

Young Driver Legislation Research

Compiled by Research & Analysis Office

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Young Driver Policy Recommendation:

Expand the nighttime driving restriction from 6 months to 12 months and from 1am-5am to 9pm-5am for 16-17 year old newly licensed drivers.

Key Takeaways from Research and Best Practice:

- There are very few collisions during the current restriction period (36 collisions in 2014)
- There are very few injuries during the current restriction period (9 injuries in 2014)
- A total of 378 collisions occurred during the proposed restriction period in 2014
- A total of 163 injuries occurred in collisions during the proposed restriction period in 2014
- Exceptions will accommodate drivers with legitimate reasons to drive between 9pm-1am

Summary Analysis:

Current law prohibits newly licensed 16-17 year old drivers from operating a vehicle between the hours of 1am and 5am for the first 6 months of licensure. By increasing the duration of the restriction to 12 months and including the 9pm-1am timeframe we would reduce exposure between 9pm-1am to levels somewhat similar to the currently restricted timeframe of 1am-5am. While we anticipate that the proposed timeframe will have more restriction violations due to the greater social activity levels at those hours, we still expect that the restriction will greatly change the 9pm-1am collision landscape. A comprehensive list of exceptions is planned to allow for driving when warranted during the 9pm until 1am timeframe.

The data shows that there are much fewer collisions in the 1am-5am timeframe and that this low rate of collision continues even into the second six months after the restriction has been lifted. Clearly, between the imposed restrictions and low social activity in the wee hours, not much happens in the way of collisions between 1am and 5am with the 16-17 year old crowd.

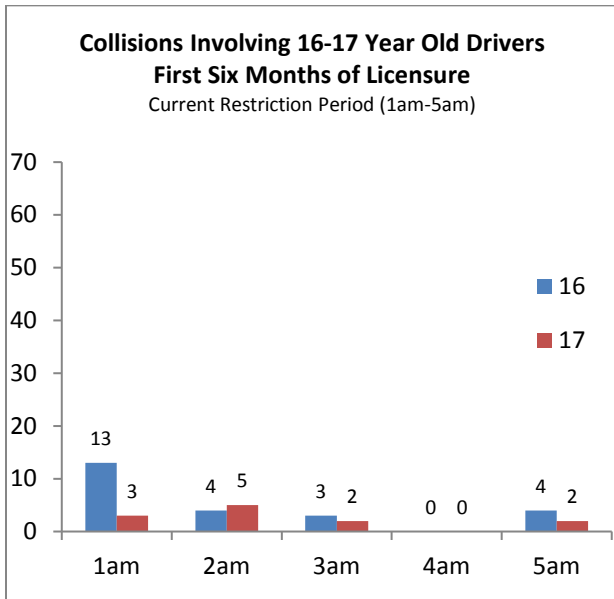
Collisions

The data show a dramatic shift in the likelihood of collisions comparing the 1am-5am restriction period to the proposed 9pm-1am period. The charts on the right on the following page depict the number of potential collisions to be avoided by imposing a restriction period from 9pm-1am. There were 192 collisions in the first six month period and 186 in the second that would be impacted. Many of these would have been averted with a driving restriction. Those with legitimate reasons to be driving would be covered by the exceptions list.

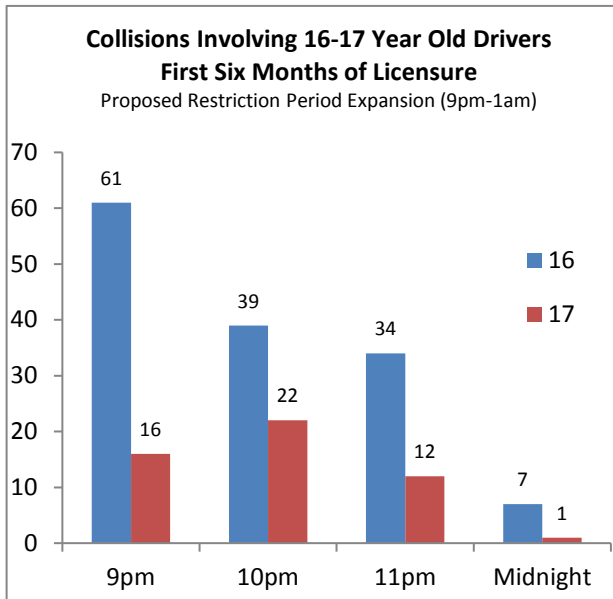
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Collisions in the first 6 months of licensure in 2014:

