

Victorian Community Road Safety Partnership Program DRAFT

Guide for Young Driver Safety Programs

March 2011

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1. Introduction

This guide has been developed to assist registered Local and Statewide Community Road Safety Groups to develop and deliver effective community road safety programs aimed at improving the safety of young drivers. The guide should be read in conjunction with 'Developing Effective Community Road Safety Programs', 'A Guide for Engaging the Community and Stakeholders in Local Road Safety Programs' and 'Practical Guide to Evaluating Effective Community Road Safety Programs'.

The guide is presented under the following sections:

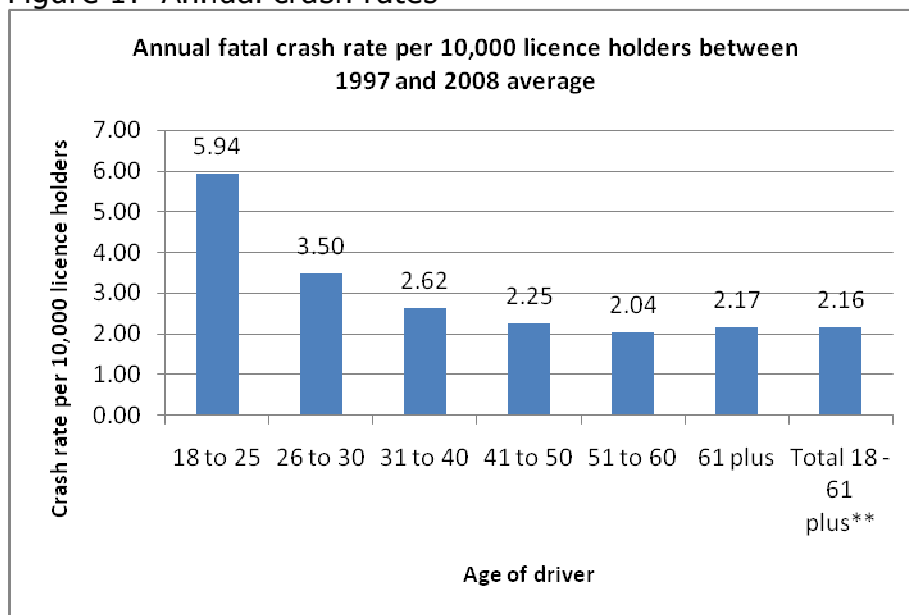
- Identifying young drivers as a road safety issue or affected group
- Victoria's Graduated Licensing System
 - Pre learners
 - Learner drivers
 - P1 and P2 drivers
- Principles of effective young driver road safety programs
- Information to assist design and delivery of effective young driver road safety programs
- Conclusion
- Sample News Releases
- Resources

2. Identifying young drivers as a road safety issue or affected group

Approximately 44 drivers aged between 18 and 25 years are killed and 990 seriously injured on Victoria's roads each year. These drivers account for over one-quarter of driver fatalities, yet represent only 13 per cent of all licensed drivers.

Many more have suffered serious injuries as a result of road crashes. These fatalities and serious injuries produce intense personal, family and community pain and suffering.

Figure 1: Annual crash rates



** Total crashes do not equal sum of individual age groups as crash may involve more than 1 driver

Source: VicRoads 2009

Fatalities, injuries and other crash consequences for young drivers are not inevitable. Development of safe young drivers is achievable.

The Victorian Government is committed to reducing annual death and injury arising from crashes on Victorian roads.

Community road safety groups are well placed to help produce short and medium objectives and results which can collectively improve on the long term and broader aim and result of a reduction in the road toll.

To determine if young drivers are a road safety issue or priority, local data can be collected from crash stats, municipal fact sheets and municipal performance sheets. Groups may also be able to obtain local enforcement data.

2.1 Safety challenges for young drivers

If you have found that 'young driver road trauma' is a priority for your community, based on crash data, there are a number of young driver characteristics and safety challenges that have been identified through research and need to be considered when preparing your road safety program. These include:

Young driver specific

- (a) Driver inexperience
- (b) Risky driving
- (c) Carrying peer passengers
- (d) Exposure at high risk times
- (e) Older, less safe cars

General issues that affect young drivers

- (f) Speeding
- (g) Alcohol and other drugs
- (h) Tiredness / fatigue
- (i) Driver distraction
- (j) Seat belt use

Detail of each of these risk factors is provided below.

