

HB

57

HFIN

FILE

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(11)

Date Referred: March 24, 1995

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 4/27/95

The FINANCE Committee considered:

HB 57

HOUSE BILL NO. 57

LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR DRIVERS

"An Act relating to driver's licensing; and providing for an effective date."

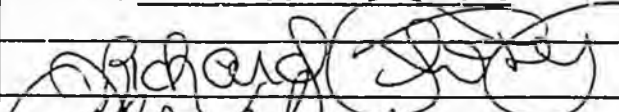
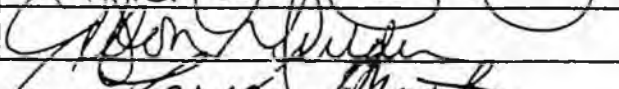


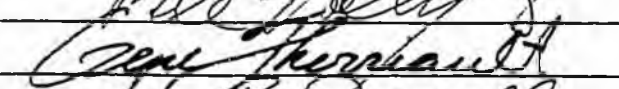
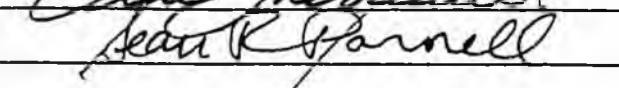

recommends it be replaced with the following committee substitute HB 57 the same title a new title

additional referral to _____ Committee
 attached amendment(s)

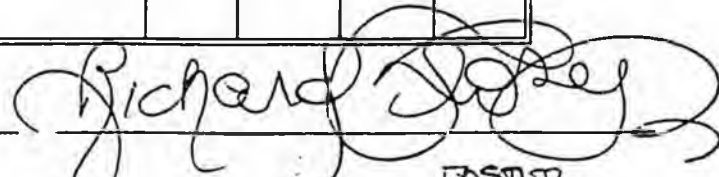
ADOPTS: _____ Letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S): (Dept) _____ APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Dept/Date) _____
 fiscal note(s) _____ fiscal note(s) DPS 3/10/95

zero fiscal note(s) _____ zero fiscal note(s) _____

SIGNING WITH RECOMMENDATIONS		DP	DNP	NR	AM
	FOSTER			X	
	MULDER			X	
	MARTIN			X	
	Kobring			X	
	Kelly			X	
	Therese			✓	
	Parnell			X	

CO-CHAIR'S SIGNATURE _____


FOSTER

FISCAL NOTE

No. 1

STATE OF ALASKA
1995 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL N

(Bill Version: HB 57

(H) Publish Date: 3/10/95

Revision Date: _____ Dept. Affected: Public Safety
 Title: An Act relating to driver licensing... BRU: Motor Vehicles
 Component: Driver Services
 Sponsor: Representative Green
 Requestor: H. TRA. COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 500

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars) (inflation not included)

OPERATING	FY 95	FY 97	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01
PERSONAL SERVICES	31.2	36.7	36.7	36.7	36.7	36.7
TRAVEL	5.5	0	0	0	0	0
CONTRACTUAL	52.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
SUPPLIES	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
EQUIPMENT	16.5	0	0	0	0	0
LAND & STRUCTURES	0	0	0	0	0	0
GRANTS & CLAIMS	0	0	0	0	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OPERATING	126.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHANGE IN REVENUES (1005)	163.0	163.0	163.0	163.0	163.0	163.0
Revenue Code						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0
1003 GE Match	0	0	0	0	0	0
1004 GE	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5
1005 GE/Program Receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0
1006 GE/MHTIA	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5

Estimate of current year (FY 95) impact \$ _____

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	1	1	1	1	1	1
PART-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

SEE ATTACHED

Prepared By: Juanita M. Hensley Phone: 465-2650
 Division: Motor Vehicles Date: 2/1/95
 Approved by Commissioner: Ronald L. Otto Date: 2-6-95
 Agency: Ronald L. Otto, Dept. of Public Safety

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ORIGINAL

Traffic crashes are the number one cause of death for youth nationwide. Alaska statistics are no different than the national statistics.

The impact this bill has on the Division of Motor Vehicles is the issuance of the full driver's license after the provisional license period is over. This bill requires the person to come into the office and be re-issued a driver's license without the provisional license restriction. The person will be required to pay a duplicate license fee of \$10. The division issued approximately 10,000 driver's licenses in 1994 to individuals in this age group. This will generate approximately \$100.0 in new general fund program receipts.

A person of this age group will have the driver's license suspended for accumulation of points at 5 point level instead of 12 points in a 12 month period. In 1994, 1,205 warning notices were sent to individuals in this age group. It is anticipated, this bill, will cause a deterrent effect on this age group and, approximately 500 of these individuals will not reach the 5 point accumulation. This will result in approximately 700 additional point suspensions yearly. Since the point suspension notices are automated, the cost the Division will incur is for the postage to mail the suspension notices to the individual. The law requires these notices to be mailed by certified mail return receipt. Postage rate for certified mail is \$2.52 each.

It is estimated, 90 percent of all persons whose license is suspended will reinstate their driver's license. A \$100.00 reinstatement fee is charged anytime a person has had their license suspended. This will generate approximately \$63.0 in new general fund program receipts revenue. The total amount of additional new general fund program receipt revenue generated by this bill is \$163.0

The Division of Motor Vehicles applied for a grant to assist in implementation cost for a graduated license program. Alaska was awarded the grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in the amount of \$77.1 for this pilot project. The only other state to receive this type of grant was North Carolina.

The following analysis is an estimate of the operational cost the Division of Motor Vehicles anticipates with the passage of this bill.

	<u>FY96</u>	<u>FY97</u>
<u>PERSONAL SERVICES</u>		
1 Motor Vehicle Representative (Anchorage)	\$36.7	\$36.7
Federal Grant Receipts	\$4.5	
<u>TRAVEL</u>		
Federal Grant Receipts	\$5.5	
<u>CONTRACTUAL</u>		
Postage 700 notices (certified mail) @ \$2.52 each	\$1.8	\$1.8
Computer (Mainframe Connection)...yearly costs	\$0.5	\$0.5
Federal Grant Receipts	\$60.5	
\$9.6 Data Processing Fees		
\$30.0 Computer Programming		
\$6.6 Public Service Announcements and Brochures		
\$13.0 Public Opinion Survey		
\$1.3 Tuition-National Judicial College for Hearing Officer Training		
<u>SUPPLIES</u>		
Routine office supplies	\$0.5	\$0.5
<u>EQUIPMENT</u>		
1 Complete Computer Workstation	\$10.0	
One time costs		
Federal Grant Receipts	\$6.5	
Upgrade of Computer equipment and software		
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$126.5</u>	<u>\$39.5</u>

Alaska State Legislature



Representative Joe Green

Sponsor Statement

HB 57 - "Licensing Requirements for Drivers"

HB 57 establishes new rules for young drivers. Due to the high incidence of accidents, injury, and death among teenage drivers many states, and other political jurisdictions, are changing the rules which grant teenagers the "license" to drive.

One strategy to reduce young driver accidents is the provisional licensing system. HB 57 establishes a graduated system whereby a new, young driver must begin his/her progression to "driver-hood" with a learners permit, graduate to a restricted, provisional license, and then, if driving performance has been satisfactory during the provisional period, an unrestricted license is awarded.

Language in HB 57 establishes certain conditions during the provisional stage which include restrictions on nighttime driving, so that driving takes place in less dangerous circumstances. Currently, 12 states have laws which limit teenagers from operating motor vehicles during late evening or early morning hours. Studies in these states have shown that nighttime restrictions have significantly reduced accidents.

Finally, HB 57 is designed to allow the Department of Public Safety to take advantage of new federal legislation. The "High Risk Drivers Act of 1993" established monetary incentives for states that implement programs for young drivers. I believe that passage of HB 57, along with federal support, will help stop the teenage carnage on our highways.

STATE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

HIGHWAY SAFETY PLANNING AGENCY

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

Ronald L. Otte

Commissioner

P.O. BOX 111200

JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-1200

PHONE: (907) 465-4371

FAX: (907) 463-5860

March 30, 1995

The Honorable Mark Hanley
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 507
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

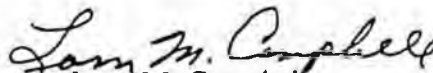
Dear Representative Hanley:

The Alaska Highway Safety Planning Agency (AHSPA) is responsible for the Governor's highway safety program. The goals of this program are to reduce fatalities and injury vehicle accidents on Alaska's roadways. In 1994 drivers between the ages of 16 through 20 represented only 6.2% of all licensed drivers in Alaska, they represent however, 12.9% of the drivers involved in traffic crashes within the state. This same age group was also involved as drivers in 28.8% of total fatal crashes in Alaska. Nationwide more than 40% of all deaths of persons ages 15 to 20 result from motor vehicle crashes. This is a loss of over 6,500 young lives. Many of these deaths may have been avoided if a Graduated Licensing System nationwide had been in place.

Recent studies conducted by the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) indicate that graduated licensing systems can reduce crashes, injuries and deaths through a graduated drivers licensing program. Under this system, novice drivers are required to demonstrate responsible driving behavior in each stage of the licensing before advancing to the next level.

The Highway Safety Planning Agency encourages you to give strong consideration to passage of HB 57. We believe it will have a positive effect on ensuring the safety of our States most valuable resource, it's young people. We thank you for your consideration, and look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,



Lorn M. Campbell

Administrator

Alaska and North Carolina are the only states to receive grants to develop a pilot project and evaluate the provisions of a graduated license program. If legislation (HB 57) passes the legislature, Alaska will evaluate the project and report back to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration by June 1998.

GRADUATED LICENSE. WHAT IS IT?

Graduated license basically is a restricted license program that allows youth drivers to learn over a period of time with restrictions. The idea is to help beginners learn to drive step by step by controlling their progression toward full driving privileges. Restrictions are lifted gradually and systematically until the driver graduates to an unrestricted license. This helps in two ways. It ensures that new drivers accumulate the behind-the-wheel experience in low-risk settings. It also means drivers are older and maybe more mature by the time they get their regular licenses. Alaska does not have driver education programs in our schools, so our youth driver's commonly learn by trial and error.

Youth drivers in Alaska are definitely over-represented in all of the statistics. Drivers between 16 through 20 represent only 6.2% of the licensed drivers in Alaska, however, they represent 12.9 % of the total traffic crashes in the state. 28.8% of the total fatal crashes involved youth between 16 and 20 for 1993.

In the states that have implemented graduated licensing systems show the following benefits:

California and Maryland report a 5 percent reduction in crashes for drivers ages 15-17. Maryland also reports a 10 percent reduction in traffic convictions for driver's age 16-17.

Oregon reports a 16 percent reduction in crashes for male driver's age 16-17.

HB57 was introduced again this year by Representative Joe Green from Anchorage. This bill, if enacted, would establish a graduated driver license program for Alaska.

GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING PROGRAM

Demonstration and Evaluation Project

State of Alaska

Performance Period for Project

Planning phase: July 1, 1995 - December 31, 1995.
Operation phase: January 1, 1996 - December 31, 1997.
Analysis and Final Report: January 1, 1998 - June 30, 1998

Current Status

Alaska currently does not have a graduated license system. A provisional license bill was introduced to the legislature, January, 1995 Legislative Session.

The Following will be Implemented in Alaska's Graduated Licensing System:

Learner's Stage

- Pass vision and knowledge tests, including rules of road, signs, and signals.
- Supervised practice driving with parent or licensed adult age 25 or older.
- All occupants must wear safety belts.
- Zero tolerance for all drivers under age 21.
- Permit revoked for any alcohol - related offense.
- Driving restrictions; no driving between hours of 1:00 am - 5:00 am.

Legislation: Learner's permit can be obtained at age 14 and a driver's license at age 16. This will not change under the graduated licensing system. Passage of legislation is required for:

- Increase the age of the accompanied licensed driver to 25.
- Restriction on hours of driving.

Evaluation: During the learner's stage the following will be evaluated:

- Zero tolerance.
- Revocation of permit for any alcohol offense.
- Restricted hours of operation.

Intermediate (Provisional) Stage

- Pass behind-the-wheel skills test.
- Violation free record for six months before progressing to next stage.
- All occupants must wear safety belts.
- Zero tolerance for under age 21.
- Permit revocation for any alcohol - related offense.
- Driving restricted; no driving 1:00 am - 5:00 am (exceptions).
- Youth - oriented and more rapid driver improvement actions.
- Parent participation.
- Applicant age 16, but not yet 18 must have been licensed under and instruction permit under state law or under the law of another state with substantially similar requirements for at least six months.

Legislation: Currently, Alaska has statutes in place to cover driver improvement actions for all drivers with suspension at 12 points and a interview at six points. Proposed provisional license bill states that drivers with a learner's permit or provisional license will be subjected to suspension at six points and an interview at three points. The bill is being amended to also include:

- Parent participation in the process.
- Violation free driving record for one year during the provisional license phase.

Evaluation: During the intermediate stage the following will be evaluated:

- Clean driving record for six months prior to issuance of provisional license.
- Zero tolerance.
- Revocation for any alcohol - related offense.
- Restricted hours of operation.
- Youth - oriented and more rapid driver improvement actions.
- Parental participation in the process.

Full licensure

- Complete intermediate phase with clean driving record for one year.
- Zero tolerance for under age 21.
- Provisional license requirement for all suspended or revoked drivers requiring violation - free driving for one year.

Evaluation: All three elements of the phase will be evaluated.

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Ford

4/13/95

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 57()
 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
 NINETEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES GREEN, Bunde

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to driver's licensing; and providing for an effective date."

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

3 * Section 1. AS 28.15.031(a) is amended to read:

4 (a) The department may not issue a driver's license to a person

5 (1) who is under the age of 16 years, except that the department may
6 issue a permit under AS 28.15.051 or a restricted license under AS 28.15.121; ~~or~~7 (2) who is at least 16 years of age but not yet 21 years of age unless
8 the person meets the requirements of AS 28.15.057.

9 * Sec. 2. AS 28.15.051(a) is amended to read:

10 (a) Except as provided in (b) of this section, a person who is at least 14 years
11 of age may apply to the department for an instruction permit. The department may,
12 after the applicant has successfully passed all parts of the examination under
13 AS 28.15.081 other than the driving test, issue to the applicant an instruction permit.
14 The permit allows a person, while having the permit in the person's immediate
15 possession, to drive a specified type or class of motor vehicle on a highway or

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1 vehicular way or area for a period not to exceed two years. The permittee must be
2 accompanied by a person at least 25 [19] years of age who has been licensed at least
3 one year to drive the type or class of vehicle being used, who is capable of exercising
4 control over the vehicle and who occupies a seat beside the driver, or who
5 accompanies and immediately supervises the driver when the permittee drives a
6 motorcycle. An instruction permit may be renewed.