During the current restriction period (1am-5am)

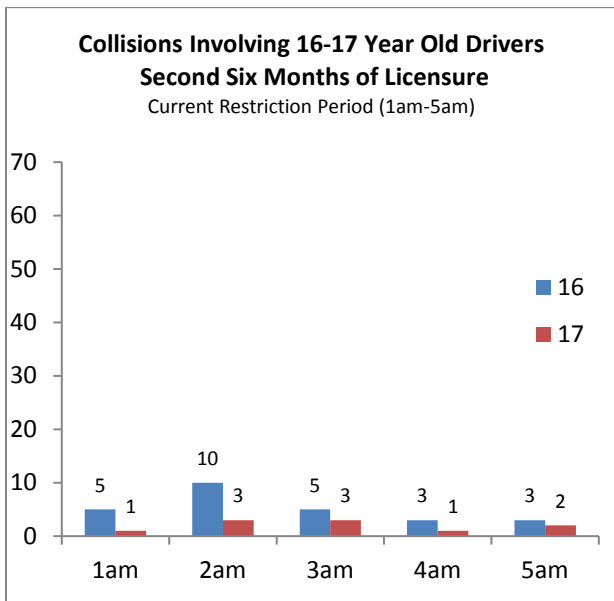


During the proposed restriction period (9pm-1am)

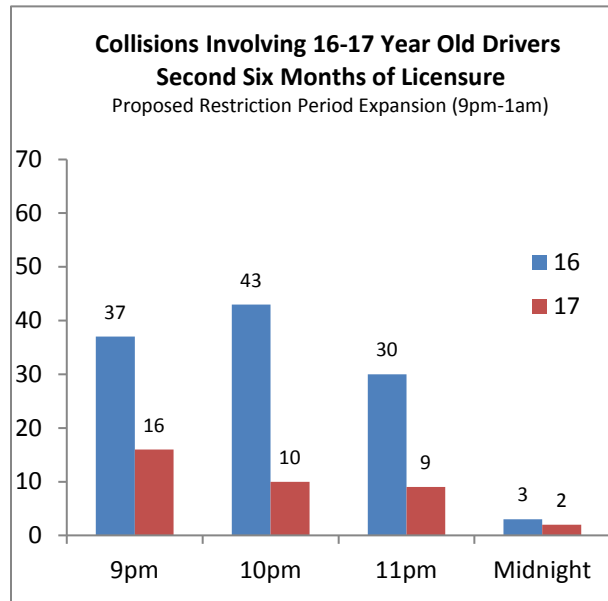


Collisions in the second 6 months of licensure:

During the current restriction period (1am-5am)



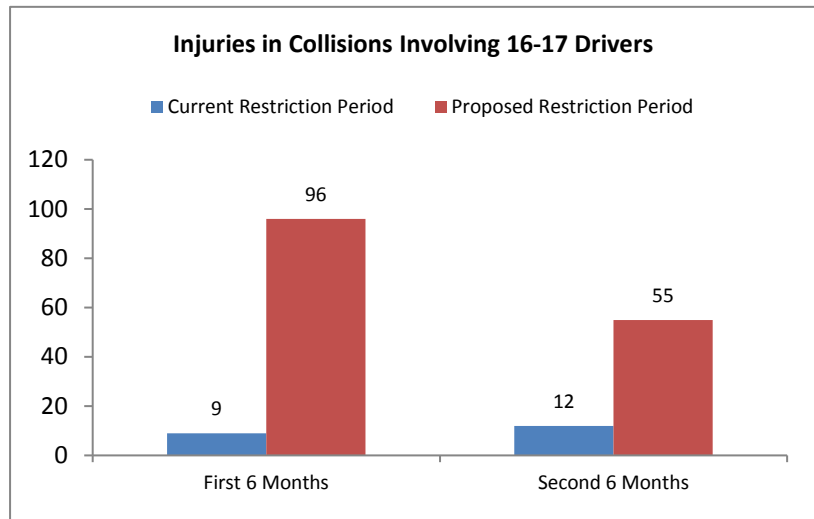
During the proposed restriction period (9pm-1am)



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Injuries:

As could be expected, the few collisions that occurred during the current restriction period (1am-5am) in the first 6 months of licensure resulted in few injuries. The data illustrate this with only 9 injuries attributed to this timeframe. An additional 163 injuries occur in the new proposed timeframe when we expand the duration to 12 months and include the 9pm-1am timeframe. Limiting the exposure of these drivers could greatly reduce these injuries.



