

Ford to Host Free Advanced Driver Training for Teens in Chicago Area Ahead of NASCAR Cup Series Weekend

Ford Philanthropy is teaming up with GHSA and Illinois Department of Transportation to bring free, hands-on Ford Driving Skills for Life clinics June 27-28

CHICAGO, IL, UNITED STATES, June 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the NASCAR Cup Series prepares to bring high-speed thrills to Chicagoland Speedway, Ford is shifting the focus from the track to the road to ensure local teens are equipped with life-saving skills.

The week before the green flag drops, Ford Philanthropy is teaming up with the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and the Illinois Department of Transportation to bring four free, hands-on [Ford Driving Skills for Life](#) clinics to Manheim Chicago in Matteson, Ill., June 27-28, 2026.

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Mobility Director Joe Provenzano, Ford Philanthropy.

Established in 2003, Ford Driving Skills for Life pairs newly licensed or permitted teen drivers with professional instructors for advanced behind-the-wheel training designed to help inexperienced drivers develop the skills needed to recognize hazards, control their vehicles and make safer decisions on the road. Each session combines instruction from professional drivers with hands-on exercises that allow teens to practice important driving techniques in a controlled environment.

“With the NASCAR Cup Series in Chicago over the Fourth of July, all eyes will be on the track, but our focus is on the road,” said Mobility Director Joe Provenzano with Ford Philanthropy. “NASCAR



drivers are experts in speed, but every driver needs to be an expert in safety. Hosting our Ford Driving Skills for Life program in the Chicago area, where we have two Ford plants employing more than 5,000 people, is an extra special opportunity to give young drivers the hands-on experience and confidence they need to handle real-world driving challenges.”

Participants will work with professional instructors to learn how to manage real-world driving situations and understand how their choices behind the wheel affect others on the road.



Why sign up?

- Hands-on training with professional driving instructors
- Real-world driving skills including hazard recognition, vehicle handling and skid control
- Strategies for avoiding distractions and staying focused while driving
- Safety in Mobility activities covering awareness of pedestrians, cyclists and e-scooter riders

“The Illinois Department of Transportation is thrilled we are participating again in the Ford Driving Skills for Life event to educate our teens,” said Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering Bureau Chief Stephane Seck-Birhame. “This form of hands-on training is an excellent opportunity for young drivers to learn good habits and prevent dangerous driving behaviors that lead to fatal crashes. We’re proud to support Ford Driving Skills for Life as we continue working to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries in Illinois.”

The Ford Driving Skills for Life free training is designed to give teens experience practicing advanced driving techniques they may not encounter during traditional driver’s education courses. Vehicles are provided.

Parents, guardians and teen youth groups are encouraged to participate. Space is limited, and advance registration is required.

Register today at drivingskillsforlife.com/training.

About Ford Philanthropy

Ford Philanthropy champions equitable access to essential services, education for the future of work and entrepreneurship opportunities by harnessing Ford's scale, resources and mobility expertise. With a 75-year legacy and \$2.3 billion in contributions since 1949, Ford Philanthropy, alongside Ford Motor Company, collaborates with nonprofit partners and community organizations to invest and co-create solutions to meet unique community needs, supporting people to move forward and upward. Through impactful grantmaking, Ford Community Centers and employee volunteerism, Ford Philanthropy drives positive change in communities worldwide. For more information, visit fordphilanthropy.org or join us at @FordPhilanthropy on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

About Governors Highway Safety Association

The Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) is a nonprofit association representing the highway safety offices of states, territories, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. GHSA provides leadership and representation for the states and territories to improve traffic safety, influence national policy, enhance program management and promote best practices. Its members are appointed by their Governors to administer federal and state highway safety funds and implement state highway safety plans. Visit ghsa.org for more information or find us on LinkedIn, X and Facebook.

About the Illinois Department of Transportation

The Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering (BSPE) is a bureau under the Office of Highway Projects Implementation in the Illinois Department of Transportation that advocates for traffic safety. The BSPE works in tandem with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to implement statewide programs addressing occupant protection, impaired driving, distracted driving, speed enforcement, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and crash data collection and analysis. Programs administered by the BSPE are both state and federally funded. The Illinois Department of Transportation's mission is to provide safe, cost-effective transportation for Illinois in ways that enhance quality of life, promote economic prosperity, and demonstrate respect for our environment. To learn more, please visit <https://idot.illinois.gov/>.

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