7 * Sec. 3. AS 28.15 is amended by adding new sections to read:

8 Sec. 28.15.055. PROVISIONAL DRIVER'S LICENSE. Upon application, the
9 department may issue a provisional driver's license to a person who is at least

10 (1) 16 years of age but not yet 18 years of age if the person has been
11 licensed under an instruction permit issued under AS 28.15.051 or under the law of
12 another state with substantially similar requirements, for at least six months; or

13 (2) 18 years of age but not yet 21 years of age.

14 Sec. 28.15.057. RESTRICTIONS ON DRIVER'S LICENSE ISSUED TO A
15 PERSON UNDER 21. (a) Except as provided under AS 28.15.051 or 28.15.055, a
16 person who is at least 16 years of age but not yet 18 years of age may not be issued
17 a driver's license unless the person has been licensed under an instruction permit issued
18 under AS 28.15.051 for at least six months and has held a valid provisional driver's
19 license issued under AS 28.15.055 for at least one year.

20 (b) Except as provided under AS 28.15.055, a person who is at least 18 years
21 of age but not yet 21 years of age may not be issued a driver's license unless the
22 person has held a valid provisional license issued under AS 28.15.055 for a period of
23 at least one year.

24 (c) A person under 19 years of age who is authorized to drive a motor vehicle
25 under an instruction permit issued under AS 28.15.051 or a provisional driver's license
26 issued under AS 28.15.055 may not drive a motor vehicle on a highway or vehicular
27 way or area between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. each day. This paragraph
28 does not apply to a person authorized to drive under a provisional driver's license who
29 is driving from the person's place of residence to the person's place of employment or
30 from the person's place of employment to the person's residence and who is driving
31 along the most direct highway, vehicular way or area available between the residence

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1 and the place of employment.

2 * Sec. 4. AS 28.15.221(b) is amended to read:

3 (b) The regulations adopted under (a) of this section must [SHALL] include
4 a designated level of point accumulation that [WHICH] identifies drivers who are
5 habitually reckless or negligent or who are habitual or frequent violators of traffic
6 laws, so as to show a disrespect for traffic laws and a disregard for the safety of other
7 persons. In formulating the point system authorized by this section, the commissioner
8 shall, in the interest of interstate uniformity, provide for suspension, revocation or
9 denial of a driver's license, privilege to drive, or privilege to obtain a license for an
10 accumulation of 12 or more points as a result of offenses committed during any
11 consecutive 12-month period or 18 or more points as a result of offenses committed
12 during any 24-month period, except for a person licensed under an instruction
13 permit or provisional license. A person licensed under an instruction permit or
14 provisional license shall have the person's license suspended, revoked, or denied
15 for an accumulation of six or more points as a result of offenses committed during
16 any consecutive 12-month period.

17 * Sec. 5. AS 28.40.100(a)(8) is amended to read:

18 (8) "driver's license" or "license," when used in relation to driver
19 licensing, means a license, provisional license, or permit to drive a motor vehicle, or
20 the privilege to drive or to obtain a license to drive a motor vehicle, under the laws
21 of this state [,] whether or not a person holds a valid license issued in this or another
22 jurisdiction;

23 * Sec. 6. This Act takes effect January 1, 1996.

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SECTION

P.O. BOX 110616
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-0616
PHONE: (907) 465-3027
FAX: (907) 465-4101

February 2, 1995

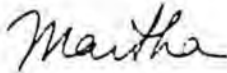
Juanita Hensley
Chief, Driver Services
Department of Public Safety
Division of Motor Vehicles

Dear Nita,

Attached is information from the Alaska Trauma Registry on motor vehicle drivers involved in crashes and admitted to an Alaskan hospital for 1991 through 1994. Missing from this data are passengers requiring hospitalization after a vehicle crash involving a youthful driver.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if there is additional information that you need.

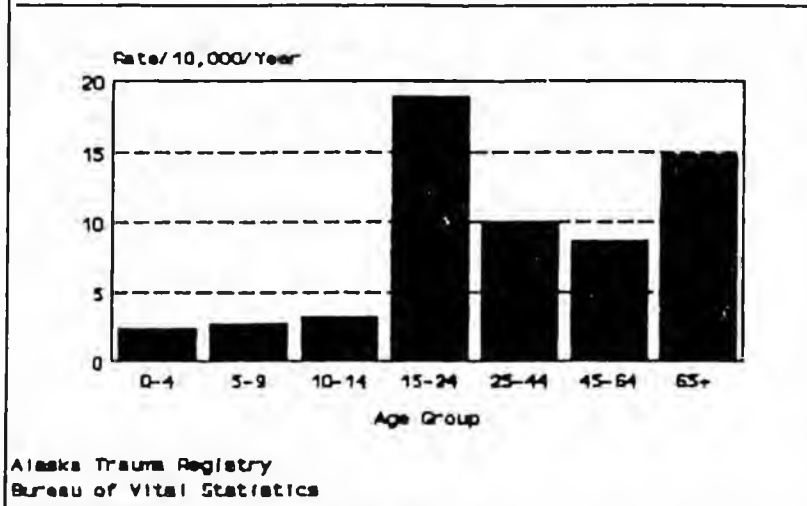
Sincerely,



Martha Moore
Trauma Registry Coordinator

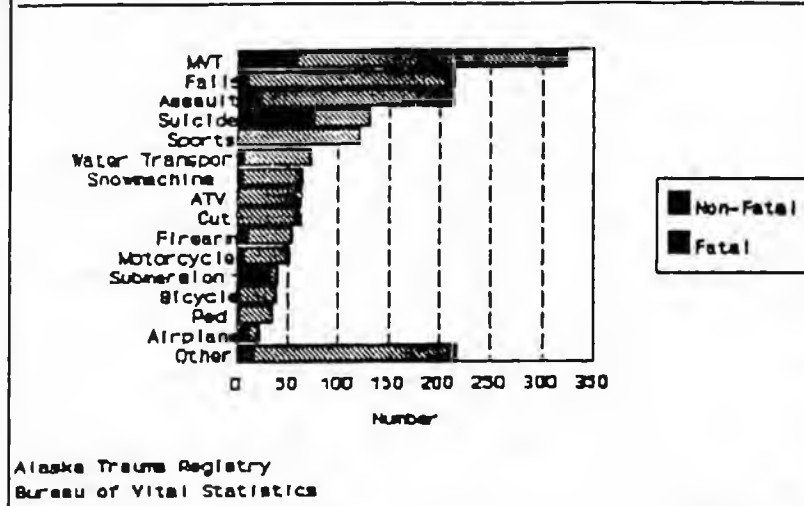
For the years 1991 and 1992, the 15-24 age group had the largest rates of fatal and non-fatal hospitalized motor vehicle crash injuries in Alaska.

Fatal and Non-Fatal (Hospitalized) Injuries, 1991-1992
Alaska Statewide
Motor Vehicle Traffic [N=1057]



In these two years, motor vehicle crash was clearly the most common cause of hospitalization for this age group.

Fatal and Non-Fatal (Hospitalized) Injuries, 1991-1992
 Alaska Statewide
 Age 15-24 [N=1721]



From 1991 through 1994, the Alaska Trauma Registry has information on traumatic injuries resulting in hospitalization, transfer to another hospital, or emergency department death, including 'Dead on Arrival'. Data for 1994 is not yet complete.

Out of 979 drivers hospitalized due to motor vehicle crashes, 128 (13%) were age 20 and under. Of the hospitalized youth, alcohol was suspected to be a factor in 31 (24%) of the incidents. Of the 277 hospitalized drivers for whom alcohol was suspected to be a factor, 11% were age 20 and under.

Injury time was indicated for 106 of the youth drivers. In 24 (21%) of the cases, the injury occurred between 1:00 AM and 5:00 AM. In another 29 cases (36%), the injury occurred between 9:00 PM and 1:00 AM.

Of the 128 youth drivers 8 (6.3%) were critically injured, 11 (8.6) were severely injured, 41 (32%) seriously injured, 53 (41.1%) moderately injured, and 11 (8.6) sustained minor injuries. Four were not scored for injury severity.

Of the 128 youth drivers hospitalized, 8 died and 12 were discharged with a permanent disability. Five were discharged to an inpatient rehabilitation facility and 1 to a residential facility.

Based on available hospital charge information, the average cost per patient per admission in the 14 through 20 age group was about \$20,000. Not included is physician fees, rehabilitation costs, and subsequent disability payments.

Alaska Trauma Registry, 1991-1994 (1994 not yet complete), hospitalized motor vehicle crash drivers.

Age Group	# Hosp	% Total	% Licensed Drivers
<16	12.0	1.2	0.0
16-20	116.0	11.8	6.2
21-25	167.0	17.1	10.6
26-30	133.0	13.6	12.4
31-35	130.0	13.3	14.7
36-40	107.0	10.9	14.9
41-45	72.0	7.4	12.8
46-50	63.0	6.4	9.5
51-55	37.0	3.8	6.6
56-60	43.0	4.4	4.4
61-65	29.0	3.0	3.1
66-70	36.0	3.7	2.3
71+	34.0	3.5	2.6
Total	979.0		

Hospitalized motor vehicle crash drivers, 1991-1994 (1994 not complete), by year.

Year	Total Pts	≤ Age 20	% Youth of Total
1991	277.0	40.0	14.4
1992	261.0	32.0	12.3
1993	276.0	34.0	12.3
1994	165.0	22.0	13.3
Total	979.0	128.0	13.1

Hospitalized motor vehicle crash drivers, 1991-1994 (1994 not complete), alcohol involvement suspected.

Year	Total Alcohol	Youth Alcohol	% Youth of Total
1991	62.0	12.0	19.4
1992	76.0	7.0	9.2
1993	90.0	8.0	8.9
1994	49.0	4.0	8.2
Total	277.0	31.0	11.2

NATIONWIDER

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Graduated Teen Licensing Means Fewer Teen Fatalities

It's pretty easy to get a driver's license in most states. As long as you're 16 (15 in some states), you can take to the road with essentially full privileges. In most states, all that's required is passing a driving test and a simple written exam. The only other requirement in many states for full licensing is completion of an approved driver training course. Unfortunately, even the best driver's education courses don't create safe drivers overnight.

Inexperienced drivers have more accidents.

Time and again, studies show that younger drivers are involved in more accidents than older ones. And, the problem can't be attributed entirely to more aggressive behavior or attitude. It's related more fundamentally to experience. That's an important distinction, because it means that even if the young driver in your household behaves conscientiously and carefully on the road, he or she is still more likely to have an accident than drivers in any other age group, including the elderly. There's simply no substitute for on-the-road experience.

Graduated licensing: how it works, how it helps.

Under graduated licensing, beginners learn to drive step by step in a controlled progression before being awarded full driving privileges. While graduated systems may vary somewhat, an essential

feature of all is a ban on late-night driving, when the threat of accidents is greatest because of poor visibility. Other requirements usually include the supervision of a parent during the beginner stage, and limits on the number of passengers a beginner may transport (research shows the majority of teenage passenger

licensing program. This means that legal actions like suspension can be imposed more quickly and easily in the event of a traffic violation or accident.

Unlike graduated licensing, probationary licensing uses only the threat of punishment to encourage younger or inexperienced drivers to behave with greater caution. It does nothing to help inexperienced drivers gain on-the-road experience under controlled circumstances. For all practical purposes, drivers with probationary licenses have unrestricted driving privileges.

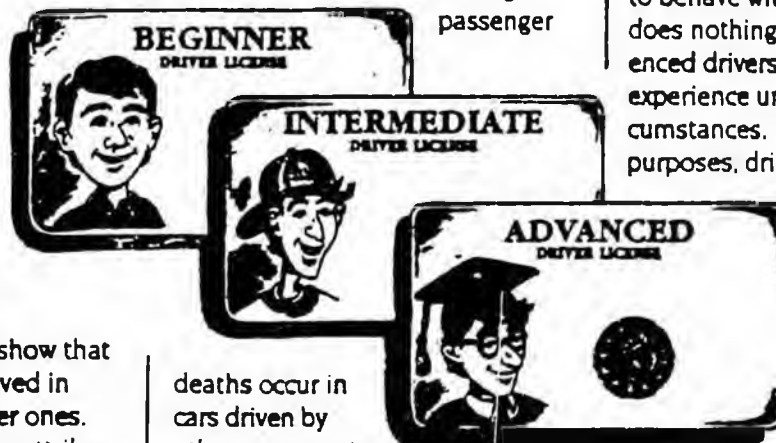
New Zealand's experience.

In New Zealand, graduated licens-

ing has been in effect since 1987 and has reduced accidents among young drivers dramatically. The effect is particularly noticeable among 15-19 year olds. And, it's important to note that the New Zealand plan applies to all drivers under the age of 25, not just to teenagers.

In Ontario, Canada, graduated licensing was recently implemented requiring all new drivers, regardless of age, to drive for a minimum of 20 months before an unrestricted license can be granted.

Based on the New Zealand experience, and with further research and experimentation, graduated licensing may be tried in the United States in the near future.



deaths occur in cars driven by other teenagers).

In any case, restrictions are gradually lifted as drivers gain experience and pass advanced driving tests. Penalties for violations are also more severe than for unrestricted drivers, and may trigger specific driver improvement requirements.

Older licensing ages, probationary periods not as effective.

Raising licensing ages provides some improvement in teenage crash rates, but it still doesn't take the place of on-the-road experience. Statistics show that drivers in their twenties still have more accidents than slightly older drivers.

Many states have tried to deal with the problem by instituting what is called a "probationary"

THE DRIVER LICENSING

Eagle Eye



Volume 1

November, 1994



INTRODUCTION

This is the inaugural issue of The Driver Licensing Eagle Eye, a bi-monthly newsletter reporting the latest news and developments in driver licensing. The Eagle Eye is published by Eagle Vision Consultants

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GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING

Momentum continues to build for states to adopt graduated driver licensing systems. Recent releases from NHTSA and the NTSB clearly indicate their programs will emphasize graduated licensing as a measure to improve traffic safety for under 21 year old drivers. In addition, the High Risk Drivers Act (HR 1719), a bill that would provide incentives to states to try innovative graduated licensing programs is being revived.

locate programs that work, such as approaches that develop vehicle-handling skills more quickly, change risk-taking attitudes, or help young drivers develop good judgment and spatial awareness. Northport will present an integrated package of recommendations, including changes in enforcement, sanctions, and graduated licensing. Graduated licensing, in combination with improved driver education, holds promise as a way to provide positive incentives to new drivers to drive safely. The project is scheduled for completion in January, 1995.

NHTSA

On September 8, 1994, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announced it has developed a plan to improve driver education for young drivers that seeks to help foster positive attitudes in addition to teaching them to drive safely.