Conclusion:

The proposed driving restriction would reduce collisions and injuries for 16-17 year old novice drivers. The data shows that 378 collisions and 163 injuries in 2014 fell within these proposed restriction hours. The inconvenience of not being able to drive after 9pm for the first year of a young person's driving life may be a small price to pay compared to the potential harm caused in a collision.

Young Driver Policy Recommendation:

Extend comprehensive traffic safety education requirement for young adults 18-20 years old.

Key Takeaways from Research and Best Practice:

- Among young drivers in Washington, those licensed at 18 years old have the highest rate of collisions within their first 6 months of licensure. Since these drivers did not obtain their license until they were 18, they were not required to complete driver training.
- Young drivers in Ontario, Canada, were much less likely to be involved in a collision during the learner stage of their license if they completed a driver education course.
- In Oregon, young drivers who opted to take formal driver education tended to be associated with lower crash, conviction, and suspension rates and therefore better performance compared to the young drivers who opted for an additional 50 hours of supervised driving practice.
- Among all teen drivers that were licensed in Nebraska between 2003 and 2010, 10.4% of those who took driver's education were ticketed for moving traffic violations, compared to 18.3% who completed 50 hours of supervised practice but no formal driver training.

Summary Analysis:

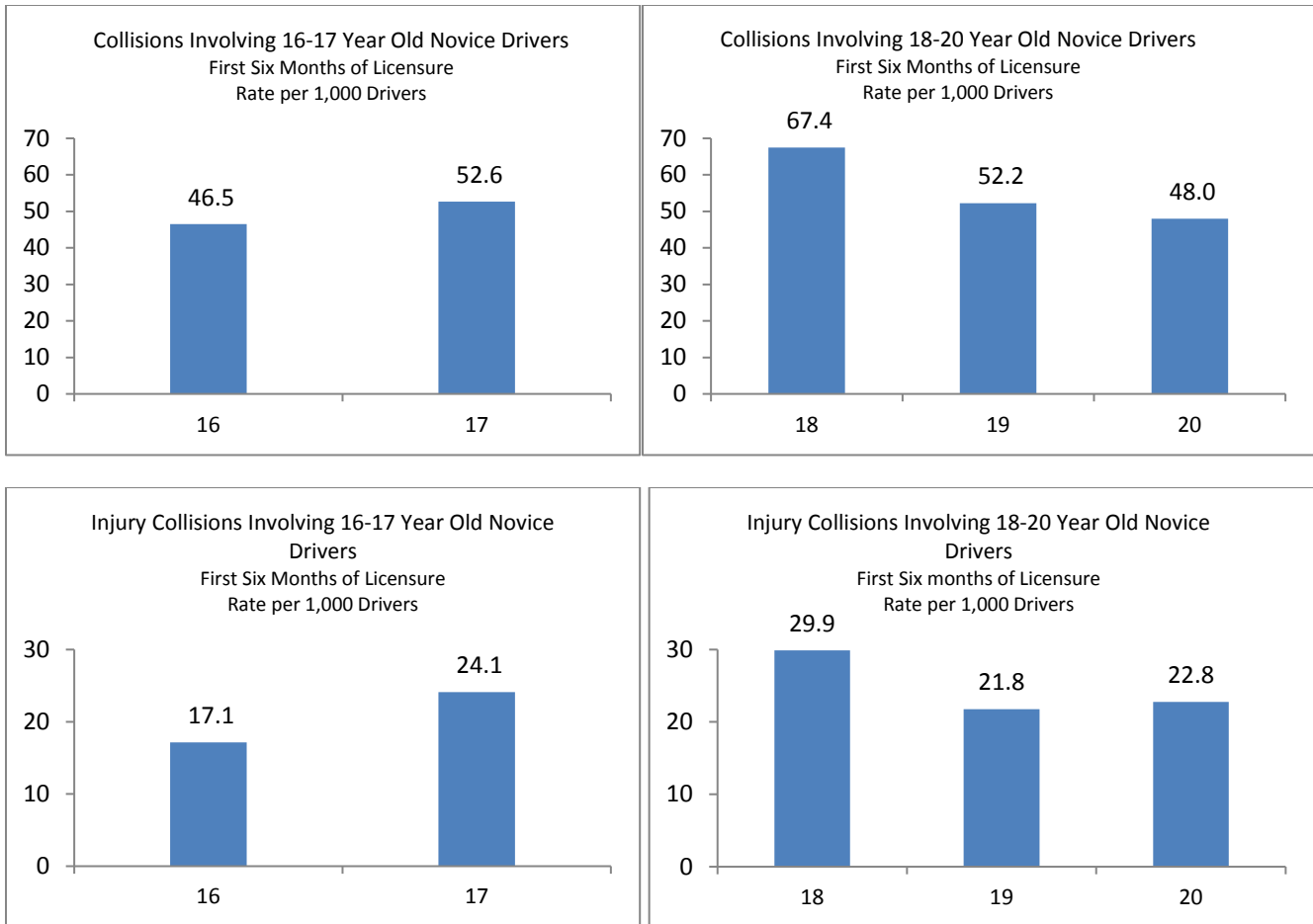
Over the last few years, DOL and other traffic safety partners have looked seriously at the need for expanded driver training to newly licensed young adult drivers. DOL has examined this issue extensively and is very concerned by the significant number of drivers waiting until age 18 to get their license. By doing so, these drivers avoid all driver training requirements. Extending the same comprehensive classroom and behind-the-wheel traffic safety education requirements to new drivers 18-20 will help address the risky behavior newly-licensed young adults engage in. DOL and many of our traffic safety partners see comprehensive driver education with classroom and behind-the-wheel instruction as a better option compared to a more abbreviated classroom-only course for these drivers.

