

9th GRADE VIDEO SCRIPTS

9th Grade: Driving Contract

Speaker: You can tell you are approaching a big event in life when the very thought of it instantly brings out both fear and excitement. That's what happens when you and your teenager think about them getting a driver's license. They are excited about their new-found freedom but you're forced to face a ton of fears. Will they be safe? Will they be smart? What if in the 9th grade year, you led your teenager through a rite of passage where you give them something more important than keys to a car? You also give them your trust.

A driving contract helps you and your teenagers get on the same page before they start driving. Now, I know what you're thinking. You're like, "I love the idea of a contract. Does that mean I can sue them when they wreck the car?" Hey, that's not what you're going to get to do. The point of a driving contract is not to control their behavior but it's a communication tool to teach your teenager about trust. There is so much more going on here than just learning how to operate a vehicle and avoiding speeding tickets. There is a transfer of trust that you are giving to them and this is a powerful time in the life of your teenager when they'll begin to make the majority of their decisions apart from you. Your driving contract should definitely set clear expectations that you have for them. It should teach them about how to drive safely but that should only be the beginning. The real conversation in this rite of passage is how they can earn freedom through building trust, and how they can lose freedom through breaking trust. And when they break trust,—not if, but when—how can they re-earn it. This is crucial to your relationship to them but it's also a vital skill for them to learn to be adults here. It's more than just driving. It's one of their first big leaps to adulthood. It's conversations like this that we remember the most. If you use the materials provided by your church student ministry, you will invite your teenager to more than just driving a car. You can invite them into a deeper relationship with you and into the adventure of adulthood. So the next step for you is to go check out the how-to video to plan your driving contract rite of passage.

Parent Guide for 9th graders: The Driving Contract

Speaker: You know, the scariest words a parent would ever hear are: “can I have the car keys?”

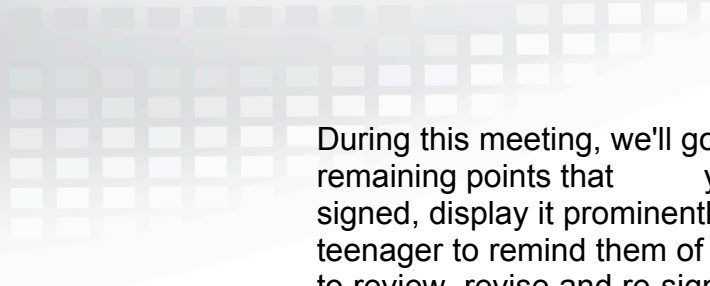
Welcome to the 9th grade rite of passage: the Driving Contract. During this rite of passage, parents will present a driving contract to their student. This contract is designed to help you emphasize to your student the weight and responsibility that comes with getting a driver's license. The resources for the rite of passage will help establish precedent for you and your teenager and to mark this time as another step towards the student's development into manhood or womanhood. We know that depending on what state you live in, your student can be very close to being able to get their driver's permit or they could be a year or two away. It's important at this time to go ahead and begin the discussion of driving with your student. This rite of passage is not just about getting a driver's license. This is a time when you, as a parent, begin to give more trust to your teenager and to discuss with them the importance of the new responsibilities that you are entrusting them with.

At this stage in your teenager's life, there is a shift in your relationship where a teenager may spend much more time away from you. When they drive a car, they experience their first significant amount of freedom. A huge worry on every parent's mind is: “how will they do making decisions on their own?”

The driving contract establishes a system for your teenager to build trust, and when necessary, restore a broken trust. In the contract, there are blank spaces for you to add any expectations that you have for your teenager. We know every teenager is going to make mistakes. We've included space in the driving contract to list consequences for when trust is broken.

This should be a two-way conversation when your teenager helps to determine what these consequences would be. You will ultimately decide what they will be but your teenager will be more likely to honor them if they participate in the process.

Go ahead and pick a day that you are going to present them with the driving contract. Put it on the calendar. Just like they can look forward to getting their permit, they need to look forward to having that meeting with you. When you meet with your teenager, we have provided a parent's script of topics and discussion starters that will help emphasize the serious nature of this event.



During this meeting, we'll go through the contract with your student, and add any remaining points that you discussed. When the contract is completed and signed, display it prominently permanently in your house and give a copy to your teenager to remind them of the responsibility they are taking on. You might want to review, revise and re-sign the driving contract each year around their birthday to make sure that it remains relevant and builds clear communication with your teenager. Other resources that we have provided for you, including car maintenance checklist, a document that tells you what is developmentally with your student, and devotionals centered around the topic of responsibility, trust and restoration of trust. It's easy to get caught in the excitement of growing up for both and your student. It's important to continue praying with your teenager and encouraging them in their walk with the lord. As they draw closer to him, you and your teenager will naturally draw closer to each other.