NTSB

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recently sent a letter to the governor of each state informing them of revisions in NTSB's "Most Wanted" list. The "Most Wanted" list highlights those transportation safety improvements sought by the Board that offer the greatest potential for significant and immediate reductions in accidents and loss of lives.

In a report to Congress, NHTSA pointed out that while most teenagers are safe drivers, about 15 percent of them have a crash in their first year of driving. In many cases, these crashes are not caused by a lack of knowledge of traffic laws or driving skill. The reasons are complex and reflect risk-taking, susceptibility to peer pressure, inexperience, poor judgment, or alcohol use.

Among the recommendations were:

NHTSA's plan includes these recommendations:

- Driver licensing should be done in three stages—commonly known as graduated licensing—so that learning to drive is spread over an extended period. The novice would have to comply with certain restrictions for at least six months in each stage before qualifying for a less restrictive license.
- Driver education should be an integral part of the graduated licensing process. Basic vehicle handling skills would be taught under a learner permit, while more complex decision and perception skills would be taught under a provisional license, the stage before full-license privileges.
- Research also should be done on ways to involve parents and other adults in the education and licensing of novice drivers, in order to help form mature attitudes toward driving.

- Enact comprehensive laws that prohibit drivers under the age of 21 from driving with any measurable blood alcohol concentration.
- Enact laws to provide for a provisional license system for young novice drivers.
- Enact laws that prohibit driving by young novice drivers

IIHS

Recent Insurance Institute of Highway Safety (IIHS) research indicates that teenagers living in states with short learners permit terms obtain their licenses sooner and have higher crash rates than teens in states that delay or restrict licensure or require longer supervised driving periods.

Allen F. Williams of IIHS indicates that states can reduce teenage crash risk by delaying the age at which practice driving is permitted, providing learners permits that are valid for long periods of time, and establishing a higher minimum licensing age.

AAA

In a recent news release, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety announced the Foundation has contracted with Northport Associates to develop a new model curriculum outline to improve the training of novice drivers in North America.

The research examined the driving records of 15, 16, and 17 year old drivers in Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey. For copies of "Teenage Driving Practices and Licensing Laws: Differences in Four States" and "Differences in Young Driver Crash Involvement in Five States with Varying Licensure Practices" write: Publications, IIHS, 1005 North Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22201.

The project researchers will interview traffic safety training experts and

Growing Up Behind the Wheel



BY JOHN ARCHER

When are you treated as an adult? When you graduate from school? Get your first full-time job? Cast your first vote? American society recognizes all those events as mileposts along the road to maturity.

But long before most of us earn a diploma, get a regular job, or cast a ballot, we obtain society's ticket to mobility in the world of grown-ups—a driver's license.

Unfortunately, because in many places little more than a warm body is required to obtain that license, it too often becomes a ticket to tragedy. In 1992, for example, more than 6,000 teenagers were involved in fatal crashes. Half of them died. In fact, although teenagers represent only 5 percent of all drivers and on average drive much less than you and I, they account for 13 percent of all collisions.

Congress is now considering legislation sponsored by Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.) and Sen. John Danforth (R-Mo.) that focuses attention on teenagers and other high-risk motorists. Known as the High-Risk Drivers Act, it encourages states to take several steps that would make new drivers safer drivers, most notably:

- ◆ Establish graduated licensing under which a novice driver would earn first an instructional license, then a provisional license, and finally a full license. No one under age 18 could earn a full license without a clean driving record for one year.

- ◆ Encourage improved driver education. Research would identify ways to make driver's ed more effective, relevant, and stimulating for new drivers. States would set minimum standards for public and private driver training programs.

- ◆ Crack down on alcohol use. In addition to prohibiting open alcoholic beverages in a car and imposing stiffer penalties on sales to minors, states would set a maximum .02 blood alcohol content for drivers under 21.

The High-Risk Drivers Act offers a common-sense approach to improve safety for everyone on the road. It would help address a very disturbing trend: as statistics continue to pile up demonstrating that teenagers pose higher risks than any other age group, training for them has dwindled. In fact during the last 20 years, the percentage of students taking driver education has dropped by a third. And many states no longer even offer driver education programs.

The High-Risk Drivers Act can help reverse that trend by stimulating innovative driver education. Particularly attractive options include interactive computer and video technology that have the potential to revolutionize driver training by conveying well-established driving concepts through techniques today's MTV generation views as "user friendly."

Graduated licensing would legally recognize what we all know intuitively: maturity and driving capability aren't marked by a single event, but by a gradual process. Safe driving demands practiced skills, sound judgement and a sober attitude. A system of graduated licensing would allow teenagers to develop those traits as they acquire behind-the-wheel experience.

If we only eliminate the overrepresentation of novice drivers in collisions, thousands of lives could be saved. How can we afford not to try?

John Archer is managing director of AAA Public Policy and Special Programs in Washington, D.C.

LETTERS

Building Roads Right

John Archer's article, "Let's Build Roads Right" [January/February] was on target about using new technologies rather than relying on "the same, tired ways" of building roads.

By rewarding use of the cheapest, lowest-quality materials and the least-expensive labor—as we do now—we actually penalize innovative efforts to improve road quality or offer superior workmanship. Our current system is inflexible, unwise, and short-sighted, costs taxpayers billions of dollars in unnecessary highway repair bills, and results in intolerable and costly traffic delays.

I have introduced legislation that would permit states to include contractor guarantees and to set performance standards for highway projects.

Demanding that contractors guarantee

a minimum standard of quality would not, by itself, cure our country's infrastructure ills. But Americans should be outraged that, in an era of huge budget deficits, we have failed to fulfill our responsibility to see that federal highway money is well spent.

REP. ANTHONY C. BEILENSON
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Water, Water, Everywhere?

Although you tried to think of all eventualities to prevent accidents ("What to Do When Your Home's Alone," May/

Let us know what you think about the issues raised in AAA World. Write "Letters," AAA World, 1000 AAA Dr., Heathrow, FL 32716-5063. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

June), you missed something very important. We always turn off the toilets and washing machine faucets when we leave town. We have two friends who had major toilet problems with a leak or a crack while they were on the other side of the world. And washing machine hoses can spring a leak anytime.

BETTY RUBIN
Albuquerque, N. Mex.

Where I Begins

I enjoyed your May/June issue, as always, but as a former resident of Madawaska, Maine, I must tell you that U.S. 1 starts in Fort Kent—not Madawaska ["Rediscovering Our National Routes"]—about 25 miles north.

ALINE KOPF
St. Augustine, Fla.

Provisional Licensing for Teenagers

MADD's Position

MADD advocates that each state adopt laws providing that persons under 21 receive driver's licenses which are more restrictive than full licenses, under which violations would result in driver improvement actions and license revocation and civil sanctions in addition to any criminal sanctions and penalties.

What is it?

The standard age for full adult licensing is 18. However, most states have provided for licensing teenagers at a considerably earlier age, in some firm states as early as 14 but more generally at age 16. Learners' permits may be available at age fifteen and a half. Provisional licensing provides special rules for those who apply for and receive licenses below the age of 18. These rules cover the period between the age an individual receives a license and age 18. During this period, young drivers may be limited to driving only in the daytime or early evening. There may be special conditions placed on these provisional licenses. If, for example, youth are guilty of a serious traffic offense, they will lose their provisional license until they reach age 18. The purpose of such provisional licensing is to ease the young driver into the adult driving population by limiting his or her exposure to more dangerous late-night driving and by providing special incentives to drive carefully during the period when a youthful driver is gaining the experience necessary to become a safe driver.

What is needed?

Legislation

A law which requires at least six months driving with parent or adult on a learner's permit before provisional licensing.

A provisional licensing law which covers the period between ages 16 and 18 and provides:

- a. A requirement of six months of citation-free daytime driving before late-night solo driving is permitted.
- b. A limit of only one passenger in vehicle for the first twelve months unless an adult is present in the vehicle.
- c. A requirement that all passengers be safety-belted.
- d. License suspension to age 18 in the event of a DWI offense.

What Can Be Done?

- Support legislation to establish a comprehensive provisional licensing system which requires these recommended limits and conditions.
- Work with local police and schools to publicized and enforce the provisional licensing system.

MADD®

Provisional Licensing

Each year, 16- and 17-year-old drivers are involved in more than twice the average number of crashes per mile driven as are experienced adult drivers. These crashes occur most frequently between midnight and 5:00 a.m. Studies show that although only 2 percent of the miles driven by 16-year-olds occurs in these hours, 17 percent of their fatal crashes occurred in that five-hour period. Also, novice driving between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. account for 16 percent of their miles driven, but 43 percent of their fatal crashes.¹ Driving inexperience is further compounded when alcohol consumption is also involved.

One way to reduce this disproportionate involvement is through the use of provisional licenses for novice drivers. The provisional license serves as a tool to "ease" young drivers into gaining driving experience on the road. With restrictions mandated under a provisional license, the novice driver would gradually gain driving skills through education, driving during lower-risk hours or with supervision.

When young drivers do not have the option to drive during the high-risk hours under high-risk conditions, their driving experience is gained during the lower-risk hours, with fewer deaths as a result.

MADD advocates the adoption of the following provisional licensing elements.

1. Nighttime restriction either as a phase/stage of the system or as a remedial action.
2. Parent-supervised basic driving practice and advanced sessions during high-risk hours.
3. Improved licensing and testing procedures tailored to the needs of young drivers.
4. Youth-oriented and prompt driver improvement action.
5. Mandatory safety belt usage by all occupants of motor vehicles while operated by a teenager.
6. .00 blood alcohol concentration (BAC) requirements for underage drivers.
7. Driver education, required learner's permit and a behind-the-wheel training period.
8. A license distinctive from regular driver's licenses.²

At the end of a predetermined period, the driving restrictions could be removed or extended depending upon the driver's crash or violation records.

Although no state has all the aspects of this model, provisional licensing programs are becoming more common as more states adopt restrictions for young drivers. For "hands on" training, most states require a learner's permit (often used in driver education classes). Several states have a .00 BAC tolerance for youth and six states have restrictions against nighttime driving.

The results from provisional licensing programs are encouraging. States which place certain restrictions on driver's licenses show a sharp decline in the number of crashes and fatal crashes. The states with curfews show significant reductions in fatal crashes involving 16-year-olds during restricted hours: Pennsylvania, 69 percent; New York, 62 percent; Maryland, 40 percent; and Louisiana, 25 percent. The states which have the earliest curfew hours show the greatest crash reduction totals.³

MADD advocates that all states adopt such measures as a means of further reducing youthful crash involvement.

1. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "Provisional Licensing or New Driver Entry System."

2. Ibid.

3. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Teenage Drivers, 1984.

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Provisional Licensing for Teenagers

What Is It?

The standard age for full-adult licensing is 18. However, most states have provided for licensing teenagers at a considerably earlier age, through learners' permits available at ages 14 - 16. Provisional licensing provides for special rules for those who apply for and receive licenses below the age of 18 for the time between the age they receive their license and age 18. During this period, young drivers may be limited to driving only in the daytime and may have a special restriction that if they are guilty of a serious traffic offense, they will lose their provisional license until age 18. The purpose of such restricted licenses is to ease the young driver into the adult driving population by limiting his or her exposure to the more dangerous nighttime driving and by providing a special incentive to drive carefully during the period when a youthful driver is gaining the experience necessary to become a safe driver.

How Does It Work?

The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators has developed a program for easing young people into the driving population. They describe the goal of this program as follows:

"The purpose of this proposed improved driver entry system is to ease young novice drivers, under more controlled conditions, into the driving environment by increasing the amount of their behind-the-wheel driving practice and their exposure to progressively more difficult driving experiences. The program requires novice drivers to earn their full

Figure 6.1

driving privilege by demonstrating safe driving performance, and by being crash- and conviction-free for a minimum driving period."

The program provides for the three step process outlined in Figure 6.1 and includes the nine elements listed in Figure 6.2.

Licensing normally begins with the issuance of a learner's permit which, for states that provide an initial license at age 16, may be provided as early as age 15+. The learner's permit becomes the basis for on-the-road training which provides sufficient skill to pass the road test and move on to the second stage which is the issuance of a provisional license. Provisional licenses cover the period between age 16 and age 18 after which all states provide for full adult licensing (though special laws applicable to drivers under 21, such as a zero BAC limit, may apply).

Step 1. Learner's Permit

The first step in this driver entry system is obtaining a learner's permit and using this privilege to begin to develop the essential skill and experience which are required to drive safely. The young person should be protected as he or she learns to cope with traffic by being required to drive only with an adult over 21 years of age — preferably a parent and not, in any case, a slightly older friend who happens to have a license. This period of supervised practice should extend for at least six months. Some states permit a novice driver to receive a full driving permit as soon as they can pass the road test. Finally, any traffic citations received while on a learner's

Stages in the Licensing of Teenagers

Step 1	Learner's Permit Drive only with adult over 25 Must pass license test to go to step 2	15½ - 16	6 months minimum
Step 2a	Limited License With nighttime curfew Must have 6 months offense-free driving	16 - 18	6 months minimum
Step 2b	Limited License With special point limits	16 - 18	up to 2 years
Step 3	Full License Subject to under age 21 0.00 BAC limits	18 - 21	up to 3 years

permit should result in an extension by six months in the waiting period for a provisional license.

Step 2.

Provisional Licensing, Phase A

Once the young person has driven under parental supervision for at least six months and passed the licensing examination, a provisional license, which allows the individual to drive alone, is issued but restrictions on driving are continued to limit the risks to which the novice driver will be exposed. Normally, these restrictions are phased out over the provisional licensing period.

Elements of the AAMVA Provisional Licensing Program

- 1 Provisional license system to facilitate implementation of a program designed to ease the novice driver into the mainstream of driving
- 2 Learner's permit required for a specified period
- 3 Parent/adult supervised basic driving practice, especially during high risk hours
- 4 Improved licensing and testing procedures tailored to the needs of young/novice drivers
- 5 Zero legal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) requirements for young drivers
- 6 Youth-oriented and prompt driver improvement actions
- 7 Mandatory safety belt usage by all occupants of a motor vehicle being operated by a teenager/novice driver
- 8 Demonstrated safe driving performance for a specified period
- 9 License distinctive from regular driver's license

Figure 6.2

Twelve states (New York, Louisiana, and Maryland are examples) provide for an initial period during which novice drivers are not permitted to drive during certain hours. Other states provide for early intervention with the novice driver who commits a serious traffic offense, such as DWI. The provisional licensing program in California, for example, requires that the potential novice driver complete additional parent-supervised driving practice with the learner permit prior to applying for a driver's license, and requires a longer waiting period after failing a written or on-the-road test for such a license before re-testing, and, finally, provides that

the department of motor vehicles can suspend the license on a lower point count for drivers under the age of 18.