Research from Washington State

In Washington state, teens can currently bypass the driver education requirement by waiting until they are 18 to obtain a license. This is problematic because the data show that 18 year olds have a higher rate of collision as compared to 16 and 17 year olds within their first 6 months of licensure (based on the rate of collisions per 1,000 drivers). This may partially be due to the lack of formal driver training.

The graphs on the next page show the collision and injury rates during the first 6 months of driving, as these are when new drivers are at the greatest risk. According to the graphs below, drivers licensed at 18 years old have the highest rates per 1,000 drivers of collisions and injuries during their first 6 months of licensure. The lowest rates are observed among those licensed at 16 years old.

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Research from other states

A report from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) lists 6 states – Connecticut, Louisiana, Maryland, Texas, Utah and Virginia – that have imposed driver education requirements for people in their higher teens and early 20s. Texas requires all individuals under the age of 25 to complete driver education before obtaining a license, and Maryland requires driver education for all new drivers.

Several notable studies have found a positive relationship between attending formal driver training and lower rates of crash involvement post licensure. A 2006 analysis of the learner stage in Ontario, Canada, compared the rates of collision involvement for those who completed an approved driver education course to those who do not. This analysis used a survey of 1,533 young drivers, in which they self-reported collision involvement. In Ontario, all new drivers must hold a “beginners license” (called a G1) for 12 months; however, this can be shortened to 8 months if the individual completes driver education. New drivers who reported taking driver education were significantly less likely to be involved in collisions than those who did not report taking driver education. Thus, taking a driver education course was associated with a significantly lower proportion of G1 drivers reporting collisions.