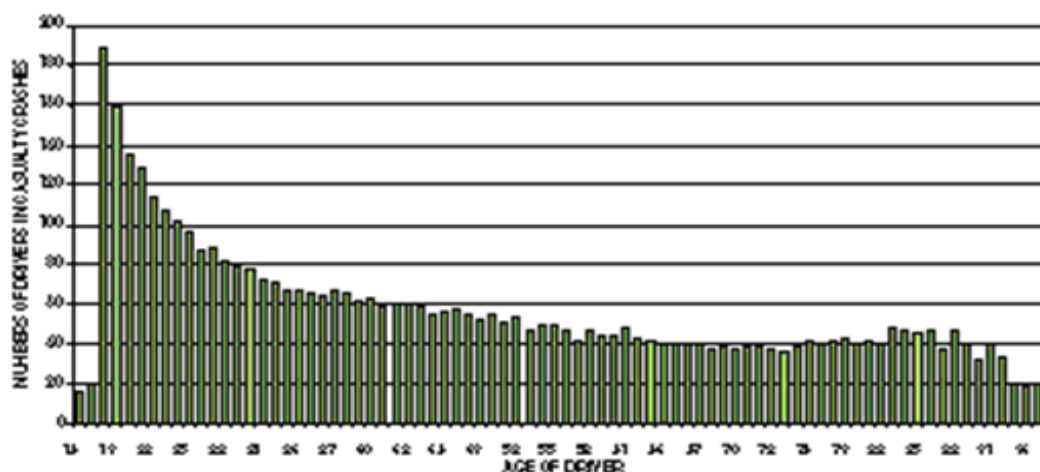
Young Driver Safety Challenges specific to young drivers with a brief description

(a) Driver inexperience

Driving is a complex activity that requires many different tasks to be managed at the same time. Young drivers need to become experienced at dealing with the complex and numerous demands of driving.

There are no short cuts to gaining this experience, it takes time. This is why the Graduated Licensing System requires that learner drivers under the age of 21 obtain a minimum of 120 hours of supervised driving practice. It is also the reason why there are a range of restrictions placed on P1 and P2 probationary drivers that recognise their inexperience as drivers.

Figure 2 below illustrates that a young driver in their first year of probationary driving is in the most vulnerable group of all road users. Probationary drivers are involved in casualty crashes at three times the rate of experienced drivers.



Annual number of drivers in casualty crashes per 10,000 license and learner permits (2002-2005)

Figure 2

(b) Risky driving

Some young drivers may take more risks on the road than any other drivers, either intentionally or unintentionally. Young drivers may find it difficult to assess risks because their hazard detection skills are less well developed than experienced drivers.

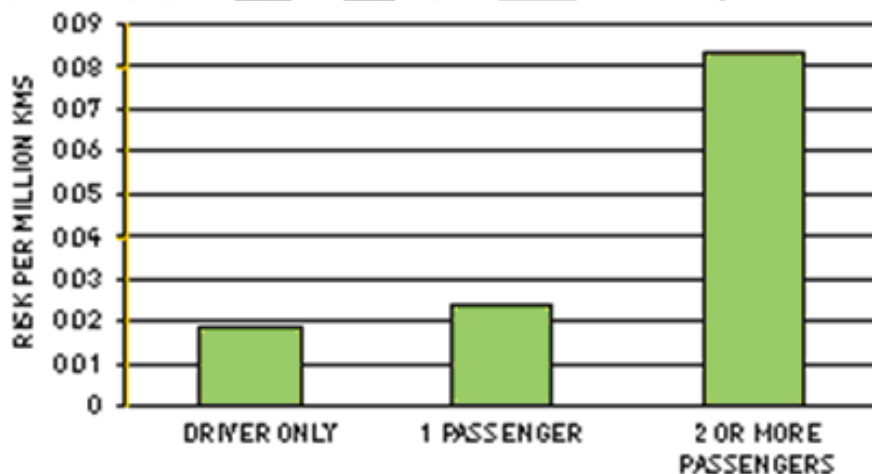
Risky driving could include speeding, driving above a safe speed on wet or gravel roads, driving too close to vehicles in front, mobile phone use while driving, being distracted while driving, cornering too fast, not wearing a seat belt, darting in and out of traffic and so on.

Some young people who see driving as a way to show their independence, assert their individuality and personality and use their vehicle as a 'gateway to freedom' are more likely to take risks when driving.

(c) Carrying peer passengers

Inexperienced drivers carrying peer passengers increases the risk of a crash. The more passengers they have, the higher the risk. Some studies have suggested that having three or more passengers gives a young driver a crash risk factor equivalent to having a 0.05 blood alcohol concentration (BAC). This is why there are passenger restrictions in the first year of driving for P1 probationary drivers.

Figure 3 below illustrates the risk of a young driver being involved in a fatal crash increases four fold if they are carrying two or more passengers.



Risk of a young driver being involved being in a crash increases with the number of peer passengers

Figure 3

(d) Exposure at high risk times

Night time and weekend driving are high crash risk times for all drivers, but pose a particularly high risk for inexperienced drivers. This may be because they are carrying passengers of similar age, who may distract the inexperienced driver. Some drive while affected by alcohol or other drugs.

Their patterns of driving also give young drivers a high exposure to risk. The attractiveness of being independently mobile means they tend to drive more often and for longer distances at recreational times of the week.

(e) Older, less safe cars

A very significant problem is that young drivers, who are at much higher risk than their older, more experienced drivers, usually have access only to older, less safe cars. In fact, MUARC have estimated that:

If young drivers had access to the safest vehicle of the same vintage as the car they are driving, then deaths and serious injuries to young people in the age group 18 to 25 years would drop by an astounding 60%.

