



Young drivers account for 1 in 4 fatalities on the road

Insurer calls for increased training for young drivers

(Toronto , ON – March 2, 2006) Road safety continues to plague the GTA with recent statistics confirming more than 225 people died as a result of traffic collisions last year. **Drive for Life**, a local organization which delivers breakthrough driver training using state of the art simulators, suggests that most traffic collisions are preventable, particularly when drivers are equipped with defensive driving skills such as proper scanning and predicting techniques and skills for controlling a vehicle under adverse weather conditions.

According to Transport Canada , in 2004 young drivers (aged 16-24) accounted for 23.6 per cent of driver fatalities and 26.2 per cent of driver serious injuries, despite the fact that drivers in this age group account for only 13 per cent of licensed drivers.

“Handing the car keys over to your teen can be a nerve-wracking experience, especially with statistics like these. At Royal & SunAlliance, we believe that parents have an obligation to ensure their children have the driver training and skills necessary to make them safe drivers. That’s why we offer insurance discounts for families with young drivers who have participated in the **Drive for Life** program,” says Shawn DeSantis, Vice President of Personal Insurance at Royal & SunAlliance.

The **Drive for Life** training program uses state of the art driving simulators equipped with dynamic front, rear and side-view mirrors to teach drivers the defensive driving techniques required when faced with challenging, high-risk driving scenarios.

According to a pilot study conducted by SMARTRISK, an organization dedicated to preventing injuries and saving lives, the **Drive for Life** simulator based training program supports improvements in driving skills and behaviours among participants during the course of the program. The SMARTRISK study concluded that there was a significant reduction in collision levels among participants while using the simulator. Specifically, 58 per cent of participants experienced a collision incident in the initial test scenarios. At the end of the program, the collision rate on the simulator decreased to 7 per cent among participants. While these findings suggest that **Drive for Life** training may help significantly reduce collisions, SMARTRISK encourages all drivers to manage the risk inherent in driving by developing the necessary skills and attitudes.

“The complex driving environment in a large city means that drivers need stronger skills and modified behaviours to deal with challenging road situations,” said John Williamson, Managing Director of **Drive for Life**. “Experience is one of the most important factors in driving. We provide that experience through training on our simulators that is based on our proprietary SPOT driver program. By using SPOT (Scanning skills, Predicting ability, need to create Options and Taking action), **Drive for Life** trained drivers have successfully reduced their chance of being involved in a collision.”

The GTA ranks as the highest-risk driving location in the province, and from an insurance perspective this means there is a greater chance for collisions. Royal & SunAlliance offers graduates of the program discounted rates on automobile insurance premiums for each of their first four years on the road. The savings can amount to as much as 20 per cent in year one (up to 40 per cent if combined with a standard driver training program).

Drive for Life is located in the Sheridan Centre, 2225 Erin Mills Parkway in Mississauga . For more information about hours, location and training courses visit www.driveforlife.ca, or call 905-822-0111.

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About Drive for Life

Drive for Life is a breakthrough training approach for automobile drivers to improve their driving abilities. Using state-of-the-art simulator technology, drivers are exposed to a wide-range of high-risk driving situations, in a safe and effective environment. **Drive for Life's** proprietary **SPOT** technique: **S**can, **P**redict, **O**ptions, and **T**ake action – teaches drivers how to effectively anticipate and react to different high risk driving situations. **Drive for Life** is a Toronto based company that is leading the development of simulator training environments for automobile drivers.

** Stated discount rates are for newly licensed drivers only and are applicable in Ontario only. The applicability of discounts depends on accident and conviction records. Discounts are applied to the price that would otherwise be offered by the insurer to that driver for the identical products. The actual wordings of a policy, local law and rate regulations govern all situations.*

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