As part of Oregon’s GDL program, teens under age 18 must complete either 50 hours of supervised driving practice and a driver education course, or 100 hours of supervised driving practice (and therefore can opt out of

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formal driver training). The vast majority of young drivers claimed the additional 50 hours of practice between 2000, when Oregon implemented the GDL program, and 2003; only about 25% of 16-year olds and 16% of 17-year olds performed the “50 hours + School” option. However, this improved to 32% of 16 and 17 year olds completing an ODOT-approved driver education course in 2009, according to a AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety study of Oregon’s GDL program. NHTSA evaluated Oregon’s GDL program, and found that teen drivers who opted to take an approved ODOT driver education course, in lieu of an additional 50 hours of supervised practice, had fewer crashes, traffic convictions, and suspensions. For all ages, during all time periods, the drivers who had certified completing the formal driver education course had fewer convictions, suspensions, and crashes than those who claimed 100 hours of supervised practice:

- **Convictions:** For drivers licensed at 16, those who took driver education had a conviction rate of 13.94 per 1,000 driving months during the first year of licensure, compared to a rate of 26.20 per 1,000 driving months for drivers who opted for an additional 50 hours of practice. For drivers licensed at 17, the conviction rate per 1,000 driving months is 18.91 for the driver education cohort, compared to a rate of 36.87 for the additional practice hours cohort during the first year of licensure.
- **Crashes:** For drivers licensed at 16, those in the driver education cohort had a crash rate during the first year of licensure of 12.87 per 1,000 driving months, compared to 14.72 for the additional practice hours cohort. For drivers licensed at 17, the crash rate per 1,000 driving months during the first year of licensure was 13.29 for the driver education cohort, compared to a rate of 16.07 for the additional practice hours cohort.

It is not possible to determine whether these outcomes are associated directly with the ODOT-approved training courses, or if they are an artifact of another variable such as selection bias (teenagers were not randomly assigned to receive formal driver education versus more supervised practice). It is also important to note that there was no way to verify that the teen drivers who opted for 100 hours of supervised practice actually completed 100 hours of practice. Focus group participants reported that many parents may have simply signed the ODOT form verifying the 100 hours of practice regardless of how many, or how few, hours their teen driver actually completed.

In a 2015 study, researchers examined a census of all teen drivers in Nebraska between 2003 and 2010. Nebraska teens can apply for an intermediate level Provisional Operators Permit (POP) in the GDL system by completing either a 50 hour supervised driving certification log or a certified driver education course. This study compares the subsequent traffic violations and crashes between the two cohorts of teens. The study found that the cohort of teens who obtained their POP through driver education had significantly lower prevalence of a crash, injury/fatal crash, traffic violation, or DUI in both the first and second year of driving following the POP:

- 11.1% of the driver's education cohort was involved in a car crash, compared to 12.9% of those who did not take driver's education.
- 10.4% of students who took driver's education were ticketed for moving traffic violations, compared to 18.3% of those who did not take driver's education.

When controlling for gender, income, and demographic factors, they found that teens in the certification log cohort had higher odds of a crash, injury/fatal crash, traffic violation, and DUI in both the first and second year of driving. The overall conclusion that was drawn from this study is that relative to a supervised driving

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certification log approach, teens taking driver education appear to have fewer crashes and injury or fatal crashes as well as fewer traffic violations and alcohol-related traffic violations. These differences were independent of gender, ethnic/racial, residence, and socio-economic factors. This is the first study to provide a population level direct comparison between driver education and an alternative licensing method where all other aspects of the GDL licensing process were the same for both groups.

Sources:

Mayher, D., Marcoux, K., Wood, K., Simpson, H., Vanlaar, W., Lonero, L., Clinton, K. (2014). Evaluation of Beginner Driver Education Programs: Studies in Manitoba and Oregon. Retrieved from: <https://www.aaafoundation.org/evaluation-beginner-driver-education-programs-studies-manitoba-and-oregon>.

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Shell, D. F., Newman, I. M., Cordova-Cazar, A. L., Heese, J. M. (2015). Driver education and teen crashes and traffic violations in the first two years of driving in a graduated licensing system. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*. Volume 82 (2015), pp. 45-52.

The Effectives of Driver Training/Education as a Road Safety Measure. (2016). Retrieved from: <https://www.racv.com.au/wps/wcm/connect/3fa1fb26-ebdf-4e14-9209-a5dbdd06d8f1/RACV-the-effectiveness-of-driver-training-education-as-a-road-safety-measure.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=3fa1fb26-ebdf-4e14-9209-a5dbdd06d8f1>

Zhao, J., Mann, R. E., Chipman, M., Adlaf, E., Stoduto, G., & Smart, R. G. (2005). The impact of driver education on self-reported collisions among young drivers with a graduated license. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*. Volume 38 (2006), pp. 35-42.

