding of driving principles
- Understand the relationship between distraction and reaction time

Teens learn from professional drivers who have spent years instructing students from the right seat. Our instructors have perfected their craft at various driving schools and on racing circuits, competing on different levels for various championship titles. Several of these professionals have stunt driving backgrounds, and have appeared in commercials, TV shows and feature films. The program's instructors stress the importance of safety during each behind-the-wheel activity. Teens learn:

- Vision and the importance of keeping your eyes on the road
- Reaction times to emergency braking situations and controlling your vehicle
- The negative effects that distracted driving can have behind the wheel
- Accident avoidance and control of your vehicle

Parents learn:

- An awareness of their own driving behavior and how it impacts their teens' driving patterns
- How to model proper driving habits
- The importance of clarifying and enforcing the rules of responsible driving with teens

"While drivers are more aware now than ever about distracted driving and its devastating effects, crashes related to distracted driving remain one of the leading causes of death for 16-to-21-year-olds, so there is still work to be done," said Angela Patterson, Bridgestone's teen driver safety coordinator. "This new program helps our newest drivers see the true impact distracted driving can have, and how it can endanger them and the drivers around them. Bridgestone remains committed to educating our newest drivers on how to stay safe on the road, and this new experience offers valuable information to help them do that."

The event is being held in seven cities: St. Louis, Mo., Aug. 4 – 5; Kansas City, Mo. Aug. 11 – 12; Denver, Aug. 25 – 26, San Francisco, Sept. 22 – 23; Houston, Oct. 6 – 7; Phoenix Oct. 20 – 21; and Nashville, Tenn. Nov. 3 – 4. Participating teenagers must be between the ages of 15-19 and have a valid driver's license or learner's permit. Attendees need to have at least 30 hours of driving experience to gain the most from the Bridgestone Teens Drive Smart Driving Experience. The event is free to attend, but advanced registration is required. Visit www.teensdrivesmart.com and click on 'Driving Experience' to register.

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About Bridgestone Americas, Inc.:

Nashville, Tenn.-based Bridgestone Americas, Inc. (BSAM) is the U.S. subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation, the world's largest tire and rubber company. BSAM and its subsidiaries develop, manufacture and market a wide range of Bridgestone, Firestone and associate brand tires to address the needs of a broad range of customers, including consumers, automotive and commercial vehicle original equipment manufacturers, and those in the agricultural, forestry and mining industries. The companies are also engaged in retreading operations throughout the Western Hemisphere and produce air springs, roofing materials, and industrial fibers and textiles. The BSAM family of companies also operates the world's largest chain of automotive tire and service centers. Guided by its One Team, One Planet message, the company is dedicated to achieving a positive environmental impact in all of the communities it calls home.

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