The challenge, then, is to find and vigorously promote a list of affordable, safe cars that young people can access to help keep them safe on the roads.

General issues that affect young drivers with a brief description

These safety challenges apply to all drivers. However, they apply particularly to young drivers.

(f) Speeding

Speed is a major contributing factor to crashes and road deaths. Young drivers underestimate the dangers of speed and overestimate their ability to control a vehicle safely. Some also speed to impress peers.

On average, in the best driving conditions, at 60km/h it takes 45 metres to stop. At 50km/h takes 35 metres - that's 10 metres shorter, which could be the difference between avoiding a hazard and having a crash.

Research has shown in average conditions, a car travelling at 60 km/h will take 45 metres to stop in an emergency braking situation. A car braking from 65 km/hr will still be moving at close to 32km/h after 45 metres travelled.¹

¹ <http://www.tacsafety.com.au>

There are many reasons why young people speed, such as:

- a perception they can do so safely
- feeling pressure to keep up with other traffic
- being encouraged by or wanting to impress peers
- having a sense of control or pleasure seeking
- impatience or curiosity about the car's performance
- wrongly perceiving the likelihood of being caught while speeding as being low.

Driving too fast doesn't just mean exceeding the speed limit. There are times when road conditions such as rain or poor visibility, make it necessary to drive below the speed limit.

(g) Alcohol and other drugs

Some young people use alcohol and other drugs as a part of their lifestyle and social behaviour. They can also be pressured by peers to drive when impaired by alcohol and other drugs.

Under Victoria's Graduated Licensing System all learner and probationary drivers must have a zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC).

A drink or drug driving offence will extend the P1 or P2 licence period by six months. A probationary driver or any driver under 26 years, caught for a drink driving offence involving a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.07 or higher, will have an alcohol interlock fitted to their car when they return to driving.

Alcohol is a contributing factor in about 20 percent of deaths in drivers aged 18 to 20 years and about 50 percent of deaths in drivers aged 21 to 25 years.

Drug driving is a serious road safety issue, with approximately 32% of all drivers and motorcyclists killed in 2008 found to have drugs present in their system.

(h) Tiredness / fatigue

Tiredness is especially relevant for young drivers due to their lifestyle – which may include socialising late at night, and working and/or studying for long hours.

Young people lead busy lifestyles that can lead to not having enough sleep or having to drive at times when they would normally be asleep, which can lead to crashes where fatigue is either the cause or a contributing factor.

This increases their risk of being involved in a fatigue related crash. It is essential that young drivers are aware of the signs of fatigue, and understand the importance of getting a good night's sleep before long drives, taking regular breaks and having a 15 minute powernap, if they feel tired.

Research has shown that going without sleep for 17 hours has the same effect on driving ability as a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of .05, which is over

the legal limit. Going without sleep for 24 hours has the same effect as a BAC of 0.1, which is double the legal limit for a full license holder.

(i) Driver distraction

Research has shown that young drivers are at increased risk of a crash due to distraction, because of their inexperience in dealing with the demands of driving. Texting is very dangerous and illegal as is speaking on a hand held phone while driving. Under the Victoria's Graduated Licensing System a learner or P1 driver is not permitted to use a mobile phone of any kind and this includes hand held, hands free, or sending text messages.

(j) Seat belt non - use

Seat belts save lives and prevent injuries. However, young people's perceptions about risk and risk taking can lead to a tendency to not wear seatbelts. This may be due to a low perception of the risk, the 'short trip' syndrome, driving in familiar territory, not developing a driving and belting routine or simply forgetting because of distractions. Failing to wear seat belts is also often related to other risks, such as carrying more passengers than available seat belts and poor vehicle condition.

3. Victoria's Graduated Licensing System

The Victoria's Graduated Licensing System gives new drivers time to develop safer driving skills. It provides a structured transition to full driving privileges as the new driver's experience and maturity increases.

The Graduated Licensing System helps new drivers to be safer by better preparing learners for solo driving through extended learning periods; it protects probationary drivers by keeping them out of higher risk situations; and motivates probationary drivers to adopt safer behaviour and to drive within the law.

It is important for young drivers to recognise that they need to have a good driving record to progress through the graduated licensing system. To maximise the potential success of your young driver program consider the three stages of the Graduated Licensing System.

Pre learners

The pre-learner period is a time when young people should be preparing for obtaining a learner permit and getting ready to learn to drive. They should also be encouraged to explore and consider the issues for young drivers and to develop positive attitudes towards road use.

Learner drivers

Getting 120 hours of supervised driving is the first step towards safer driving. This is a requirement of the Graduated Licensing System and learners under the age of 21 must have completed at least 120 hours of supervised driving practice, including 10 hours at night, before they can be tested for a probationary licence. These hours must be recorded correctly in the Learner Log Book. Each entry must be signed by the supervising driver and the learner.