Young Driver Policy Recommendation:

Expand driving permit holding period from 6 months to 12 months for 16-17 year old driver license applicants.

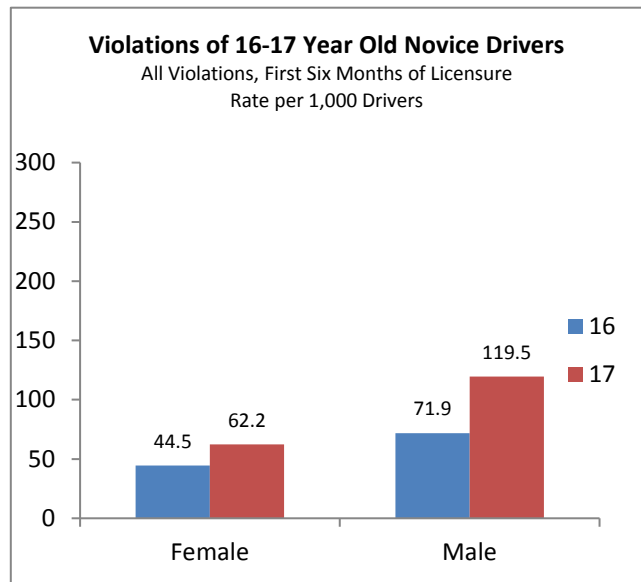
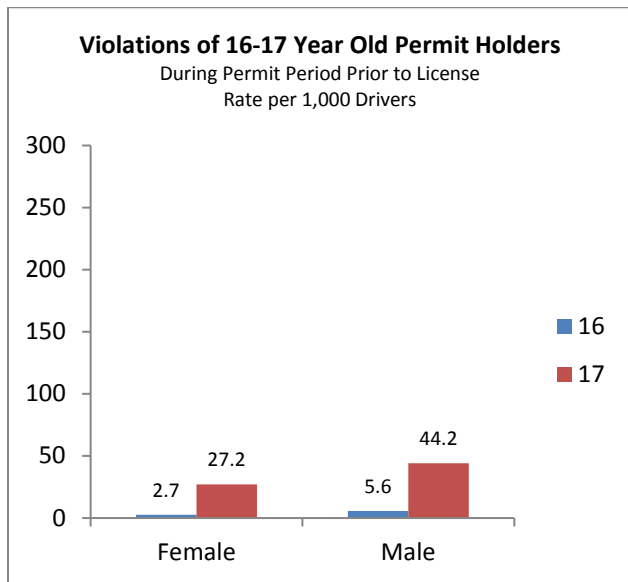
Current law allows a 15 ½ year old to get a driving permit which must be held for a minimum of 6 months before a young person can apply for a driver license. The proposal is to allow a 15 year old to get a permit, moving the minimum permit age back 6 months, and require a minimum 12 month period driving with a permit before license application.

The data shows that under the current law permit holders who become licensed at 16 or 17 have relatively minimal driving violations, collisions, and injury collisions during in their permit period compared to the first and second 6 months following licensure.

