

New Tool for Teen Drivers Helps Keep Them Safer Behind the Wheel

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USAA members William and Lora Gill and their son Ethan.

When USAA members William and Lora Gill heard that their teenage son Ethan downloaded a smartphone app known as Automatic[®], they had no idea it would help save his life.

“He told us about the neat things it did like sharing info about his fuel economy,” William Gill says. The surprise came weeks later when William and his wife received an emergency call letting them know Ethan had been in a car accident.

Ethan was driving at night when a deer suddenly ran out into the road. He swerved to avoid it, but his car ended up rolling several times. Automatic’s crash-alert feature immediately notified authorities and his parents. The app also advised his parents which hospital was closest to the accident site.

“The app sent my exact GPS location and got an ambulance there fast,” Ethan says. “When I looked at my phone it said, ‘Emergency services have been notified.’”

Shayna Dickson, a senior staff underwriter at USAA, says the Gills’ story prompted USAA to team up with Automatic to offer Automatic License+, an enhanced version of the app as a free program for its insured teen drivers.

USAA offers License+ on a voluntary basis and at no cost to eligible members with a driver between ages 15 and 19 listed on

A device installed under the dashboard transfers vehicle diagnostics to the app. Each week, the driver earns a score based on how well he or she avoids risky behavior such as sudden braking, fast acceleration and high speeds.

The program is a coaching tool to help teens build safe driving skills during the first 100 hours they're behind the wheel, Dickson says. The driver selects a coach — usually a parent — who is able to log into the Automatic website to view the teen's progress.

"Member safety is a top priority for USAA, especially that of our newest drivers," Dickson says. "We want to make the teen driving experience a positive one right from the start for both teens and parents. It gives teens a new way to show off their good driving skills while giving parents peace of mind."

Ethan's experience encouraged his younger brother Simon to enroll in the program.

"Knowing there's a simple app that can save the life of someone you know is priceless," William Gill says.

More Resources

The third week of October is **National Teen Driver Safety Week**. Read [Avoid These 9 Distractions When Driving](#).

The information received through the adapter powers the License + program and makes a variety of features available. USAA uses data for research only. Data will not be used to adjust policy rates or coverage.

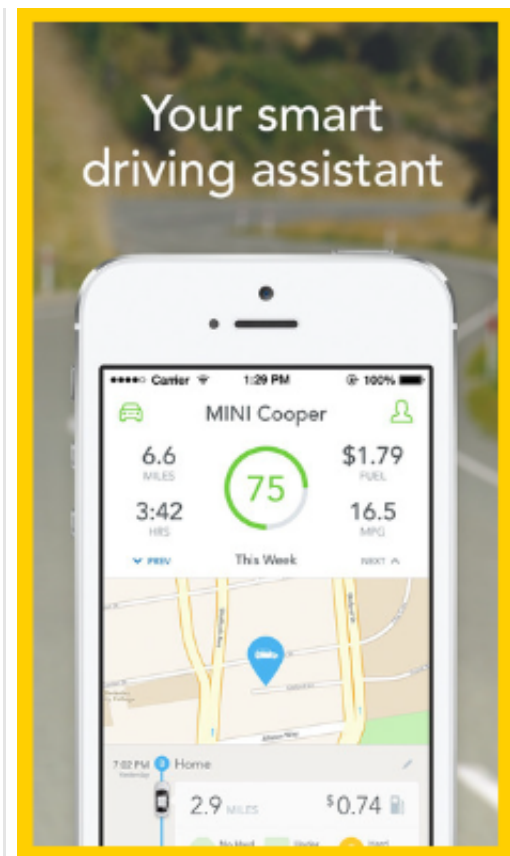
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Comments

by [AvatarAvatar](#) on 10-20-2015 10:41 AM

Glad to hear Ethan is OK. Every insurance company "cares" on TV. Programs like this show that USAA cares. Period. Keep up the great work and you've got a member for life.



their USAA auto policy.

Learn about all the features at usaa.com/coachingyoungdrivers.

