

# [Reflection essay on underage driving](https://assignbuster.com/reflection-essay-on-underage-driving/)

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There's a reason the legal driving age in Ohio is 16 and 16 1/2 in Kentucky. Kids younger than that in most cases lack the emotional and cognitive skills to bear theresponsibilityof operating a vehicle, said Dr. James Brush, a child psychologist who has a practice in Monfort Heights. “ Children at age 12 can become frightened or overwhelmed much more than older children,” Dr. Brush said. That's what may have happened early Friday when 12-year-old Courtney Mathis of Mount Airy was caught by police driving a car, allegedly without his parents' knowledge. TIPS FOR PARENTS Know what your children are doing and where they are • Talk with them about consequences of their actions •Stressresponsibility • Put keys where underage children cannot get to them • If you awaken in the middle of the night, check to make sure your children are in the house. Source: Sgt. Tom Butler, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office The subsequent events led to the deaths of both Courtney and Cincinnati Police Officer Kevin Crayon, who tried to apprehend the boy. Courtney's fatal ride is the fifth accident involving under-age drivers in the Tristate in the past year. A 12-year-old driving a car may be shocking to the community,” said Keith Fangman, a Cincinnati police officer and president of Queen City Lodge No. 69 of the Fraternal Order of Police. But, “ it is not uncommon to find 11-, 12- and 13-year-olds driving stolen cars for a joy ride or driving a relative's car without their permission,” he said. Other recent incidents: • On Aug. 27, four people were injured — including two Harrison policemen — after a 14-year-old girl led police in a pursuit on Interstate 74. On July 16, a 13-year-old Florence boy stole a car in Covington and led police on a chase south on Interstate 75 before colliding with another car on Buttermilk Pike. The front end of the vehicle that was hit burst into flames, sending the driver to the hospital. • In September 1999, a 15-year-old who was drinking and driving in a stolen car slammed into a tree at a cemetery in Fort Mitchell. Brad Fritz, a Covington Catholic High School football player sitting in the back seat, suffered head injuries and was hospitalized for four months. In June 1999, four Hamilton teens were arrested after they allegedly went on a joy ride in a stolen car and ran it over residents' lawns before crashing into a parked car. A police officer attempting to apprehend the driver said the car reached speeds of up to 78 mph in a 35-mph residential zone. The driver was 15. In the most recent tragedy involving an underage driver, 12-year-old Courtney took a relative's car to a United Dairy Farmers store on Colerain Avenue in Mount Airy after midnight.

Officer Crayon spotted Courtney, asked for his driver's license, then — when Courtney started to speed off — became entangled in the car and was dragged more than 800 feet. He shot Courtney just before falling to the pavement and dying. The boy died a little more than four hours later. The number of incidents of underage teens driving out of control can be attributed partly to a feeling of youthful invincibility, Dr. Brush said. “ All teen-agers, even older teen-agers, have a little sense that they can get away with things,” he said. There's a bravado or grandiosity at that age that " I can do anything. '” Parents have to be on guard for such behavior, Dr. Brush said. He suggests that mothers and fathers talk to their children about consequences that can result from their actions. And parents should be role models early on by demonstrating good driving behavior, he said. Sgt. Tom Butler of Hamilton County Sheriff's Office's traffic section cautioned that there are also criminal consequences for under-age drivers.

They range from the loss of a future license to confinement in a juvenile detention facility. “ I would stress to (kids) the seriousness and the trouble they can get into,” he said. “ People can get hurt and do die in auto crashes. ” Most of all, parents should confront their children if they suspect irresponsible behavior, Dr. Brush said. “ Chatting with kids is an important thing,” he said. ” I think it comes down to being aware of things. ”