Summary Analysis

Violation Count

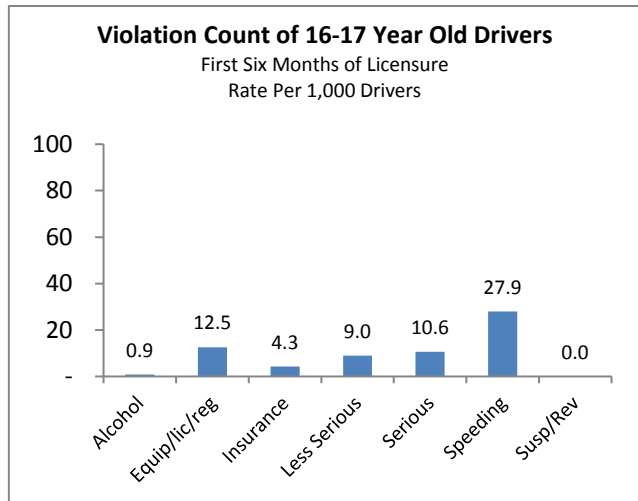
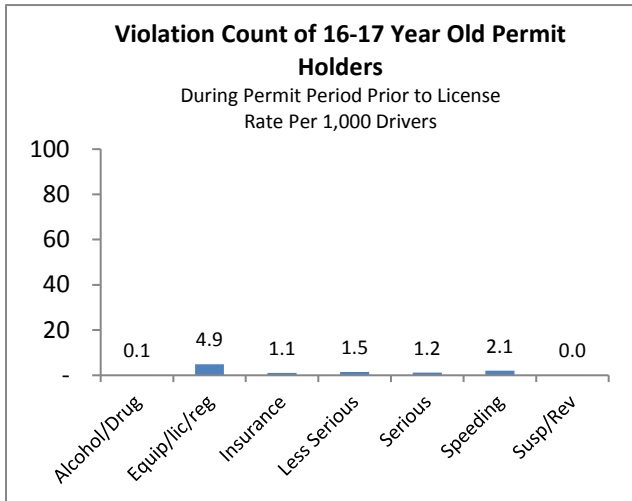
Males and 17 year olds have relatively higher rates of traffic violations compared to all 16 and 17 year old drivers. The rate increases after licensure several fold. By extending the permit period from 6 to 12 months, this spike in violations will be at least delayed, allowing more experience to be gathered and hopefully a reduced violation rate upon full licensure.



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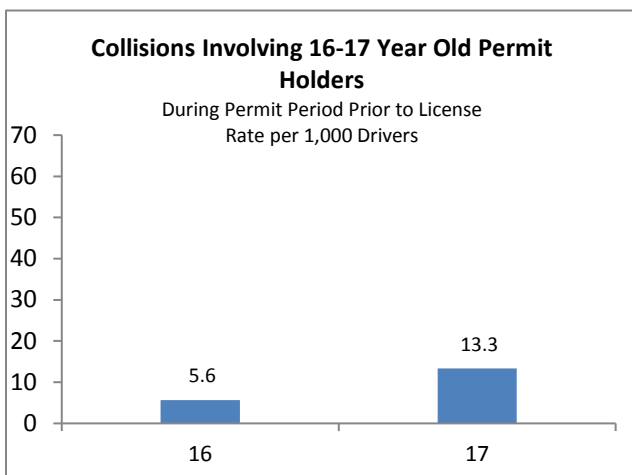
Violation Type

The types of violations change between permitted and licensed 16-17 year old drivers. Note the increase in general upon licensure, especially in the speeding category.