For the vast majority of learners, practice will be provided by parents or other family members in family owned vehicles, with the support of some professional driving lessons with driving instructors. Families and carers provide their time and expertise to mentor, support and supervise the learner driver's experience. Programs which increase parental involvement and that help build a positive parent/carer-learner partnership are very important. For example encouraging the main supervising driver (parent/carer/family member/older friend) to sit in the back seat while the learner takes their first few driving lessons can be a good start.

Requirements for all learner drivers

Minimum age of 16 years and successful completion of a computerised knowledge test

- L Plates must be displayed
- Carry learner permit when driving.
- No mobile phone use, hands free or hands held, or any messaging of any kind.
- Zero BAC and accompanied by a fully licensed driver with BAC <0.05.
- No towing.

Learner drivers under 21 when applying for their probationary licence must obtain a minimum of 120 hours of supervised on-road driving experience including 10 hours at night which are correctly recorded in an official logbook.

A learner driver aged between 21 and 25 years when applying for a probationary licence must have held a their learner permit for at least six months before they can apply for their P1 probationary licence. There is no requirement for minimum hours of experience, however all learners are encouraged to gain extensive driving practice.

A learner driver aged 25 years and over when applying for a probationary licence must hold their learner permit for at least three months before they can apply for their probationary licence. There is no requirement for minimum hours of experience, however all learners are encouraged to gain extensive driving practice.

Probationary 1 and Probationary 2 drivers

Requirements for all probationary drivers

- Minimum age of 18 years and pass an improved on road test and the

Hazard Perception Test

- Good driving record to progress to the next stage of licence
- No hand held mobile phone use
- Zero BAC and drug driving
- Alcohol interlocks for first time drink driving offenders with a BAC over 0.07 as well as loss of licence for offenders with a BAC of 0.05 or over.
- Must display clearly visible P Plates and carry licence when driving
- Restrictions on driving high powered vehicles such as eight cylinder cars, cars with turbocharged or supercharged engines, cars with engines that have been modified to improve performance and nominated high performance six cylinder cars. Offences will attract a fine and three demerit points.
- Must wear a seatbelt
- Only drive cars suitable for licence type (If tested in an automatic vehicle, restrictions will apply and only a vehicle with automatic transmission can be driven for the duration of the probationary period.)

Additional rules for P1 drivers

- Good driving record to progress to a P2 licence
- Peer passenger restriction (can carry only one passenger aged 16-21 years inclusive).
- No mobile phone use, hands free or hands held, or any messaging of any kind for P1 probationary drivers.
- P1 probationary drivers are not permitted to tow (unless for work or if under instruction).

4. Principles of effective young driver safety programs

Evaluation of road safety programs has shown that the following approaches are effective in improving young driver safety:

- a graduated licensing system
- driving supervisor programs and support for parents, carers, driver mentors
- understanding and minimising driver (and passenger) risk factors
- purchasing affordable safer cars
- facilitated peer discussions as part of the F2D program
- ongoing campaigns combining enforcement and education
- quality programs and initiatives which focus on reducing risk factors and enhancing protective factors
- quality programs and initiatives which provide and continually reinforce key road safety messages that describe what to do to be a safe driver
- involve young drivers and encourage them to take responsibility and ownership of their own behaviour and community road safety

4.1 What works with young drivers

Ongoing enforcement (and education)

Enforcement is an essential ingredient in an effective road safety campaign, and works best when combined with an effective education program. Education can enhance the effect of enforcement by creating a perception that there is a high probability of being caught if offending.

Education can assist in encouraging and motivating safe driver behaviour, such as sticking to speed limits or not driving when impaired.

Positive behavioural strategies

Positive behavioural strategies for young people should focus on positive messages that explicitly describe what to do to stay safe (rather than what not to do). These could involve:

- maximising experience as a learner
- driving in low risk conditions in the first 6 months of licensing. Encouraging parents to actively control new drivers exposure to risky driving situations (such as night driving)
- supporting the introduction of alternative transport options at high-risk times by instigating working partnerships with licensed premises operators and others including local government
- making better speed choices
- increasing following distances and maintaining a safe space around the vehicle
- always wearing seat belts
- driving alcohol-free and drug-free
- making safe passenger choices
- choosing the safest car in price range. Look at the *First Car List* in the Vehicle Safety Guide. A car with airbags, Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) and Electronic Stability Control (ESC) can save lives.
- supporting family/carers and other significant adults to be positive role models,
- assisting driver supervisors to develop ways to deal with potentially quite stressful experiences sitting as a passenger in their own car with a beginner driver in control – without creating additional stress for the learner driver, being calm and alert while supervising learner drivers to drive safely.

In general terms best practice road safety programs attempt to:

1. Reduce risk factors, such as speed, drink driving and drug driving, and negative peer influences.
2. Enhance protective factors, such as to wearing seat belts, maximising experience under the safest conditions, and making safe choices as a passenger.
3. Provide key road safety messages, such as the role of parents/young drivers; minimum 120 hours of on road supervised driving experience, influence of speed, tiredness, alcohol and other drugs, prevalence and risk of enforcement detection.