Step 2.

Provisional Licensing, Phase B

Those states which provide for an initial nighttime restriction will normally have a second phase of the limited licensing period when the novice may drive twenty-four hours a day. However, limits are still placed on the license, empowering the state motor vehicle department to take action to require remedial training or to suspend the license at a lower point count than for adults. This second phase of the limited license lasts until the novice reaches age 18.

Step 3. Full Licensing

At age 18, the driver generally moves to Step 3, which is full-adult licensing with the feature, however, that, being under age 21, he or she is subject to a zero BAC limit (see the next issue). The process described in these three steps is intended first to stretch out the learning period for new drivers while protecting them from the worst risks on the road and, secondly, to separate learning to drink from learning to drive by use of the age 21 limit and associated underage zero BAC limit for DWI.

Aside from nighttime restrictions and earlier intervention with poor-record drivers, three elements that should be included in a provisional licensing system are parental supervision, a restriction on the number of passengers, and the requirement for safety belt use by both driver and passengers. The purpose of requiring a period of time when the novice drives with a parent, guardian or older driver in the car is to take advantage of the adult as an individual who can exercise discipline over the tendency of young drivers to take risks and can call to the novice driver's attention the risks he may be encountering without being aware of them. This type of supervision both reduces risk exposure and provides instruction on safe driving. Further, an extended period of driving with the parent may help condition good driving habits. It is important, therefore, not to shortcut the period of the learner's permit, when the parent is required to be in the car. In those states which prohibit nighttime driving for the first six months of provisional licensing, the parent can continue to supervise driving at night for a period of time before the novice qualifies for driving solo twenty-four hours a day.

A restriction on the number of passengers in the vehicle as a condition of provisional licensing can be important in reducing the distractions which lead to crashes among young drivers who have not yet perfected their driving skills. Moreover, peers can often be a motivating factor in producing dangerous driving. A group of teenagers in the car may challenge the driver to take risks that would not occur if he or she were alone. Therefore, it is desirable for provisional licensing systems to include a limitation on the number of passengers in vehicles driven by those under 18. Finally, increased use of safety belts by youthful drivers would save many lives and injuries. Where a state does not make the driver responsible for safety belt wearing by all passengers in his or her vehicle, this requirement should at least be placed on the provisional licenses for drivers under age 18.

Thus the provisional license embodies limitations that fall between the learner's permit (where the young person can drive only when accompanied by a parent or an adult) and the full license privilege (which is only available at age 18). The concept behind provisional licensing is to ease the youthful driver into the traffic stream protecting him or her until there is an opportunity to build driving skill through on-the-road experience. Currently, only a few states have legislation providing this protection to young people. While, in theory, the administrator of the state motor vehicle department has authority to place some special restrictions on teenage drivers because of their relatively high risk of crash involvement, legislative action will normally be required to establish a provisional licensing program. The program developed by the AAMVA (1989) should be used as the basis for this legislation.

Why is It Needed?

Practice and experience are important in the development of any skill. It is particularly important where the activity involves significant risk to the participant. A perennial problem for highway safety has been the development of good systems for bringing young, unskilled individuals into the driving population safely. Teenage drivers lack skill, they lack experience, and they frequently lack judgment and take greater risks than adults. These limitations are ultimately overcome through maturation and driving experience. In the meantime, however, these youthful drivers remain at significantly higher risk per mile driven than adult drivers. States have attempted to ensure that teenagers applying for licen-

ses are adequately trained by providing for learners' permits which allow the individual to gain driving experience under the supervision of a parent or

**Drivers in Fatal Car Crashes
Per 100 Million Miles,
by Age, Sex and Times of Day**

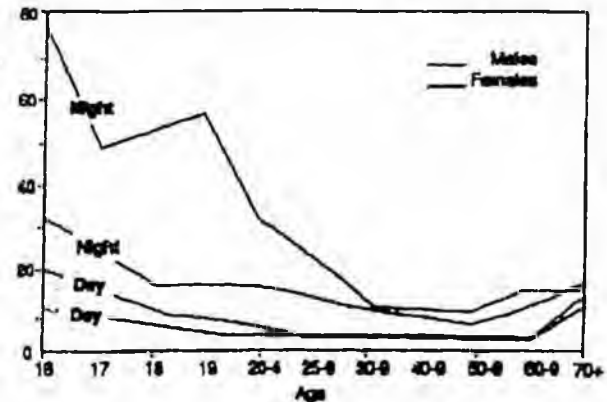


Figure 6.3 Source: IIHS, 1987

teacher, by providing for driver education in the schools, and, finally, by testing the novice driver before a license is issued. Unfortunately, the license tests are too brief and too simple to measure all the skills and knowledge required to drive safely on the roadways. Thus, each year millions of new teenage drivers enter the driving population without the skill and experience of the typical adult driver.

One method of reducing the hazard to teenagers is to increase the length of time during which they can receive training and gain experience in driving without full exposure to the hazards of normal vehicle operation. Prohibiting nighttime driving reduces the risk of death and injury while the young person is gaining experience, because teenagers are at much greater risk of death and injury at night. This is clearly illustrated by Figure 6.3 which shows the fatal car crash rate at night as compared to daytime driving as a function of age. As can be seen, 16-year-olds are at four times greater risk of involvement in a fatal crash at night than during the day. Thus, one way to protect these young drivers is to limit their driving at night until they have built up considerable experience driving during the day.

Young drivers tend to be risk takers, both because they are inexperienced judges of risk and simply because they are more risk-tolerant than adults. Provisional licenses are designed to control risk taking in three ways: (1) by allowing the motor vehicle department to intervene earlier with drivers who are caught speeding and taking other risks,

(2) by motivating the young person to maintain a clean record through the increased threat of license action, and (3) by increasing parental supervision of novice drivers by requiring the parent to approve the elimination of the driving curfew. All of these procedures are designed to help ease the novice driver safely into the traffic stream.

How Effective Is This Limited Licensing Procedure?

A study by Preusser et al. of four of the twelve states which provide for curfews for novice drivers demonstrated that these laws were effective in reducing the nighttime crash involvement of teenagers. The results shown in Figure 6.4, were obtained despite the fact that over half of the teenagers subject to the curfew admitted to driving at night anyway and despite the fact that the same teenagers reported believing that the probability of being caught by the police was relatively low (Williams, Lund, and Preusser, 1983). These researchers noted that in the states surveyed (New York and Louisiana), the teenagers appeared to believe that the police do not enforce the curfew laws vigorously; it appeared most of the enforcement came from parents rather than police. The investigators suggest that while it may be unreasonable to expect that a curfew would completely eliminate crashes in the hours covered, such curfews could be more effective if the publicity given to the curfew were increased and if the police enforcement of existing curfew laws was strengthened. Thus, reductions even

greater than those shown in Figure 6.4 might be possible with better application of these laws in the states that have them. However, it is noteworthy that such significant reductions in crash rates were achieved despite this limitation in publicity and enforcement.

Hagge and Marsh (1988) have studied the impact of provisional licensing in California, which does not include a curfew law but does require an extended period of supervised driving by the parent, a longer waiting time if the driving test is failed, and a lower point count for triggering department of motor vehicle action. Their study indicated that provisional licensing prevented a 13% rise in fatal and injury crashes for 15- to 17-year olds which might otherwise have occurred. They estimated that the effect of provisional licensing on teenagers from 15 to 17 in California prevented 540 crashes per year. Thus there is good evidence that these limitations on novice driving can be effective in reducing the crash experience of this high risk group.

How Many States Have It?

Figure 6.5 summarizes the licensing systems for novice drivers in the fifty states and the District of Columbia. As can be seen from the figure, only ten states have officially established provisional licensing programs though several more are in the process of developing such programs. Most states, however, have one or another of the special provisions for youthful drivers discussed in this section.

**Reductions in Crash Involvement
During Curfew Hours**

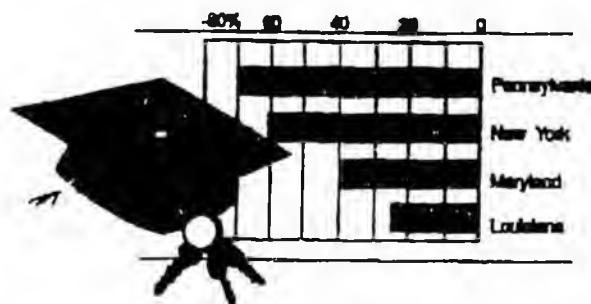


Figure 6.4

State	Letter Required	Prev. License	Night Rest.	Marital & Test	Parent Part.	Lower BAC	Model Of Prog.	Mandatory Safety DR.	Minor License	Clean Record	Driver Ed. Req.	Parent Consent
Alabama												
Alaska	yes											yes
Arizona	yes					(.06)						yes
Arkansas	yes											
California	yes	yes		M	yes	(.05)	yes	yes	yes	yes	18	yes
Colorado	yes	yes							yes			yes
Connecticut	yes			M							18	yes
Delaware	yes								yes		18	yes
District of Columbia	yes											yes
Florida	yes		Considering Program						yes			yes
Georgia	yes								yes			yes
Hawaii	yes								yes			(20)
Idaho			daytime						yes			yes
Illinois	yes	yes	11-6	M	yes		yes		yes		18	yes
Indiana	yes	yes					yes	yes	yes		18	yes
Iowa	yes		Considering Program				yes				18	yes
Kansas	yes								yes			(18)
Kentucky	yes											yes
Louisiana	yes		11-5						yes		17	(21)
Maine	yes					(.02)			yes		17	yes
Maryland	yes	yes	12-6	M	yes	(.02)			yes	yes	18	(21)
Massachusetts	yes		1-4		yes				yes		18	yes
Michigan	yes						yes				18	(21)
Minnesota	yes	yes					yes		yes		18	yes
Mississippi	yes								yes			(17)
Missouri	yes											
Montana			Considering Program						yes		18	yes
Nebraska												
Nevada								yes	yes			yes
New Hampshire			Considering Program								18	
New Jersey	yes		night	M								
New Mexico	yes					(.05)			yes		18	yes
New York	yes		8-5						yes		18	yes
North Carolina	yes					(.03)					18	yes
North Dakota												yes
Ohio	yes					(.02)			yes		18	yes
Oklahoma			New Law							yes		(19)
Oregon			Considering Program			(.01)			yes			yes
Pennsylvania	yes	yes	12-5						yes		18	yes
Rhode Island			Considering Program			(.04)			yes		18	yes
South Carolina			Considering Program			yes						(21)
South Dakota												yes
Tennessee												yes
Texas	yes								yes		18	yes
Utah	yes								yes		18	yes
Vermont	yes	yes			yes		yes		yes			yes
Virginia	yes										19	yes
Washington	yes							yes	yes		18	yes
West Virginia	yes	yes							yes		18	yes
Wisconsin	yes				yes	(.00)		yes			18	yes
Wyoming	yes						yes		yes			yes

Figure 6.5

(Continued on other side)

To interpret the table, the following definitions are provided:

Learner's Permit Required - A learner's permit is required of all new drivers prior to issuance of a provisional or regular driver's license. Such requirement can provide the applicant with supervised daytime driving experience and to develop basic behind-the-wheel skills.

Provisional Driver's License - A provisional or similar type driver's license issued to new young drivers prior to full licensure.

Nighttime Restriction - A nighttime restriction is applied to all new drivers (or age 15/16) to provide the applicant with a period of supervised driving practice during the hours of greatest hazard.

Manual and Test - State driver's license manual or supplemental manual (M) and the knowledge test (T) tailored for young/novice driver license applicants' needs.

Parent Participation - State has a program and materials which encourages the parent/guardian, may even be required, to provide supervised behind-the-wheel driving practice to their young/novice driver.

Lower BAC - State has established a lower BAC (less than 0.10) for drivers under the State's legal drinking age (age 21) which means loss of license for one year or until age 21, whichever is less.

Model Driver Improvement Program - State has a driver control program which provides for quicker intervention for young new novice drivers than the general driver population.

Mandatory Safety Belt Use - State law requires all occupants of a motor vehicle being driven by a provisional or other licensed driver to be wearing safety belts.

Minor Driver License - State minor (under age 21) driver's license different from adult to facilitate enforcement of drinking age laws.

Clean Record - Demonstrated period of safe driving performance prior to issuance of unrestricted or regular State's driver's license.

Driver Education Required - Successful completion of a driver education program required prior to issuance of regular State driver's license to young drivers under specified age.

Parent Consent - Parent/Guardian consent required prior to licensing an unemancipated minor under age 18; ages in parenthesis indicate a different age of majority for licensing purposes.

Source: *An Improved Driver Entry System for Young Novice Drivers*, NHTSA, (September 1989).

Points Often Raised

A. Why not let an individual with a learner's permit receive a license as soon as he or she can pass the written and road tests?

Currently available written and road tests are not sufficiently rigorous to test for all of the skills and knowledge required to be a safe driver. The current test principally determines that the novice driver has enough skill to drive around the block. It does not demonstrate that he has the judgment to avoid crashes or the skill for handling driving emergencies.

B. How long does it take for a young person to learn to drive an automobile?

To learn basic skills to keep the vehicle on the roadway may require only a short time, but to learn the much more complex skills involved in assuring that the driver can watch out for other vehicles and take effective action to avoid crashes in emergencies requires considerably longer. It is difficult to separate the learning required to develop the specific skills of driving from the maturation and judgment which comes only from increasing age and experience while driving. The risk per mile driven is highest for the very youngest drivers and gradually declines as one ages up to about age 25. What seems clear is that provisional licensing is effective because it applies to those who are both young and inexperienced.

C. Will not provisional licenses limit the employment opportunities of teenagers?

Since provisional licenses permit solo driving during the daytime, they should not affect employment for most persons. Where the young person operates a company car at night, special provisions could be made for driving on the job. However, it should be kept in mind that employing novice drivers to drive at nighttime is an increased risk to both employer and employee.

D. Many adults are poor drivers. Will requiring a parent in the car really help?

Yes, even the relatively poor adult drivers have considerably more experience than the novice driver, and young people are much less likely to take risks with a parent or guardian in the car.

E. Is it fair to impose heavier penalties on novice drivers who receive tickets than on adult drivers?

Yes, it is fair and appropriate since the novice driver should be driving much more carefully than the experienced driver. A novice driver is less able to handle emergencies and should therefore be driving with particular care. Young people who speed or run traffic lights while learning to operate a vehicle and getting sufficient experience to operate it safely are likely to be involved in crashes.

