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News Release | For Immediate Release***New Survey Shows Most Licensed Teen Drivers Still Text While Driving; Critical Parent-Teen Conversations Decline Once Teen Has License – Just When Dangers Are Highest***

Bloomington, Ill., (April 10, 2012) A new State Farm® survey, conducted in February by Harris Interactive, shows the majority of teens with driver's licenses, 57percent, admit to texting while driving, despite the widespread attention surrounding the dangers of this risky practice. The State Farm survey was conducted by telephone in the United States among 652 14-17 year olds, including 280 who have a driver's license or permit. These results come from a follow-up to a 2010 State Farm survey, and the numbers are virtually unchanged. Key findings in the 2012 survey include:

Texting vs. Drinking and Driving - Teens Aren't Getting the Message

Despite academic research indicating the consequences of texting while driving can be as severe as drunk driving, some teens still don't see it that way. In the survey, fewer teens view texting while driving as leading to fatal consequences as compared to drinking while driving. Of 14- to 17-year-olds who intend to have or already have a driver's license, the survey found that 35 percent strongly agree that if they regularly text and drive they will be killed someday. In contrast, the majority of teens, 57percent, strongly agree that regularly drinking while driving will be fatal.

The survey also showed that more teens think they could get into an accident when drinking while driving versus texting while driving. In the survey, of these same teens, 63 percent strongly agree they will get into an accident if they regularly text and drive. This compares with 83 percent who strongly agree they will get into an accident if they regularly drink and drive.

Parents Play a Vital Role

The survey affirms the vital role parents play in keeping their new drivers safe behind the wheel. Teens who refrain from texting while driving were much more likely to report having frequent talks with their parents about safe driving. In the survey, more teens who never text and drive talk to their parents very often or sometimes about driving (82%) compared to teens who do text and drive (67%).

Talks Decline When Needed Most

The survey also revealed a sharp decline in parent/teen interactions about driving after the teen receives their driver's license. Teens who have a learner's permit are more than twice as likely as those who already have a license to report that they talk very often with their parents about driving (46% vs. 22%). This is despite the fact that the first year after receiving a license brings the highest lifetime crash risk.

“The conversation should not end when teens get their license,” says said Chris Mullen, Director of Technology Research at State Farm. “Through this survey and other teen driver research, we know that ongoing parental involvement in the learning process is key to keeping teen drivers safe behind the wheel.”

About the Survey

This survey was conducted by telephone within the United States between February 2 and 5, 2012 by Harris Interactive on behalf of State Farm among 652 U.S. 14-17 year olds (including 280 who have a driver’s license or permit and 362 who plan to get a driver’s license). Figures for age, sex, geographic region, and race/ethnicity were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. For more information please contact Vicki Harper, 309-766-9743.

About State Farm®

State Farm and its affiliates are the largest provider of car insurance in the U.S. and is a leading insurer in Canada. In addition to providing auto insurance quotes, their 17,800 agents and more than 65,000 employees serve 81 million policies and accounts – more than 79 million auto, home, life and health policies in the United States and Canada, and nearly 2 million bank accounts. Commercial auto insurance, along with coverage for renters, business owners, boats and motorcycles, is also available. State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company is the parent of the State Farm family of companies. State Farm is ranked No. 37 on the Fortune 500 list of largest companies. For more information, please visit <http://www.statefarm.com> or in Canada <http://www.statefarm.ca>.

About Harris Interactive

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