4.2 What does not work with young drivers

Off-road driver training

Off-road driver training has not been shown to be successful overall to date. This does not mean that motivated individuals will not derive some value from it. Rather, it means that the benefits have not been shown when significant numbers are exposed to these courses. Unfortunately, such programs have been shown sometimes to increase risk, particularly for young male drivers, by making them feel more confident. To date, there is no substitute for supervised on-road exposure across a broad range of conditions.

A productive alternative is to promote extensive on-road driving practice to learners, which is the key approach used in Victoria's Graduated Licensing System.

"One off" road safety information sessions

Most drivers know what is necessary to drive safely. Drivers know it is wrong to speed, to disobey stop signs and to drink and drive. Yet these behaviours occur frequently enough to cause substantial numbers of crashes, because some drivers deliberately or inadvertently disobey these important safety related rules. Education helps to put these important issues on the public agenda, but on its own usually does not lead to a change in driver behaviour because:

- Most people consider they are better than average drivers, so don't believe they need to be educated. They see education as important, but for other "less skilled" drivers, rather than themselves and so messages are lost. In reality, drivers who rate themselves as average or below average skills generally have lower crash risks.
- Unintentional driving errors occur often, especially among young drivers, and are not a result of lack of knowledge or education.
- High risk sub-groups of drivers are inherently the most difficult to influence. Lack of knowledge is not the reason that such drivers engage in high risk behaviour.
- Programs need to be ongoing to allow target groups to adopt new belief systems and to develop new behaviour patterns.
- Programs need to be able to progressively build on positive outcomes of earlier programs and/or be supported by other program messages.
- A strong motivation for learner drivers is to obtain their licence. They learn what is relevant to reach this goal. They are not highly motivated to learn safe driving practices perceived as not relevant to them.

Education messages should provide target groups with positive behavioural strategies and explicitly describe what to do. Positive behavioural strategies are most likely to succeed as they provide a clear guide as to what a driver needs to do, but should be integrated with other measures to address young driver safety.

“One-off” information sessions can be beneficial if they form part of a multifaceted suite of other programs. For instance, Keys Please forms part of an integrated series of best practice interventions for learner drivers. Together these are successful because the key message is to get more practice (an achievable target). This has the added incentive in that more learner practice may better prepare learners for their licence test.

Fear tactics in young driver programs

In trying to persuade young people to use the roads safely, some programs centre on the harmful consequences of risky behaviours through fear and shock. A fear/shock approach contains graphic depictions of negative consequences of such risky behaviours.

Using positive reinforcement and modelling desired behaviours has been shown to be more effective in changing behaviour in young people, than using fear / shock tactics.

5. Information to assist community road safety groups to plan and deliver effective young driver programs

To maximise the success of young driver safety programs and initiatives, three stages of licensing have been developed: pre-learners; learner drivers; and P1 and P2 drivers.

Graduated Licensing System

(a) Pre learner (15 to 16 years)

Learning to be a safe passenger is also important. Young people should choose a lift with the most experienced driver possible and avoid being a passenger in a car where the driver has less than 12 months driving experience. Passengers should not distract the driver, always wear a seatbelt, avoid being in a car when the driver is affected by alcohol or drugs, be alert to the signs of driver tiredness and encourage the driver to take a break.

Key messages about the Pre-learner stage include:

- It is important to prepare for becoming a learner driver, and the learner permit test, by studying the road rules and other information in the Road To Solo Driving and available information on the L Site.
- It is important that significant adults, such as parents and carers, act as positive role models by demonstrating safe and responsible driving behaviours and attitudes to pre-learners.
- Significant adults, such as parents and carers, can undertake activities with pre-learners that are designed to develop the skills necessary for safe driving.
- Passengers in overloaded vehicles or passengers not wearing seatbelts are at extreme risk in crash.

- It is unsafe to be a passenger in a vehicle while the driver is engaging in high-risk behaviours, such as speeding or driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- Unlicensed driving is unsafe – drivers who have never been licensed are about 15 times more likely to be at fault when involved in fatal crashes, than their licensed counterparts.

Programs to consider could include:

- Encourage and support the implementation in secondary schools of Traffic Safety Essentials which is the core traffic safety education resource for secondary schools and other school programs and resources for pre-learners.
- Work with Senior Program Officers (Traffic Safety Education) in each region from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) to support schools to use Traffic Safety Essentials.
- Publicise key messages around the importance of parents/carers being positive role models by demonstrating safe and responsible driving behaviours and attitudes to pre-learners.
- Publicise key messages regarding the importance of young people being safe passengers, including planning their travel and avoiding high risk situations.
- Work with youth workers and youth agencies, Victoria Police Youth Resource Officers and other relevant groups to provide targeted education to young people at risk of driving without a licence.
- Explore issues related to young drivers and develop positive attitudes towards road use.
- Encourage the purchase of safe vehicles for young drivers

(b) Learner driver

Learner drivers should start learning as soon as possible after they feel they can safely handle road and traffic environments. Young drivers should take plenty of time to develop safe driving skills and build a positive partnership with their supervising driver.