STATUS INSURANCE INSTITUTE FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY REPORT

Vol. 29, No. 4

March 19, 1994



Slower Graduation to Full Licensing Means Fewer Teenage Deaths

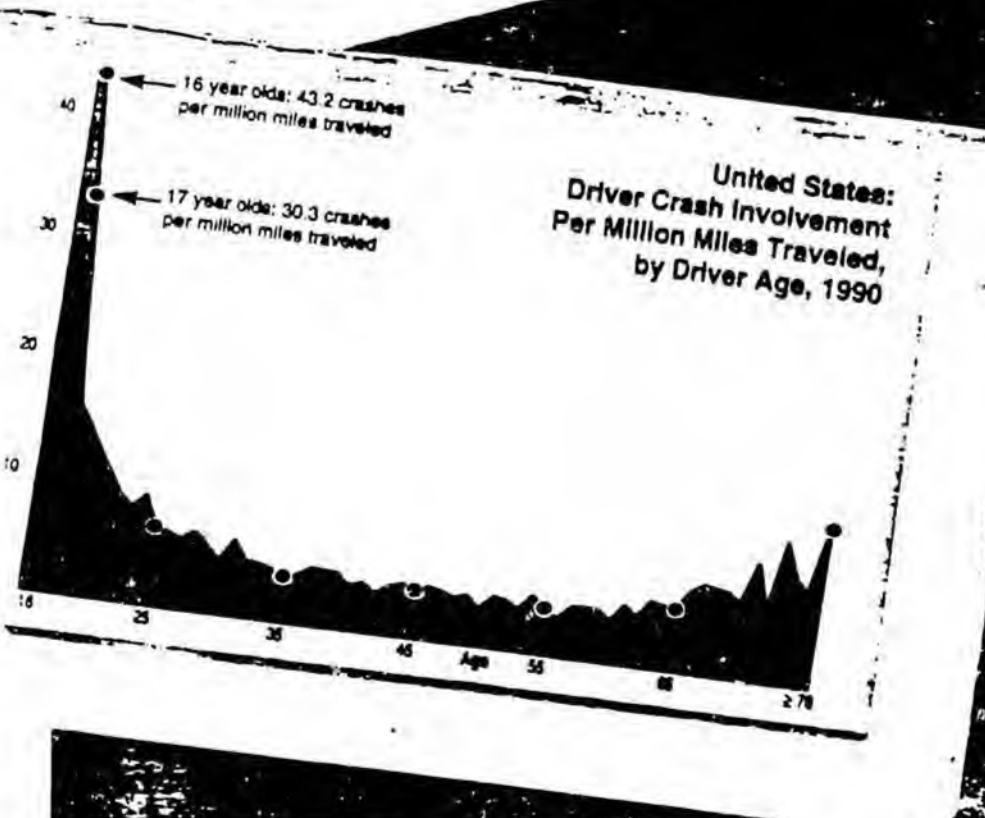
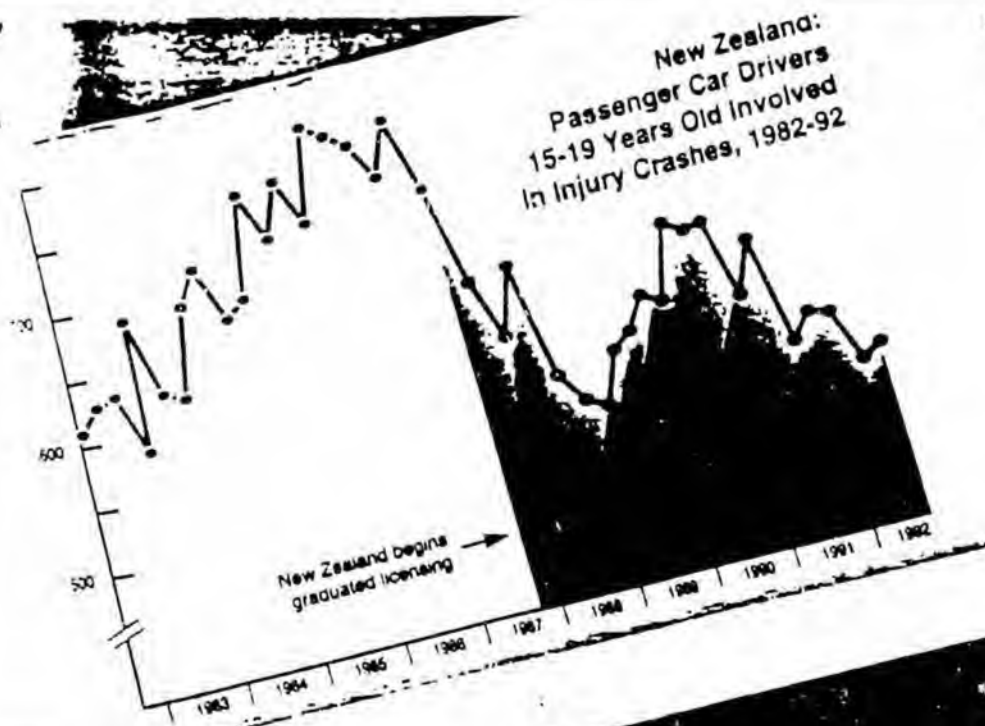
It's easy to get a license to drive in the United States. It's inexpensive, and licensing exams aren't hard to pass. As long as you're at least 16 years old — 15 in some states — you can take to the road with essentially full privileges. In many states, the only other hurdle is passing approved driver training.

It's somewhat harder to get a license in most European countries, where teenagers have to be 17 or 18 before driving legally. But even where licensing ages are higher than in the United States and requirements are tougher, young drivers are still immature and lack on-the-road experience.

The result is that young drivers in every motorized country constitute a major highway safety problem. They're disproportionately involved in crashes compared with older people. In 1992, teenagers comprised 9 percent of the U.S. population and 13 percent of all motor vehicle deaths. Crash injuries are the leading health problem among 16-19 year olds. They account for about 40 percent of all deaths in this group.

"If society is serious about reducing the young driver problem, it must bite the bullet and modify teenagers' driving through graduated licensing," says Institute Senior Vice President Allan F. Williams. "There's no substitute for on-the-road experience. But restricting the time and manner of driving in stages allows beginning drivers to acquire that experience in lower-risk settings before getting a regular, unrestricted license."

How Graduated Licensing Works: The idea is to help beginners learn to drive step by step by controlling their progression toward full driving privileges. Restrictions are lifted gradually and systematically until a



Crash involvement among 15-19 year olds went down when New Zealand began graduated licensing (top). In the United States (above), 16-19 year olds had the highest crash rate in 1990 — 20.1 per million miles traveled compared with 5.3 per million for all other ages. Sixteen and 17 year olds had by far the highest rates. Rates for drivers 76 and older were higher than average but much lower than those for teenagers.

driver "graduates" to an unrestricted license. This helps two ways. It ensures that new drivers accumulate behind-the-wheel experience in low-risk settings. It also means drivers are older and maybe more mature by the time they get their regular licenses.

Graduated licensing has already reduced crash deaths and injuries in New Zealand.

where it has been in effect since 1987. In Ontario, Canada, graduated licensing will take effect next month and is under active consideration in several other provinces.

In the United States, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has budgeted \$1.2 million over the next two years in incentive grants for states that implement

and evaluate graduated licensing programs. This isn't the first time the agency has endorsed the plan. During the mid-1970s, it developed a model system that was never fully implemented by any state. California and Maryland did adopt weakened versions, and both experienced modest reductions in crash involvement among young drivers.

Some Progress but Teens Still at Risk: The young driver problem has improved in recent years. For example, the greatest gains against alcohol-impaired driving during the 1980s were among 16-20 year olds. (See *Status Report*, Vol. 28, No. 13, Nov. 27, 1993.) Still, crash rates among this group remain a lot higher than those of other age groups including the elderly.

Immaturity and lack of driving experience are considered the main reasons for young drivers' high crash rates. The immaturity associated with youth is manifested in risky practices like speeding, following too closely, accelerating rapidly, and maneuvering in a variety of aggressive ways that heighten the likelihood of a crash.

So why not just raise the licensing age? In most of the United States, the minimum age for regular licensure is 16. In some states it's 15, and several states allow restricted licenses at 14 or 15. New Jersey prohibits regular licensure before age 17, and research shows this policy has substantially reduced the combined crash involvement of 16 and 17 year olds, compared with involvement in neighboring states that allow licenses at 16. (See *Status Report*, Vol. 19 No. 1, Jan. 10, 1984.)

Though it's safer to delay licensure until teenagers are older, Williams notes that "It can be difficult, politically, to restrict young people's mobility in the interest of safety." He also points out that raising the licensing age alone doesn't address the need for new drivers to gain on-the-road experience.

"Drivers with some experience have a lower crash risk than drivers who are new to the road," says Herb M. Simpson, executive director of the Traffic Injury Research Foundation of Canada. "Graduated licensing recognizes that the way we license people now isn't the best way. What we do is give them a vision test, a knowledge test, and ask them to drive around the block. Then

we say. Here are the keys, go out and drive on a freeway in a snowstorm at night with a car full of people.' And the result is predictable. We've basically created the situation of high risk of a collision." A longtime proponent of graduated licensing, Simpson adds that it "represents an opportunity to try and control some of the risks faced by new drivers without necessarily impinging or infringing on their mobility needs."

How Programs Compare: In the United States, there aren't any full-fledged graduated licensing systems, but all states provide for learning periods prior to licensure during which driving must be supervised. Many states grant new drivers probationary or provisional licenses for set time periods.

Simpson describes these two approaches as different from graduated licensing. Probationary license holders are typically allowed full driving privileges except that, during probation, actions like suspension can be imposed more quickly and after fewer violations. Probationary systems use the threat of punishment to encourage people to drive with care, but they do nothing to help new drivers acquire on-the-road experience.

Provisional licensing, Simpson explains, imposes some restrictions on young drivers, usually coupled with the same kinds of penalties associated with probationary systems. Restrictions are lifted after a specified time, in full and all at once, at which point a regular, unrestricted license is granted.

Graduated licensing is different in that drivers progress through a multistage licensing process that's equivalent to receiving a learner's permit, then a provisional or restricted license, and finally a regular license. Although specific driving restrictions may vary among graduated systems, a ban on nighttime driving is an essential feature. Keeping young beginners off the road during the high-risk late-night hours forces them to gain more of their early driving experience during daylight, when increased visibility makes driving less demanding.

Other restrictions apply with graduated licensing. One is a zero or near-zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC) requirement. Beginners must practice driving for a specified time under the supervision of a parent

or adult licensed driver and may be barred from major roads. Sometimes limits are imposed on the number of passengers a beginner may transport because of research showing the majority of teenage passenger deaths occurs in cars driven by other teenagers.

During restricted periods, penalties are usually more severe than those imposed on regular license holders and may trigger special driver improvement actions. Restrictions are lengthened for traffic violations and may sometimes be shortened by completing driver training. In any case, restrictions are lifted gradually as drivers gain experience and pass advanced driving tests.

New Zealand's Experience: Graduated licensing has been in effect in New Zealand since 1987 and has reduced crash rates among affected ages. The reduction is particularly noticeable among 15-19 year olds.

BAC of 0.05 percent, compared with 0.09 percent for unrestricted drivers. There's a ban on passengers in vehicles operated by restricted drivers unless they're accompanied by a front-seat passenger who's older than 20 and has had an unrestricted license for more than two years.

Startup in Canada: Beginning next month, it will take all new drivers in Ontario a minimum of 20 months to get an unrestricted license, regardless of age. Applicants who are at least 16 years old can practice driving when accompanied by someone with a full license and four years of experience. New drivers must adhere to a zero BAC rule, and they're barred from driving between midnight and 5 a.m. and on multilane, controlled access freeways.

After 12 months (8 with approved driver training) and successful completion of a



The New Zealand plan applies to all new drivers younger than 25. A learner's permit may be obtained at age 15 and then, after at least six months of supervised practice, drivers who pass a road test get an 18-month restricted license (9-month with approved training). Restrictions include a driving curfew from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. and a maximum

road test, new drivers may progress to the second level — another 12 months when they may drive unsupervised but the zero BAC rule remains in effect. At the end of this second stage, drivers who pass an advanced road test qualify for an unrestricted license.

"It's time to try a similar program in the United States," Williams concludes.

FACT SHEET

September 1994

STATE LEGISLATIVE

Graduated Driver Licensing System

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) encourages states to implement a graduated driver licensing system to ease young drivers into the driving environment through more controlled exposure to progressively more difficult driving experiences or driver licensing stages, prior to full licensure.

A significant percentage of young drivers are involved in traffic crashes and are twice as likely to be in a fatal crash as adult drivers. The problems contributing to their high crash rates include driving inexperience and lack of adequate driving skills, excessive driving during nighttime high risk hours, risk-taking, and poor driving judgment and decision-making.

To address these problems, NHTSA and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) developed an entry level driver licensing system. It consists of three distinct stages, named by the type of license possessed at each stage: learner's permit, intermediate (provisional) license, and full license. Young drivers are required to demonstrate responsible driving behavior in each stage of licensing before advancing to the next.

Key Facts

- The crash rate per mile for drivers 15-20 years of age is about 4 times as high as adults.
- In 1992, approximately 40 percent of all deaths for people ages 15-20 were from motor vehicle crashes.

- These young drivers represent seven percent of the total driving population, but represent 13 percent of the alcohol-involved drivers involved in fatal crashes.
- States with nighttime driving restrictions or curfews for young novice drivers experience lower crash rates than comparison states.

How Does Graduated Licensing Work?

The three stages of a graduated licensing system include specific components and restrictions to introduce driving privileges gradually to beginning drivers. Young drivers are required to demonstrate responsible driving behavior in each stage of licensing before advancing to the next stage.

Each stage has recommended components and restrictions for States to consider when implementing a graduated licensing system. Example components and restrictions of each stage include:

Stage 1: Learner's Permit

- Minimum age for a permit is 15 1/2.
- Pass vision and knowledge tests, including rules of the road and signs and signals.
- Licensed adult (at least age 21) required in the vehicle at all times.
- All occupants must wear safety belts.
- Zero alcohol while driving (usually 0.02 BAC).
- Permit is distinctive from other driver licenses.

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Transportation



National
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Traffic Safety
Administration

- Must remain crash-and conviction-free for six months to move to the next stage.

Stage 2: Intermediate (Provisional)

- Minimum age for an intermediate license is age 16.
- Pass a behind-the-wheel, on-road test.
- All occupants must wear safety belts.
- Zero alcohol while driving (usually 0.02 BAC).
- A licensed adult required in the vehicle during late night hours (e.g., nighttime curfew).
- Driver improvement actions are initiated at lower point level than for regular drivers.
- Provisional license is distinctive from a regular license.
- Must remain crash-and conviction-free for 12 consecutive months to move to the next stage.

Stage 3: Full Licensure

- Minimum age for a full license is 18.

How Many States Have a Graduated License System?

