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## NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: CYNTHIA SCOTT, PIO  
PHONE: 732-431-6400 ext. 1113

### **SHERIFF'S OFFICE PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL TEEN DRIVER SAFETY WEEK**

**Manalapan:** One of Sheriff Shaun Golden's top priorities is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our youths. That's why the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office is participating in National Teen Driver Safety Week, from October 16-22, through its **5 to Drive** program.

"Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15-19 year olds in the United States," said Sheriff Shaun Golden. "It's crucial, members of law enforcement educate teens, who are the least experienced drivers, in an effort to reinforce the proper safety precautions and discuss the consequences they may face if the laws are violated."

**5 to Drive**, a one hour program, which is being presented at schools in Monmouth County by S/O Michelle Melendez, stresses the five deadliest and most dangerous behaviors drivers must avoid. They include alcohol, seat belt safety, distracted driving, speeding and extra passengers in a vehicle. During the presentation all five topics are discussed, supported by alarming statistics from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, which include, that in 2014 there were 2,679 15-19 years olds involved in fatal motor vehicle crashes. Compelling videos and photos of what teens may face if they drink and drive, don't stay within the speed limit or use their cell phones while behind the wheel are also shown.

"We have seen too many crashes on our roadways as a result of irresponsible driving. Such acts take the focus off of the roads and may have deadly results that otherwise could be avoided," said Sheriff Golden.

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The most recent 5 to Drive programs were held at Manalapan High School and Middletown High School South. In the next several weeks presentations will be at Neptune High School, Shore Regional High School, Freehold Borough High School, Freehold Township High School and Monmouth County Vocational Schools in Freehold and Middletown. For more information on **5 to Drive** or to schedule a program please contact S/O Michelle Melendez at (732) 431-6400 ext.1191.

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