Supervised learner drivers are among the safest groups of drivers, because they have the support of an additional person in the vehicle, which assists with the driving task.

Experience helps drivers develop safe driving skills such as vehicle control; thinking and decision making; and recognising and responding appropriately to hazards.

Key messages about the Learner stage include:

- The compulsory minimum of 120 hours of supervised on-road driving experience including 10 hours at night is essential for a learner under 21, and the more experience all learners have, the safer they are.

- Use of the official learner logbook is compulsory and essential to track the experience of learners under 21, and other learners are encouraged to gain extensive driving experience.
- Supervising drivers have a key role to play in providing a variety of driving practice.
- Off road driver training on its own is not an effective way to prepare young drivers and is not an effective short cut to getting a licence quickly or increasing driver safety.

Programs to consider could include:

- Support the delivery of F2D in secondary schools
- Support the delivery of the L2P – Learner driver mentor program that provides supervised driving practice to disadvantaged learners that may have limited or no access to supervising drivers and/or vehicles.
- Encourage and support secondary schools to host a Keys Please session for parents/carers and their learner driver (Year 10 students). VicRoads regions are responsible for the delivery of Keys Please in secondary schools.
- Promote use of the L Site to learners and supervising drivers. The L Site has a wide range of valuable information, including information about the Graduated Licensing System, tips for getting the most out of driving practice and used car safety comparisons.
- Encourage and support the implementation in secondary schools of Traffic Safety Essentials which is the core traffic safety education resource for secondary schools and other school programs and resources for learners.

(c) P 1 and P2 drivers

On 1 July 2008, a two-stage probationary licence system commenced. The first stage is a one year probationary licence (P1 - red plates), followed by a three year probationary licence (P2 - green plates). People over 21 at the time of obtaining their licence move straight to a P2 licence. Research shows that the first year of driving is the most dangerous and that is why there are extra restrictions for P1 (red plate) drivers to help make the first year safer.

The most important factor in crashes for newly licensed P- plate drivers is inexperience combined with high risk driving situations. Therefore every P plate driver is at risk.

Key messages about the P1 and P2 stage include:

- Driving is a complex task requiring a high level of experience to drive safely and responsibly.
- Having a probationary licence signifies the driver has the minimum skills for solo driving, and more experience needs to be gained. The P1 and P2 probationary licence periods are a time during which a young driver continues to gain experience while driving.
- A good driving record is required to progress to the next stage of the Graduated Licensing System.

- Young drivers may underestimate the risks that apply to them in the road environment and are not experienced in assessing potential and real risks as their hazard perception skills are still developing.
- Risky behaviours put drivers, their passengers and other road users at risk. These risky behaviours can include:
 - being impulsive and/or impatient
 - driving when tired
 - distraction especially when using a mobile phone
 - being distracted by peers, especially alcohol affected peers
 - drinking alcohol and taking other drugs
 - speeding
 - not wearing a seatbelt.
- Drive a safe car. The safest vehicles are those which will best protect the occupants in a crash or help to avoid having one in the first place.

Programs to consider could include:

- Support key messages targeted to probationary drivers through senior classes in secondary schools, TAFE and other tertiary institutions, youth groups and youth workers.
- Promote the use of alternatives to driving for probationary drivers for social activities, especially at night, such as public transport, the Night Rider Bus, taxis, getting a lift from parents or other family members, or appointing a friend to be a designated driver.
- Encourage and support the delivery of Good Sports - Staying Fit and Surviving and Looking After Our Mates through local sporting clubs, community groups and organisations that work with young people. See Programs and Resources page ... for details.
- Encourage participation in effective local programs such as
 - L2P Driver mentor programs
 - Fit 2 Drive - Facilitated peer discussions with young people
- Promote the purchase of safer vehicles, and the use of information sources such as howsafeisyourcar.com.au and the First Car List to promote safer cars for young people. Work with partners to develop new, innovative forms of publicity regarding safe and affordable cars for young people, for example connecting young people to disposal of safe affordable cars by fleet owners.

Young Driver Safety Challenges

a) Driver inexperience

Key messages include:

- Encourage parents/carers to be involved by providing supervised on-road driving practice.
- Publicise key messages to learners under 21 and their parents/carers and other supervising drivers on the importance of the compulsory minimum

of 120 hours of supervised on-road driving experience including ten hours at night.

Programs to consider include:

- As an enrichment to Keys Please, community groups could purchase driving lessons to be awarded as prizes to participants (learner driver and supervisor) present at the Keys Please session.
- Support the delivery of the L2P – Learner driver mentor program that provides supervised driving practice to disadvantaged learners that may have limited or no access to supervising drivers and/or vehicles.

b) Risky driving

Key messages to consider include:

- Young people tend to over estimate their driving skills
- Unexpected events can happen on the road that may increase the likelihood of a crash. If you drive in a risky manner you are more likely to be involved and to be seriously injured.