Sixteen states have implemented graduated licensing systems with some of the recommended components: California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. Ontario, Canada; New Zealand; and Victoria, Australia also have graduated driver licensing systems.

Evaluations in three states show the benefits of a graduated licensing system:

- California reported a 5 percent reduction in crashes for drivers ages 15-17.
- Maryland reported a 5 percent reduction in crashes, and a 10 percent reduction in convictions for drivers age 16-17.
- Oregon reported a 16 percent reduction in crashes for male drivers age 16-17.

An evaluation in New Zealand reported an 8 percent reduction in crashes for drivers ages 15-19.

Who Supports Graduated Licensing?

The following organizations have publicly supported a graduated licensing system:

- American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA)
- Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS)
- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
- National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR)
- National Association of Independent Insurers (NAII)
- National Safety Council (NSC)

Additional Sources of Information

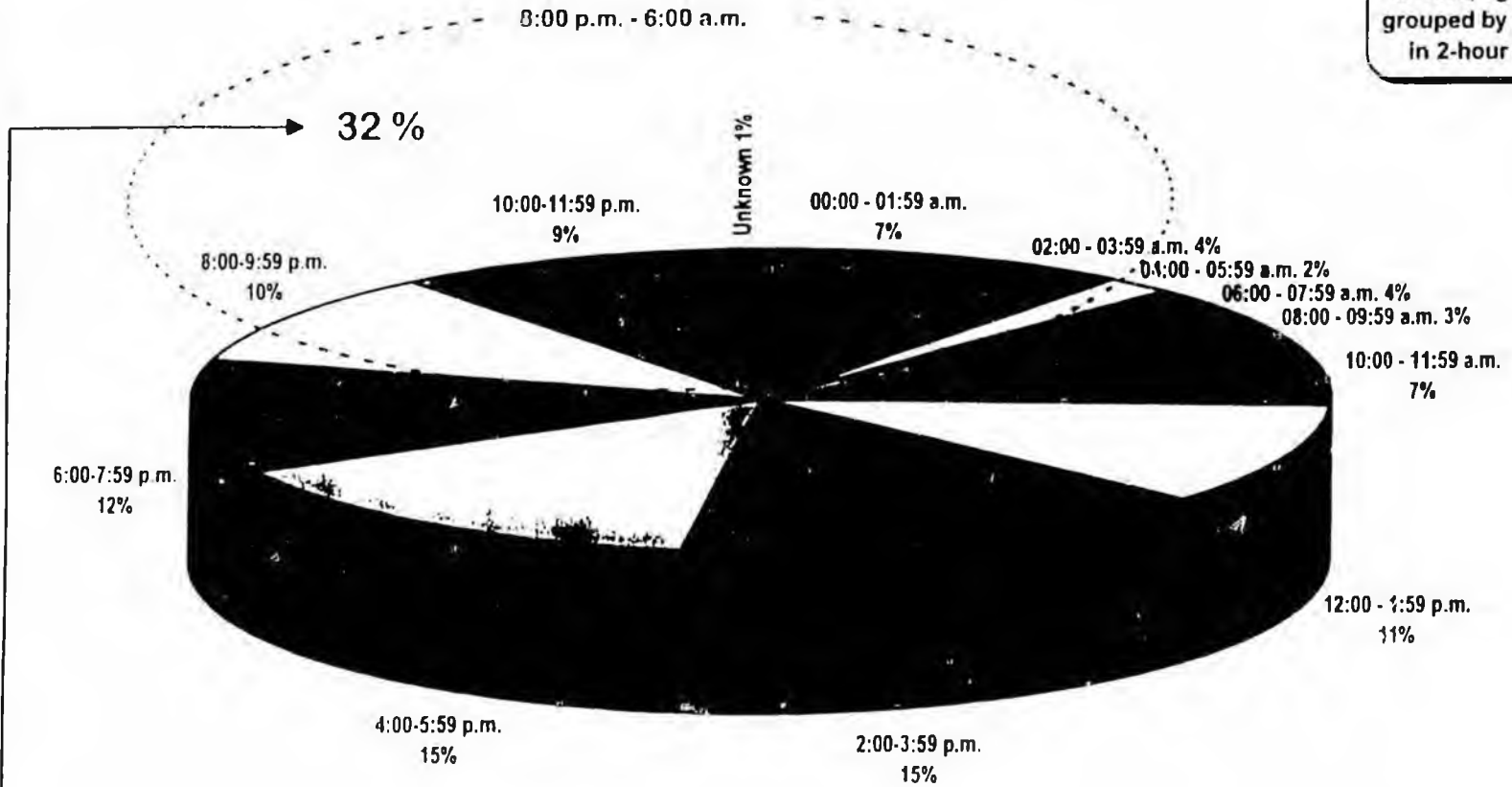
American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA)
4200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1100
Arlington, VA 22203
Mike Calvin - Director of Driver Services
703-522-4200 (Fax: 703-522-1553)

National Association of Independent Insurers (NAII)
2600 River Road
Des Plaines, IL 60018-3286
Joe Anotti
208-297-7800 (Fax: 708-297-5064)

All reports and additional information are available through your State Office of Highway Safety, the NHTSA Regional Office serving your state, or from NHTSA Headquarters, Traffic Safety Programs, NTS-21, 400 Seventh St., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590, 202-366-9588.

1993 YOUTH DRIVERS INVOLVED IN INJURY AND FATAL CRASHES (AGES: 16 - 20)

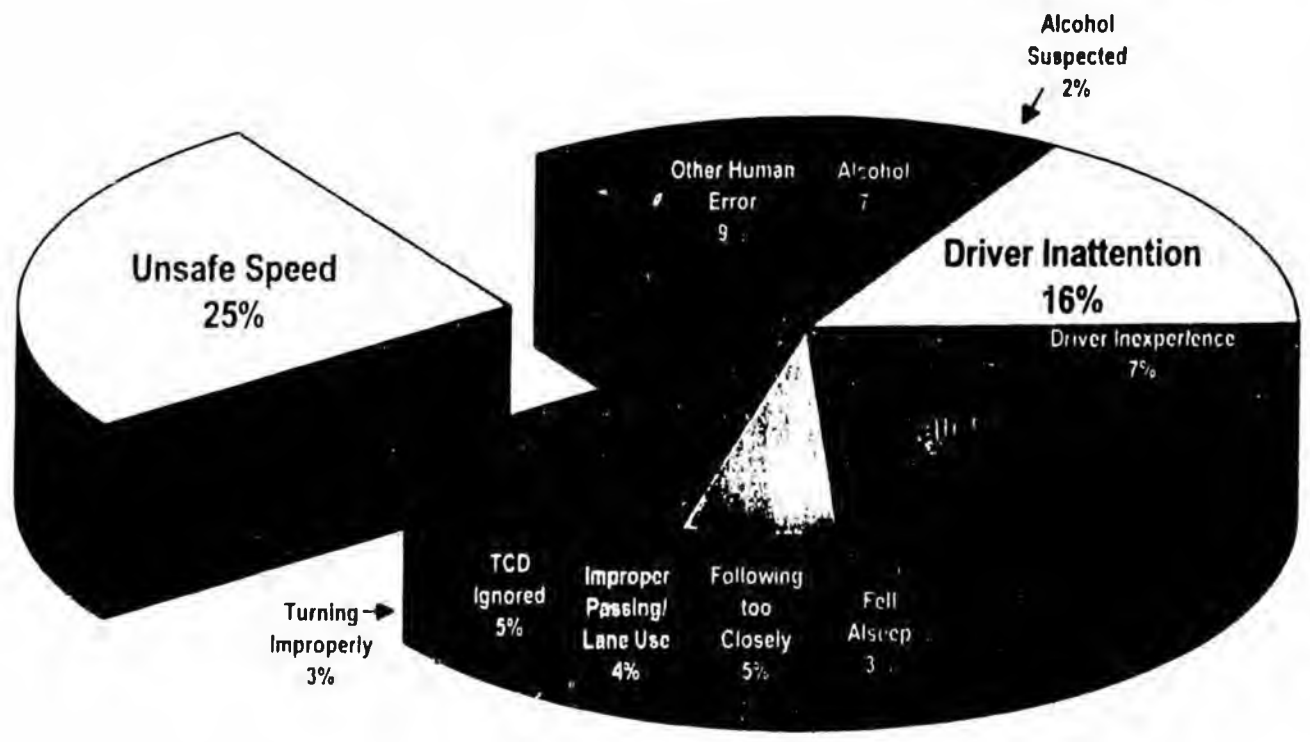
DATA REPRESENTED
Percentage of 1,138
injury and fatal crash
drivers, ages 16 to 20,
grouped by time of day,
in 2-hour intervals.



32 percent of youth crash drivers were involved in crashes which resulted in injuries and/or fatalities between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

**1993 HUMAN ERRORS KNOWN TO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO
INJURY AND FATAL TRAFFIC CRASHES
INVOLVING YOUTH DRIVERS {AGES 16-20}**

DATA REPRESENTED
Percentage of 814 known human errors contributing to injury and fatal crashes which involved a youth driver, age 16-20.



Other Known Factors

There were an additional 145 contributing factors other than human error. Of those other factors, 83 involved roadway conditions. 'Slippery pavement' was cited in 71% (59 of 83) of roadway factors. **SPECIAL NOTE: 'unsafe speed' was cited in combination with 'slippery pavement' 68% of the time (40 of 59 occurrences).**

Year	YOUTH DEATHS				ALCOHOL-RELATED					
	Total Deaths	Youth Deaths	< Diff >	% Total Deaths	Total Alcohol Deaths	Youth Alcohol Deaths	Alcohol < Diff >	Youth % of Total Alcohol Deaths	Youth Death < Diff >	Alcohol % of Youth Deaths
1979	91	32	59	35.2%	69	23	46	33.3%	9	71.9%
1980	88	18	70	20.5%	64	8	56	12.5%	10	44.4%
1981	100	25	75	25.0%	76	23	53	30.3%	2	92.0%
1982	107	9	98	8.4%	54	9	45	16.7%	0	100.0%
1983	150	45	105	30.0%	64	15	49	23.4%	30	33.3%
1984	137	37	100	27.0%	70	14	56	20.0%	23	37.8%
1985	127	30	97	23.6%	69	14	55	20.3%	16	46.7%
1986	101	14	87	13.9%	50	6	44	12.0%	8	42.9%
1987	76	17	59	22.4%	44	7	37	15.9%	10	41.2%
1988	97	22	75	22.7%	48	6	42	12.5%	16	27.3%
1989	84	12	72	14.3%	46	8	38	17.4%	4	66.7%
1990	98	8	90	8.2%	48	3	45	6.3%	5	37.5%
1991	101	16	85	15.8%	50	9	41	18.0%	7	56.3%
1992	108	25	83	23.1%	61	10	51	16.4%	15	40.0%
1993	118	34	84	28.8%	49	10	39	20.4%	24	29.4%
Total	1583	344	1,239	21.7%	862	165	697	19.1%	179	48.0%

Year	FATAL YOUTH CRASHES				ALCOHOL-RELATED					
	Total Crashes	Youth Crashes	< Diff >	% Total Crashes	Total Alcohol Crashes	Youth Alcohol Crashes	Alcohol < Diff >	Youth % of Total Alcohol Crashes	Youth Crash < Diff >	Alcohol % of Youth Crashes
1979	81	28	53	34.6%	45	19	26	42.2%	9	67.9%
1980	79	15	64	19.0%	43	7	36	16.3%	8	46.7%
1981	90	19	71	21.1%	50	17	33	34.0%	2	89.5%
1982	98	9	89	9.2%	54	9	45	16.7%	0	100.0%
1983	135	40	95	29.6%	53	13	40	24.5%	27	32.5%
1984	123	37	86	30.1%	61	14	47	23.0%	23	37.8%
1985	107	27	80	25.2%	58	12	46	20.7%	15	44.4%
1986	89	14	75	15.7%	46	5	41	10.9%	9	35.7%
1987	70	15	55	21.4%	40	6	34	15.0%	9	40.0%
1988	86	20	66	23.3%	43	6	37	14.0%	14	30.0%
1989	79	11	68	13.9%	44	7	37	15.9%	4	63.6%
1990	92	8	84	8.7%	47	3	44	6.4%	5	37.5%
1991	90	13	77	14.4%	45	7	38	15.6%	6	53.8%
1992	89	21	68	23.6%	50	9	41	18.0%	12	42.9%
1993	88	28	60	31.8%	37	9	28	24.3%	19	32.1%
Total	1,396	305	1,091	21.8%	716	143	573	20.0%	162	46.9%

1993 DRIVERS IN TRAFFIC CRASHES

Age Group	1993 Licensed Drivers	% Of Licensed Drivers	1993 Crash Drivers	% Represented in Total Crashes
< 16	1	0.0%	75	0.3%
16-20	24,310	6.2%	3,257	12.8%
21-25	41,861	10.6%	3,195	12.6%
26-30	48,780	12.4%	2,919	11.5%
31-35	57,756	14.7%	3,123	12.3%
36-40	58,506	14.9%	2,902	11.4%
41-45	50,586	12.8%	2,416	9.5%
46-50	37,471	9.5%	1,622	6.4%
51-55	25,819	6.6%	1,094	4.3%
56-60	17,226	4.4%	733	2.9%
61-65	12,396	3.1%	490	1.9%
66-70	8,979	2.3%	370	1.5%
71 +	10,236	2.6%	439	1.7%
Unknown	4	0.0%	2,740	10.8%
Totals	393,931	100.0%	25,375	100.0%



U.S. Department
of Transportation
National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

Region X
Alaska, Idaho, Oregon
Washington

3140 Jackson Federal Building
915 Second Avenue,
Seattle, Washington 98174

March 21, 1995

Honorable Joseph Green
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Ak. 99811

Dear Representative Green:

I would like to express my gratitude and complete support for your commitment to traffic safety, particularly Graduated Driver License System for Alaska's youth. Your legislative package is well thought out and timely. I am confident that when passed, it will have very positive results in Alaska.

Enclosed is some information compiled by NHTSA for perusal of all concerned. It is encouraging to know that traffic safety is a high priority with you. Please include us as enthusiastic supporters and partners, and allow us to help in any way we can.

Cordially,

Curtis Winston
Regional Administrator



FACT SHEET

April 1994

STATE LEGISLATIVE

Graduated Driver Licensing System

The United States Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) believes that state graduated driver licensing systems for young drivers can materially reduce crashes, injuries and deaths. A graduated driver licensing system is a multi-tiered program designed to ease young novice drivers into the driving environment. It is implemented through controlled exposure to progressively more difficult driving experiences or driver licensing stages, prior to full licensure.

