

### Waiting Nine Months

One of the greatest highlights of high school is finally being able to drive without a parent in the passenger seat nagging you. Watching that little slip of paper being printed out and handed to me, I thought, was the key to more freedom. I looked at the little slip of paper as if I had just won the lottery, it was my ticket to being able to go anywhere I wanted. What I didn't realize was how boring it is to drive places alone and how difficult it would be to wait nine months until I could drive my friends.

It became clear the second I stepped into high school, that not many kids really cared about the law requiring teenagers to wait nine months before driving anyone other than immediate family. Since my mother works for child passenger safety, there was absolutely no chance of me being one of the many teens that ignore the law. I understood and still understand why the law is in place though. I knew that there was no way I would break that law for fear of getting in a crash and hurting my friends. However a challenge presented itself, if everyone else wasn't abiding by the law my friends didn't always understand why I did.

Hockey season is when the pressure to drive friends became the most difficult. Multiple other members of the team drove players even when their nine months were not up. Since I drive a minivan I often felt a certain responsibility, since I can fit more players and bags, I should drive them. It often felt like having the devil and angel on my shoulders, one telling me to not give in and the other saying, just drive them it isn't even that far to the rink. The risk though of potentially getting in a car accident always overpowered my thoughts of driving friends.

Now that my nine months are up, I have an even better understanding as to why the law was put in place. With friends in the car it means, loud music, obnoxious behavior, loud discussions , getting easily distracted and often times making bad decision, influenced by people in the car. Sometimes, the minute that friend sits in my car, my common sense goes out the window along with my ability to make good choices. All teenagers need to abide by the law that requires drivers under eighteen years of age to wait nine months to drive friends. It is for our safety, the passengers safety and the safety of other people on the road.