Programs to consider include:

- Promote the use of alternatives to driving for probationary drivers for social activities, especially at night, such as getting a lift from parents or other family members, public transport, the Night Rider Bus, taxis.
- Protect young drivers by providing them with information on the safest car in their price range using the First Car List and the How Safe Is Your Car website.

c) Carrying peer passengers

Key messages include:

- Inexperienced drivers carrying peer passengers increases the risk of a crash. The more passengers they have, the higher the risk.
- Passengers have a key role to play in encouraging the driver to not exceed peer passenger restrictions.
- P1 drivers can carry only one peer passenger (aged 16-21 years inclusive).
- Encourage young people not to get into the car with a risky or impaired driver

Programs to consider include:

- Alternative transport options for young people
- Work with police to develop locally based community awareness and enforcement campaigns targetting peer passengers. Ensure that these

campaigns are well promoted through local media and that the results are publicised.

d) Exposure at high risk times

Key messages include:

- Night time and weekend driving are high crash risk times for all drivers, but pose a particularly high risk for inexperienced drivers. This may be because they are carrying passengers of similar age, who may distract the inexperienced driver. Some drive while affected by alcohol or other drugs.

Programs to consider include:

- Target initiatives to correspond with high-risk periods in the year, such as sporting finals or end of university/school year.
- Promote the use of alternatives to driving for probationary drivers for social activities, especially at night, such as getting a lift from parents or other family members, public transport, the Night Rider Bus, taxis.
- Work with hotels and clubs to ensure that under-age patrons are not served, that responsible serving practices are observed and that free water is available to patrons.

(e) Older, less safe cars

Key messages include:

- make sure that young people and their parents have access to information (the First Car List) about the safest affordable cars at the time of purchasing the novice driver's first car.
- in households with a young person and two or more cars available - let the youngest (most at risk and inexperienced driver) have access to the safer car; prevention of death and injury is far more important than the prospect of the newer, safer car sustaining property damage.

Programs to consider could include

- Local media can be encouraged to direct parents and young people to the First Car List and flyers of the updated list can be printed and supplied to young people at Keys Please sessions or festivals or forums where young people congregate.
- Encourage local dealers who supply these cars to have the flyers handy to provide to young people when making a purchase.
- Conduct a media event in which examples of the First Car List are displayed and their safety performance highlighted relative to their cost.

(f) Speeding

Key messages include:

- Speeding is unsafe and illegal – always drive below the speed limit and adjust speed to suit the conditions.
- Young drivers are often involved in crashes caused by following too close behind the vehicle in front. As speed increases, the driver needs to increase the distance to the vehicle in front of by at least two seconds. It's called the 'two second' rule.
- Speed increases the risk of a crash and the risk of serious injuries if a crash occurs.

Programs to consider could include:

- Promote and publicise the key messages around speeding for young drivers.
- Work with Police to develop locally based enforcement campaigns to target speeding vehicles. Ensure that these campaigns are well promoted through local media and that the results are publicised.
- Work with local government to place speed advisory trailers in local streets where speeding vehicles are an issue and to implement a targeted awareness program.
- Work with Police and VicRoads to identify suitable locations to strategically place static and/or mobile billboard advertising to promote key messages about the risks of speeding and the risk of police detection.
- Engineer roads to slow traffic in local streets and around sensitive areas, such as near schools and shopping centres, to improve safety for all road users.
- Include the issue of speeding into school and community based programs targeting young drivers. The key traffic safety education resource for secondary schools, Traffic Safety Essentials, contains a unit related to speed (and some of the other young driver risk factors).
- Promote the restrictions on use of high powered vehicles for probationary drivers and the reasons for these restrictions.

g) Alcohol and other drugs

Key messages include:

- P1 and P2 probationary drivers must have zero blood alcohol when driving.
- Many drivers appear unaware of the effects that drugs can have on their alertness, vigilance and ability to react rapidly to unexpected events. The impairment effects of alcohol and fatigue can be increased by some drugs.
- A P plater or a driver under 26 who has a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .07 or more will have to use an alcohol interlock for at least six months – after they get their licence back.
- Alcohol affects everybody differently. It can be difficult to estimate BAC.

- Plan transport before leaving home for a night out. Plan to get a lift with parents, use a taxi or the Night Rider Bus, stay over with friends or designate a non-drinking driver.
- Passengers have a key role to play in encouraging the driver not to drive when affected by alcohol or other drugs, and to not travel with an alcohol or drug impaired driver.
- Random roadside testing applies for both alcohol and drugs.

