As frightening as it may be for a parent, there comes a time when you realize your teen will be driving and purchasing his/her own car some day. Here are some things for a parent and teen to consider.

♦ **Affording a car purchase**: how much money will be spent as a down payment, and how much will the monthly payments be?

♦ **Choosing the right car**: safety, gas mileage, total cost, cost of insurance, reliability, etc.

♦ **Acquiring tags and titles**: how and where to apply for a tag, how to apply for a title, transferring a car title, renewing a car tag, and understanding the costs associated.

♦ **Buying car insurance**: who from, how much, how much coverage, what does that cover, and what to do if you get into an accident.

♦ **Car maintenance issues**: oil changes – what kind of oil you should use; tune ups – how often and why they’re important; tires – rotations, balancing, how much pressure they require, how to change a flat tire; knowing what to do if the car overheats; knowing how to safely use jumper cables; knowing enough about repairs to prevent spending more money than you need to.

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**How will this activity promote the parent-teen relationship?**

This activity is based upon sharing knowledge from one person to another. Your teen needs guidance and information from you. This is a way for you to openly and honestly discuss matters that are important and a way for you to spend more quality time together.

Helping your teen make wise decisions now will help to establish patterns for making wise decisions later. Teens benefit from their parents helping them to learn steps for making good choices and appreciate the time their parents spend assisting them with new challenges.

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**Keep this in mind . . .**

- Try to keep these discussions from being lectures. Casually try to involve your teen in the car maintenance tasks that you engage in; the next time you have the oil changed in your car, have the teen help, etc.
- Make sure he/she knows that it’s important to maintain the car properly in order to keep the car longer.