Graduated/Provisional Driver's License Systems Work

Under this system, novice drivers are required to demonstrate responsible driving behavior (no convictions or crashes for a specified period) in each stage of licensing before advancing to the next level. For example, there may be a six-month learning stage and one-year intermediate stage prior to gaining full driving privileges. Currently, 13 states have multi-tiered or graduated driver licensing entry systems. They are: California, Colorado, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Utah, and West Virginia.

In 1977, NHTSA published a "model" entry level licensing program, Development of a Model System for Provisional (Graduated) Licensing of Novice Drivers: Final Report. The Maryland Department of Motor Vehicles then implemented and evaluated portions of a provisional licensing concept. Their program showed a five percent reduction in

crashes and a 10 percent reduction in traffic convictions for 16- and 17-year old provisional licensed drivers.

California's provisional licensing program became operational on January 1, 1983. The California Department of Motor Vehicles reported, December 1988, that there is evidence that the provisional licensing system reduced the rate of crashes involving 15-17 year-old drivers by 5.3 percent. In 1991, the Oregon Motor Vehicle Division reported that their program reduced crashes 16 percent for male drivers under age 18 with provisional licenses. New Zealand implemented a graduated licensing system in 1987 and reported in 1992 that the program has had a continuous 8 percent crash reduction for drivers under age 25.

NHTSA, in cooperation with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), completed in 1989 the development of "An Improved Driver Entry System for Young Novice Drivers." It is part of the AAMVA/NHTSA "Guidelines for Motor Vehicle Administrators" series of publications. The purpose of this proposed graduated driver licensing system, based upon the NHTSA "model" entry system, is to ease young novice drivers, under more controlled conditions, into the driving environment. This is achieved by (1) increasing the amount of their behind-the-wheel driving practice, (2) increasing their exposure to progressively more difficult driving experiences, and (3) requiring novice drivers to earn their full driving privilege by demonstrating crash and conviction free driving performance prior to full licensure.

U.S. Department of Transportation



National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Graduated vs. Provisional Licensing Programs

The terms "graduated" and "provisional" licenses have been used interchangeably in past years, but they are very different programs.

Provisional License: A provisional driver's license is issued to all drivers under a certain age, for example the age of 21 (or 18), and includes persons operating during the learning or intermediate licensing stages. At a minimum, the provisional license is distinctively different from a regular driver's license to facilitate enforcement of licensing and drinking age laws. The provisional licensee is subject to an illegal per se BAC level of zero percent and quicker driver improvement actions. All occupants of a motor vehicle being operated by them must occupy only seats designed for passengers and use available seat belts (i.e., no passengers riding in the cargo compartment of a pickup truck).

Graduated Driver Licensing System: Based upon research and the experience of the States, a graduated driver licensing system has at least three stages: learner stage; intermediate stage(s), and full license stage. It includes some or all of the following features:

- (1) Successful completion of a basic driver education course and required a learner's permit for a specified period of behind-the-wheel training.
- (2) A second level driver education program (e.g., safe driving decision making skills) after the new drivers have acquired basic driving skills.
- (3) Require that a parent, or adult licensed driver age 25 or older, supervise basic driving practice and advance practice sessions during high risk (nighttime) hours.
- (4) Lower legal blood alcohol concentration (e.g., zero BAC) requirements for under age 21 drivers.
- (5) Nighttime driving restriction (e.g., no driving from 10:00 pm to 6:00 am) either as part of an intermediate licensing stage, or as a post-licensing driver improvement action.
- (6) More rapid driver youth-oriented improvement actions for accidents and violations.

- (7) Mandatory safety belt usage by all occupants and limitations on the number of passengers in a motor vehicle being operated by a teenager.
- (8) Demonstrated safe driving performance, i.e., having no crashes or convictions for a specified period of time prior to advancing to the next licensing stage (e.g. one year prior to full licensure).
- (9) Issue a provisional license to all drivers under the age of 21 that is distinctive from the regular driver's license (e.g. marked "PROVISIONAL," different colored photo background).
- (10) Require all suspended or revoked drivers being restored for traffic safety violations to be placed in a provisional driver's license program.

While many states are already implementing some features of the graduated/provisional licensing entry system, none is implementing a major portion of the features proposed. There is a need for States to review their novice driver programs in light of the California, Maryland, New Zealand and Oregon findings. We recommend that States seriously consider implementing a young driver graduated licensing system designed to ease young novice drivers into the driving environment. NHTSA and AAMVA can provide, at no cost to the states, technical planning and implementation assistance; also, limited financial assistance may be available to plan, implement and evaluate a state's program.

Key Facts

- In 1992, it was estimated that 40 percent of all deaths for people ages 15 to 20 (over 6,500), resulted from motor vehicle crashes.
- Young drivers represent 7 percent of the total driving population, but represent 14 percent of the drivers involved in fatal crashes.

- Young drivers are four times more likely to be in a crash than an adult, per mile driven.
- Few of the specific elements of a graduated or provisional licensing system have been documented to reduce crashes. However, the California, Maryland, New Zealand, and Oregon systems reduced the rate of crashes involving 15-17 year-old drivers.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is responsible for providing assistance to states, other government and public organizations to support efforts designed to promote improvement of traffic safety for the public.

Resources

NHTSA has established, through a grant to the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), funds to support a cadre of experts to assist states, without cost, interested in aspects of a graduated licensing system. These persons can provide expert testimony and technical planning, implementation and evaluation assistance. Should you desire additional information or assistance, contact your Governor's Representative for Highway Safety; the appropriate NHTSA Regional or National Office, or AAMVA Regional and Headquarter's staff.

Model Graduated Licensing System*

✓ Learner Stage*	Intermediate Stage	Full Licensure
✓ Pass Knowledge I & Vision Tests	✓ Pass SRJIS I Test	✓ Provisional License*
✓ Take Basic Driver Education	✓ Compete Basic Driver Education	✓ Clean Driver Record
✓ Restricted Driving Parent/Driver Education Supervision	✓ Take Advanced Driver Education	✓ Complete Advanced Driver Education
✓ Parent I Activity	✓ Nighttime Restriction** Supervisor Age 25+	✓ Pass Knowledge II & Skills II Tests
✓ No Passengers	✓ Parent II Activity	✓ Parent Certification
✓ Speed/Road Limits	✓ Limited Passengers	
	✓ Clean Driver Record	
	✓ Speed/Road Limits	

* A Provisional Driver's License is issued to all drivers under age 21, to problem drivers reaching a certain negligent point threshold, and/or to problem drivers being reinstated after license suspension/revocation actions, regardless of age. Such license would be subject to the following conditions:

- Distinctively different from other driver licenses
- Illegal per se 0.0 BAC level
- Mandatory seat belts for all occupants
- Quicker driver improvement actions
- Clean /Driving record for one year
- Nighttime restriction**

Also, a Provisional Driver's License would be issued to problem drivers reaching a certain negligent point threshold and to problem drivers, regardless of age, being reinstated after a driver improvement suspension/revocation actions.

** Nighttime restriction can be a condition of the intermediate phase and/or as a condition of the provisional license issued as a post licensing driver improvement activity problem for drivers who have demonstrated irresponsible driving performance.

Resources (con't)

*National Association of
Governors' Highway Safety Representatives*
750 First Street, N.E., Suite 720
Washington, DC 20002
Barbara L. Harsha, Executive Director
202-789 0942 [Fax 202-789-0946]

*American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators
(AAMVA)*
4200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1100
Arlington, VA 22203
Mike Calvin-Director of Driver Services
Nancy Bullen-Administrative Assistant, Driver
Services
703-522-4200 [Fax 703-522-1553]

*National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
(NHTSA)*
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590
Bill Holden (NTS-21)
202-366-2722 [Fax 202-366-7985]
Jerry Tannahill (NTS-24)
202-366-2748 [Fax 202-366-2788]

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upon request:*

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GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING SYSTEM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This paper provides basic information about graduated driver licensing for young novice drivers. While many states have driver licensing programs which have features prescribed for a graduated licensing system, none have adopted a major portion of these features. We hope the following information will assist you in the consideration of legislation for a graduated driver licensing system and/or adoption of its various features.

1. What is a graduated driver licensing system?

A graduated driver licensing system is a multi-tiered program designed to ease young novice drivers into the driving environment through controlled exposure to progressively more difficult driving experiences or driver licensing stages, prior to full licensure. Under this system, novice drivers are required to demonstrate responsible driving behavior (no convictions or crashes for a specified period) in each stage of licensing before advancing to the next. For example, a 6 months learning stage and one year for the intermediate stage prior to gaining their full driving privilege.

2. Why a graduated driver licensing system?

Teenage drivers are over represented in traffic crashes, in fact they are twice as likely to be in a fatal crash as the average driver. The graduated driver licensing system addresses the driving problems attributed to this group by traffic safety experts: (1) driving inexperience and lack of adequate driving skills; (2) excessive driving during high risk hours, especially nighttime; (3) risk-taking; and (4) poor driving judgment and decision making. It is believed that considerable driving experience is required before young drivers achieve dependable driving know-how, skill, and judgement.

3. What is the purpose of a graduated driver licensing system?

The purpose of a graduated driver license system is to ease young novice drivers, under controlled conditions, into the driving environment by (1) increasing the amount of their behind-the-wheel driving practice, (2) increasing their exposure to progressively more difficult driving experiences, and (3) requiring them to earn full driving privileges by demonstrating crash and conviction free driving performance.

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4. What evidence is there to indicate that a graduated driver licensing system will reduce young driver crashes?

In 1987 New Zealand implemented a graduated licensing system and reported in 1992 that the program continues an 8 percent crash reduction for drivers (drivers under age 25) in the program has resulted. The Maryland Department of Motor Vehicles implemented in 1979, and evaluated portions of the graduated licensing concept. The Maryland program showed a five percent reduction in crashes and a 10 percent reduction in traffic convictions for 16 and 17 year old provisional licensed drivers.

The California Department of Motor Vehicles reported, in December 1988, that there is evidence their provisional licensing system, implemented January 1, 1983, reduced by 5.3 percent the rate of crashes involving 15-17 year-old drivers. In 1991, the Oregon Motor Vehicle Division reported that their Provisional Licensing Program implemented in 1989 reduced crashes 16 percent for male drivers 16 and 17 years old with provisional licenses.

5. What are the features of a graduated licensing system?

Based upon research and the experience of the States a graduated driver licensing system is a multi-staged licensing system (learner stage, intermediate stage(s), and full license stage) which includes some or all of the following features:

- (1) Successful completion of a basic driver education course and require a Learner's Permit for a specified period of behind-the-wheel training.
- (2) A second level driver education program (e.g., safe driving decision making skills) after the new drivers have acquired basic skills.
- (3) Require that a parent, or adult licensed driver age 25 or older, supervise basic driving practice and advance practice sessions during high-risk (nighttime) hours.
- (4) Lower legal blood alcohol concentration (e.g. zero BAC) requirements for under age 21 drivers?
- (5) Nighttime driving restriction (e.g. no driving from 10:00 pm to 6:00 am) either as apart of an intermediate licensing stage, or as a post-licensing driver improvement action.
- (6) Youth-oriented and more rapid driver improvement actions for accidents and violations.

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- (7) Mandatory safety belt usage by all occupants and limitations on the number of passengers in a motor vehicle being operated by a teenager.
- (8) Demonstrated safe driving performance, i.e., having no crashes or convictions for a specified period of time prior to advancing to the next licensing stage (e.g. one year prior to full licensure).
- (9) Issue a provisional license to bridge the gap between a learner's permit and full licensure all drivers under the age of 21 which is distinctive from the regular driver's license (e.g. Marked "PROVISIONAL," different colored photo background).
- (10) Require all suspended or revoked drivers being restored for traffic safety violations to be placed in a provisional driver's license program (see Q&A No. 7 below).

6. What is a provisional driver's license?

A provisional drivers license is issued to all drivers under the age of 21 (or 19) and includes persons operating during the learning or intermediate licensing stages. It is distinctively different from a regular driver's license to facilitate enforcement of licensing and drinking laws and the driver would be subject to an illegal per se BAC level of zero percent and quicker driver improvement actions. All occupants of a motor vehicle being operated by a provisional licensed driver must occupy seats designed for and use available seat belts (i.e., no passengers riding in the cargo compartment of a pick-up truck).

7. What is a provisional driver's license program?

This is a new proposal taken from an early draft of the High Risk Driver Act of 1993 and provides "that any driver whose driving privilege has been restored after license suspension or revocation resulting from a traffic safety violation shall be required to enter the provisional license program and 1) successfully complete, no at-fault accidents nor convictions, a period of not less than one year (supervised nighttime driving practice, a night driving restriction between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., unless supervised by an adult at least 25 years of age with a clean driving record), 2) subject to immediate suspension upon conviction of any moving traffic violation, and 3) deemed to be driving while intoxicated with a blood alcohol concentration of .02 percent or greater. A waiver may be granted by appropriate state authority for applicants to drive during the nighttime restricted period for purposes of work or school."



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Beginning Drivers' Crashes Differ

As a group, teenage drivers have high crash rates per mile driven. What isn't so widely known is that the problem is worst among 16-year-olds, the age when most beginners get licenses. If a teen in your household is licensed, or about to be, this information is for you.

Crashes involving 16-year-old drivers aren't like those involving older drivers. They even differ from crashes involving drivers only a year or two older. For one thing, 16-year-olds get in trouble trying to handle unusual driving situations, even small emergencies. More often than when older people drive, such situations turn into disasters. The essential problem is that the young people bring both inexperience at the wheel and the immaturity of their 16 years to the complex task of driving.

In 1993, a total of 1,269 people died in crashes involving 16-year-old drivers. The deaths break down like this: 454 drivers 16 years old died; 447 passengers died — 367 teens, 80 people of other ages; 281 people died in other vehicles — that is, they struck or were struck by the vehicles driven by the 16-year-olds; 66 deaths were pedestrians; 21 were other/unknown.


How, exactly, do 16-year-olds' fatal crashes differ?

• **Driver Error:** It's one thing to learn how many crash deaths involve 16-year-old drivers. But are the beginning drivers culpable in their crashes? Do we too quickly assume errors by beginning drivers? The short answer is that our assumptions are correct. Much higher proportions of 16-year-olds are responsible for their fatal crashes, compared with older drivers. Eighty-two percent of 16-year-old drivers in fatal crashes during 1993 made at least one driving error that contributed to the crashes. This compares with 62 percent of drivers 20-49 years old.