Programs to consider could include:

- Promote and publicise the key messages around alcohol and drug use for young drivers together with stepped up enforcement.
- Work with local licensed premises to ensure all employees have undertaken a Responsible Serving of Alcohol program, especially those venues frequented by young people. Also encourage the management of these venues to make breath testing facilities available and support the non-alcohol drinking designated driver by supplying reduced price or free soft drinks and water. Do proof of age checks as required.
- Work with police to develop locally based enforcement campaigns to target alcohol or drug affected drivers. Ensure that these campaigns are well promoted through local media and the results are publicised.
- Use strategically placed static and/or mobile billboard advertising to promote key messages about the risks of driving when affected by alcohol or drugs.
- Encourage schools to use Traffic Safety Essentials to explore the the issue of alcohol or drug use and driving.
- Encourage and support the delivery of programs such as Good Sports - Staying Fit and Surviving and Looking After Our Mates through local sporting clubs, community groups and organisations that work with young people.

h) Tiredness/Fatigue

Key messages include:

- Fatigue is considered to be a factor in more than 25% of road crashes in Victoria
- In rural areas about 30% of severe single vehicle crashes involve the driver being fatigued.
- Lack of sleep (sleep deficit) is a critical factor with fatigue, and irrespective of age the body is influenced by changes to normal sleep cycles.
- Fatigue related crashes can happen on short or long trips and at any time of the day or night.
- Drivers should stop every two hours for a break and take a 15 minute powernap if feeling tired.
- Drivers should never drive at times when they would normally be asleep. And remember the only cure for fatigue is sleep.
- Drivers should get a good night's sleep before a long trip

Programs to consider could include:

- Encourage local authorities to provide safe 'powernap areas' for travelling drivers and promote their availability.
- Target media releases to match statewide campaigns at holiday times, such as Easter, tertiary education term breaks, Christmas holidays and major sporting events, such as football finals.
- Publicise key messages in venues such as workplaces, social venues, and tertiary education campuses to inform young drivers about the role of fatigue in road crashes. This could involve:
 - distributing pamphlets on the issue in workplaces that have large numbers of young shift workers
 - liaising with local tertiary institutions to publicise messages through student newspapers and via pamphlets distributed on campus.
- Work with local businesses to increase the awareness of fatigue related road safety issues and to encourage the purchase of safer vehicles and the development of a fleet safety policy
- Support the engineering of safety factors into the road environment by installing protective devices, such as audible edge lines and wider bitumen surfacing on roads for which the municipality is responsible.
- Support Driver Reviver sites during key holiday periods in partnership with other interested groups such as service clubs or the State Emergency Service. This could involve provision of tea/coffee supplies or help with preparing a suitable site for drivers to safely stop and take a power nap.

(i) Driver distraction

Key messages include:

- All mobile phone use, including hands free or hands held, and messaging is not allowed under the Graduated Licensing System for learner drivers and for P1 drivers.
- Using a mobile phone, whether hand held or hands free, is estimated to increase crash risk by up to four times. Using a hands-free phone while driving is no safer than using a hand-held phone.
- It is illegal in all Australian states and territories for any driver to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving. This includes talking, texting, playing games, taking photos/video or using any other function on a phone.
- Driving is complex and challenging. A simple way to make driving safer is to reduce the number of non-driving and distracting activities undertaken while driving.

Programs to consider could include:

- Target media releases about the risks of driver distraction from use of mobile phones, and entertainment and driver assistance systems combined with local police enforcement operations.
- Work with police to locally target illegal mobile phone use while driving. Develop media releases on the number infringements as a way of promoting the issue.

- Encourage local mobile phone retailers to display and distribute promotional material about driver distraction caused by mobile phone use.
- Encourage secondary schools to educate pre-learner and learners about the risks of driver distraction as part of their Traffic Safety Essentials program and driving to school policy

j) Seat belt non-use

Key messages include:

- approximately 20% of vehicle occupants killed on Victoria's roads are unrestrained

Programs to consider could include:

- Work with police to develop locally based community awareness and enforcement campaigns to target seat belt use of young people – (focus around secondary schools, shops, sporting clubs and licensed premises.
- Ensure that enforcement campaigns are well promoted through local media and the results are publicised.

6. Additional Resources

Below is a list of programs and resources that have been developed to assist young people and young drivers develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to act as a safe driver. Some of these programs and resources also target parents, carers, mentors and driving supervisors.

These programs include:

- L2P – Learner Driver Mentor Program (VicRoads)
- School Based initiatives (TAC, VicRoads, DEECD, RACV)
 - Keys Please – developed by VicRoads
 - Traffic Safety Essentials/Road Safety School Resources – developed by Transport Accident Commission [Traffic Safety Essentials](#).
 - The following secondary school resources are available online tac.vic.gov.au/road_safety/schools: VELS 6 English; VELS 6 Civics; VELS 6 Health; VCE Legal Studies; VCE Health
 - Muck Up Day
 - Raw in the Classroom
 - Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) Road Safety Units (Developed by VicRoads)
 - Fit to Drive
 - RACV Transmission
- Looking After Our Mates (RoadSafe Victoria)
- PartySafe Victoria (RoadSafe Victoria)
- PartySafe Victoria Police
- Road Safety Awareness and Information Unit and Youth Resource Officers (Victoria Police)

7. Useful Web Sites

Graduated Licensing System – gls.arrivealive.vic.gov.au

L Site – lsite.vicroads.vic.gov.au

howsafeisyourcar.com.au

vicroads.vic.gov.au

tac.vic.gov.au

police.vic.gov.au

justice.vic.gov.au

racv.com.au

monash.edu.au/muarc

arrb.com.au

Austroads.com.au