Speeding: This thrill-seeking behavior shows up again and again. Police reports indicate that 37 percent of all 16-year-old drivers in fatal crashes during 1993 were reportedly speeding or, if not exceeding the limit, going too fast for road conditions. This proportion drops steadily with age — only 23 percent of drivers

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"I wonder where John is?" Sandra Tucker thought, checking her watch. It was nearly 6 p.m., time for John to be home for supper. But her son never made it to the table. Driving home from his after-school job in Hartwell, Georgia, 16-year-old John had been having a little fun with a teenager in another car. "I hate to say racing, but that's what they were doing," Sandra says, when John plowed into a tree at 85 mph. "I had no idea he'd ever do anything like that." After all, John was in the National Honor Society and was listed in *Who's Who Among American High School Students*.

When it happened, "I was across the street at my neighbor's," Sandra says. "My other son was home by himself, and my husband came up to the [accident] scene. The law and ambulance and cars were backed up everywhere. John was still in the car. They had covered him with a sheet . . . When the sheriff's car pulled up with Ronnie [Sandra's husband], I just couldn't imagine what in the world was going on. Ronnie started screaming my name. He just screamed at me that John was dead. That's how I found out."

From then on, "the night was just a blur. I remember sitting in my rocking chair, freezing to death. I tell you when you go into shock your blood pressure drops real low, and your body temperature drops. I was freezing. I must have had the heat up to 90 degrees . . . and I was wrapped in blankets, just shaking.

"Right away, I went to counseling. I went to someone I could scream at. I had a good friend I worked with, and her pastor is at First Baptist. I went in my first day back at work, and I was completely in tears. She said, you get yourself to that phone, and you call Dr. Kirby [at First Baptist Church] right now. And just like a little child, I went to the phone and called him. I started seeing him, and I saw him for about a year. He kept me straight. He kept me assured I wasn't going insane, that every feeling I had was perfectly correct. I tell you, you think things that are just unbelievable. There's hatred, there's rage, and there's just ungodly emotions."

20-49 years old were reportedly speeding when their fatal crashes occurred in 1993.

■ **Single-Vehicle Crashes:** Forty-four percent of the 16-year-old drivers were in fatal crashes that involved only the teen's vehicle. The vehicle generally left the road and overtook or struck an object like a tree or pole. Among 16-year-old drivers, this is by far the biggest crash type. In contrast, only 29 percent of fatal crashes with 20-49-year-olds at the wheel in 1993 were single-vehicle.

■ **Alcohol Involvement:** Another distinction of fatal crashes involving 16-year-old drivers is a positive one. The rate of alcohol involvement is low. Only 5 percent of all 16-year-old drivers killed in 1993 crashes had

Percentage of Fatal Crashes with Various Characteristics, by Driver Age, 1993

	Driver Age		
	16	17-19	20-49
Driver Error	82	74	62
Speeding	37	33	23
Single-Vehicle	44	37	29
3+ Occupants	33	27	18
0.10+ Percent BAC*	5	28	48
Female Driver	34	27	29

* BAC: Blood alcohol concentration. In most states, 0.10 percent or more defines the offense of alcohol-impaired driving.

blood alcohol concentrations of 0.10 percent or more. This compares with 28 percent for older teenagers (17-19 years old) and 48 percent for drivers 20-49 years old.

■ **Safety Belt Use:** Many of the 16-year-olds who die in crashes aren't using belts. In fact, a higher proportion of teenagers in general don't use belts, compared with older drivers. This is the finding of surveys conducted at high schools.

■ **Passenger Deaths:** It isn't just 16-year-old drivers who are dying in disproportionate numbers. Two out of every three teens who died as passengers in 1993 crashes were traveling in vehicles driven by other teens, and 16-year-olds are particularly implicated. Fatal crashes involving drivers this age are much more likely to occur with three or more occupants in the vehicle — and the occupants are usually other teens — than are crashes involving older drivers.

One Small Emergency

Joy spread across the faces of 16-year-old Brandi Nichols and her mother on the day they learned that Brandi had been accepted for college at James Madison University. "I can see her now," Brandi's mother, Linda, recalls. "You know how the kids just kind of reach up and grab air and pump their arm up and down saying yes! yes! She was just elated."

Two weeks later, and just a month after Brandi got her license, she was headed for school in Monroe, Virginia. An honor student, she was exempt from exams and didn't have to arrive until 11 a.m.

"She left here about 10 minutes to 10" driving the pickup, Linda recalls. "I was home, washing a sweater Brandi wanted to wear the next day. I had our police scanner. I could hear there had been an accident on Route 130. And, of course, when I heard it I was just kind of listening. And then I heard it was a truck that hit a pole. They were sure there was personal injury, so I listened and listened, and I thought to myself, oh my god, oh dear god, not my Brandi. . . . And then I heard on the scanner the first three numbers of the license plate. I called the sheriff's department and asked the woman if she could verify the license number for me, but she couldn't."

That's when Linda "went down there and could see the truck. On the back bumper was a sticker: *I have a child who's an honor student at Amherst County HS.* Then I knew it was our truck. I started across, and a fireman was directing traffic there in the middle of the road. I asked him, the little girl in the truck, is she hurt bad? He said, are you any kin to her? And I said, I'm her mother. And about that time two of the rescue squad women, one on one side and one on the other, were helping me and I said, is she hurt bad? And one of the women said yes. And I asked, is she dead? And she said yes."

Brandi's truck got "a little bit off the edge of the road," her mother explains. "She managed to get back up, but then she just overreacted and cut the steering wheel too hard." The pickup "did a 360 — kind of got airborne, enough up off the road to tilt over, and it hit the telephone pole."

Parents Speak Out

Among parents with the most telling comments about the readiness of 16 year-olds to drive are people whose own children died in crashes shortly after they — or friends of theirs — got licenses. Sandra Tucker, for example, says she feels "like that driver's license was a terminal disease. It was only a matter of time" until her son would be in a crash.

Sixteen-year-old John Tucker died in a single-vehicle crash five months after getting his license. "They can take a test and get a license, go anywhere," Sandra adds, "and a 16 year-old doesn't have any sense. It's just insane. They don't have the experience. I don't think they're responsible enough."

Other parents who know a lot about licensing procedures in their states — and who have strong opinions about the policies — are the ones whose children recently got their licenses.

Among 1,000 parents of 17 year-olds surveyed in November 1994, almost 9 out of 10 said their children already had licenses. Eighty-one percent said their children were ready when licensed to drive under most conditions.

At the same time, 41 percent of the parents surveyed said they think it should be more difficult to obtain a driver's license. The same percentage think licenses shouldn't be allowed until teenagers are six months past their 16th birthdays — or older. Parents also overwhelmingly support restrictions for beginning teenage drivers:

- 90 percent said they favor a minimum period of supervised driving before teenagers get their licenses. Most said they favor a three- to six-month supervised driving period.

- 74 percent said they favor night driving curfews for beginning teenage drivers. Almost all favor curfews beginning at or before midnight.

- 97 percent said they favor a blood alcohol concentration of zero for teenage drivers. A concentration of 0.10 percent defines alcohol-impaired driving for older drivers in most states, but most states already specify lower thresholds for teenage drivers.

- 58 percent said they're in favor of graduated licensing programs that would include multiple restrictions on beginners.



What Parents Can Do

When parents understand the risk factors involved in letting 16 year-olds get behind the wheel, they can act to improve the situation for their own children:

- Give 16 year-olds as much driving time supervised by an adult as possible, even after the teenagers get their licenses.

- Be aware of the high risk when 16-year-old drivers and their peers travel together, without adults. Make new drivers wait to go with friends until they get plenty of supervised driving time. Don't assume your 16 year-old drives the same way with peers in the car as when you're present.

- With or without a curfew law, prohibit late night driving that's unsupervised. Teen outings late at night tend to be recreational and pose more risk. (Nine states have laws restricting night driving by teens younger than specified ages — Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and South Dakota.)

- Don't assume that belt use when you're in the car with your 16 year-old means belts are used all the time, especially when your child is out with peers. Remember that belt use is lower among teenagers than older people, so insist on belts all the time.

- Choose safe cars. Large ones are safer than small ones, and air bags enhance safety. Avoid performance cars — the combination of high performance and a young driver is deadly.

- Prohibit driving after drinking any alcohol. Even though this is a factor in only 10 percent of crashes involving 16-year-old drivers, it becomes a much worse problem among older teenagers.

Case For Graduated Licensing

A license to drive is a ticket to freedom for 16-year-olds and, in many cases, for their parents who don't have to chauffeur them around anymore. But the price is steep — more than a third of all deaths during the teens' first five years will come from crashes. Do 16-year-olds get too much freedom too soon? If so, what to do? Some policy measures can help keep them alive.

High school driver education is *not* the answer. In many families, it may be the most convenient way for

Attitudes Versus Skills

Training and education programs can help teens learn driving skills, but they don't produce safer drivers. Why? Because it's often not poor skills that cause the crashes in the first place. It's teenagers' attitudes. They naturally tend to rebel against adult standards and regulations. Peer pressure influences them much more than advice from adults. Teenagers are slower than adults to perceive danger and, when they do, they often don't relate it to themselves. They think they're immortal, which is why they don't use safety belts as often as older drivers and deliberately seek thrills like driving at high speeds. Training and education don't change these tendencies because teenagers tend not to respond to adult influence.

beginners to learn how to drive. But it doesn't produce safer drivers. In terms of crash experience, learning to drive this way is about the same as learning from parents or private driving schools.

A promising approach to the overall problem involves modifying 16-year-olds' initial driving — helping them learn by controlling progression to unrestricted driving, lifting controls one by one until a young driver "graduates" to full licensure. The crux is to influence when beginning drivers may drive and with whom. Restrictions typically include limits on teen passengers, a prohibition on night driving, and/or a requirement that beginners drive only with an older experienced driver in the car. The blood alcohol concentration specified for teens may also be lower than the one for older drivers.

The first graduated licensing program was implemented in New Zealand in 1987. It's effective, and similar systems were adopted last year in two Canadian provinces, Ontario and Nova Scotia.

Saturday Night Party

Sick with pneumonia and tired from a trip, Sarann Hackett was glad to see her husband, Fred, at the Florida airport that afternoon in February 1993. On the way home, she talked excitedly about the gifts she brought their son, 16-year-old Scott.

"We were always playing tricks on each other in the van," Sarann recalls, "so stupid me thought Scotty was hiding in the van when Fred picked me up at the airport. I do remember Fred telling me that Scott was with friends. And he kept saying he had something else to tell me.

"He waited until we got the suitcases in the house and everything, and then he told me about the accident." Scott had died with two of his friends in a late-night crash.

Scott (shown above, after fishing expedition) and friend Mike Morgan (top) had been planning that Saturday night for weeks. They were going to throw a bash for a friend home on leave from the Marines. It was supposed to be small, but the party grew so big that police came and told them to go home. That's when Scott, Mike, and another teen took off in a Camaro with 16-year-old Jason Harrison at the wheel.

They made it to Jason's house, where they got a phone call from a boy who'd been stranded at the party. "So the four boys piled back into the car, going back thinking they were only picking up one or two boys. When they got there, there were four," Mike's mother, Pam Barrett, explains.

Now the Camaro was packed with eight teens, and Jason reportedly sped off at about 75 mph. That's when he lost control and hit a pole. The driver was one of three boys killed. A toxicology report showed he had a blood alcohol concentration of 0.11 percent. Mike and Scott hadn't been drinking, reports indicated, but died with Jason.

Sarann Hackett donated Scott's eyes, finding comfort in that. "When I watch the sun come up, I think well, if Scotty can't see it himself, he helped someone else be able to see it."



"A lot of people think of the restrictions as being inhibiting, curtailing... but I like to think of [graduated licensing] in terms of a protective mechanism," says Herb M. Simpson, director of the Traffic Injury Research Foundation of Canada, adding that parents like it. "The difficult thing is to be able to say no. It's compelling when you have teens who want to be able to use the vehicle, and the parent has to say no. One of the advantages we've heard from parents is that graduated licensing puts them in the position that they're simply complying with rules."

Driving is a far more complex task than most 16-year-olds realize. Allan F. Williams, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's senior vice president for research, explains that beginners "have to accumulate a lot of experience before they're able to combine steering with scanning the environment and putting it all together, all at the same time, behind the wheel." That's not all. Williams adds that "handling a car responsibly takes more than mastering the skills that are involved. It takes the maturity that can only come with time."

Sixteen year-olds "can't learn it overnight," says David F. Preusser, another researcher who has studied the problem of teenage drivers. "It takes a long time to learn what to do and how to predict danger. It also takes time to develop the maturity to make responsible decisions behind the wheel."

Restricting initial driving to daytime hours is part of creating time to learn. It's not just that night driving is a more difficult task. It also "tends to be recreational," Preusser points out. "The 16 year-olds go out with their friends. They're thinking about having fun. And then, if they also have a ton and a half of metal, glass, and plastic hurtling down the highway at 50, 60, or 70 miles an hour, this is a dangerous set of circumstances." Graduated licensing heads off such circumstances by introducing night driving only after on-the-road experience is gained during the day.

So far, not one U.S. state has a full-fledged graduated program. Interest in the idea is on the increase, though, and we may be on the verge of following the Canadian example. "It took several years in Ontario," Simpson remembers, "not to convince the public but to convince the political body that the public really wanted graduated licensing. And to do that required a groundswell of activity. There must have been 15 inquests, and in every one of those cases the death could have been averted. . . . These were all very poignant and very dramatic reminders of the potential power of graduated licensing."



Best Friends Since Kindergarten

"They loved being with each other," Kay Nielson says of her daughter, Annie (shown above, right), and best friend Alyssa Hanson (left). "You never saw one of them without the other." Alyssa's mother, Diane Hanson, echoes, "Two of a kind."

The best day of Alyssa's life, Diane remembers, was when she turned 16 and got her license. "She was so excited. She called me at work and said, 'Mom, I passed. Dad said I can go pick up Annie.'" Of course, Annie was Alyssa's first passenger.

The girls attended different schools in their Wisconsin community, but both had gotten out early on the next-to-last day of 10th grade, and they were together as usual on that clear June afternoon. Alyssa "was just supposed to get Annie and come right back home," her mother says. But first Alyssa helped Annie cut the grass. Then they stopped by the bank so Annie could deposit a check.

The deposit slip was stamped 12:25 p.m., and the crash happened exactly 13 minutes later. The girls were going about 75 mph on a winding highway when Alyssa lost control on a curve, and the pickup she was driving overturned. Neither Annie nor Alyssa was using a belt, and both were ejected from the pickup truck Alyssa was driving. "They didn't know which girl was which," Kay says. Diane Hanson had to identify them.

"They were just so young," Diane says, "still babies. They were good kids. Never did any drugs, drinking, just typical girl stuff. We had no major problems at all."

Annie and Alyssa's families said good-bye the only fitting way, by mourning them at a joint funeral. But there was even a downside to that. Diane says, "We not only lost our own, but Annie was like ours and Alyssa was like theirs. It's like losing two kids instead of one."