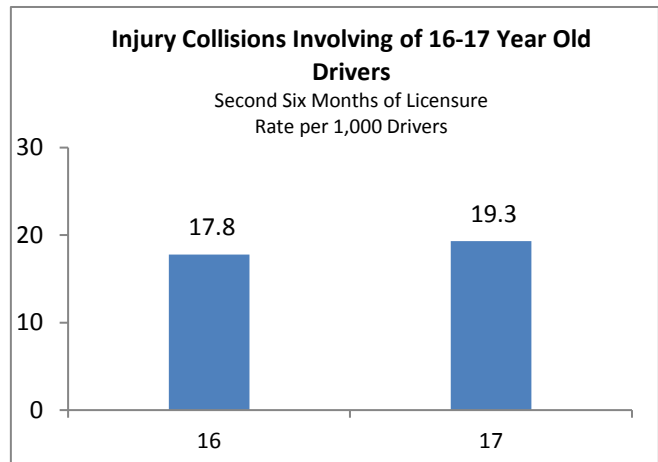
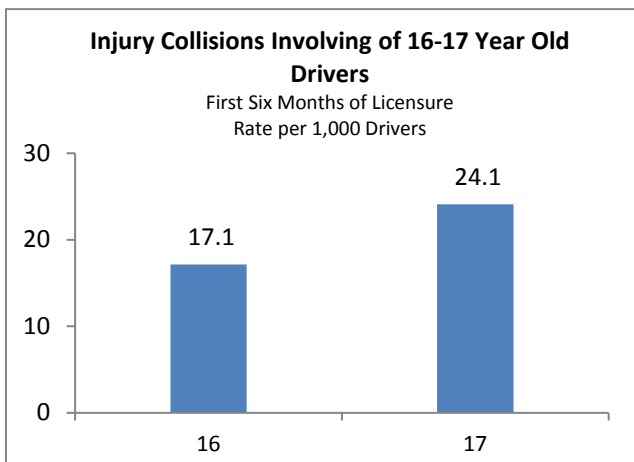
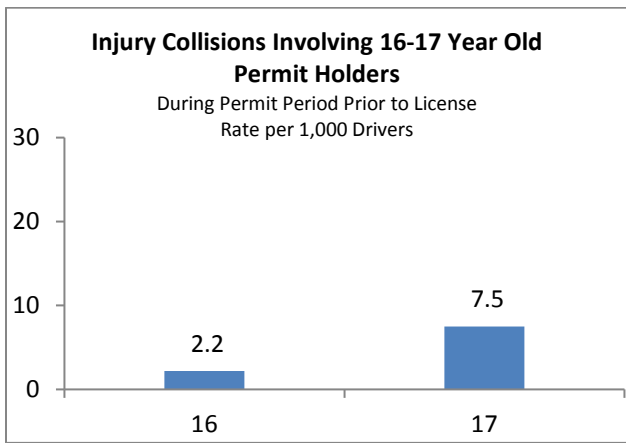
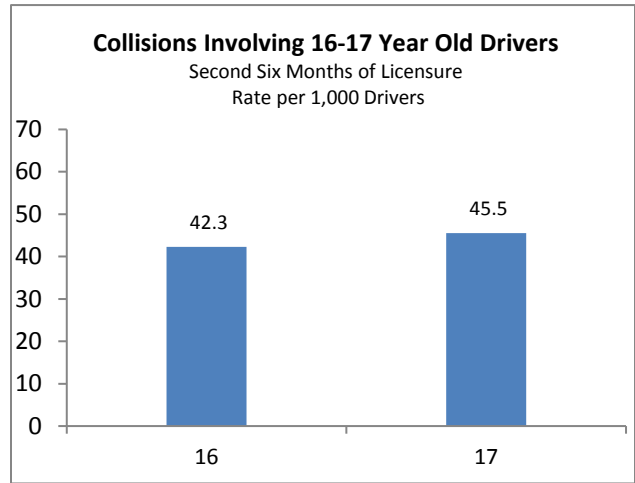
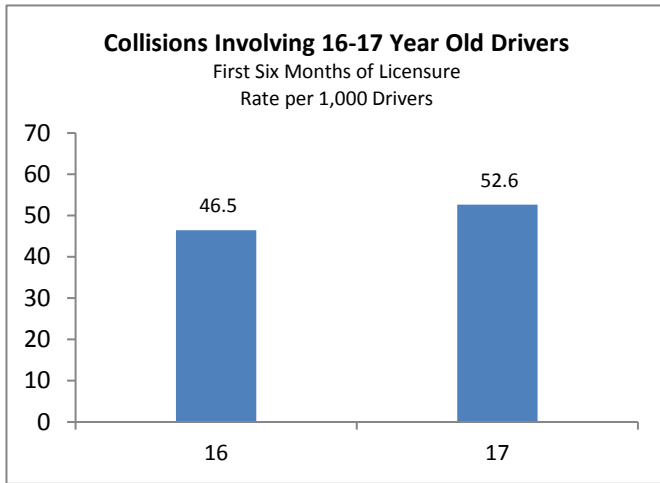


Collisions

The data show a dramatic shift in the likelihood of both total collisions and collisions resulting in injuries following the current 6 month permit period. Obviously, this is heavily influenced by the lack of supervision that occurs following licensure. Should the permit period be extended, at a minimum, a delay of this increase in collisions and injuries would likely occur. The added practice time would also contribute to a lessened risk of collision upon licensure, as we see a decline in both the collision and injury rates in the second 6 month period following licensure.



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Conclusion:

Moving the permit period to 12 months for 16-17 year old novice drivers will have the immediate effect of delaying some of the expected behaviors resulting in violations, collisions, and injuries upon licensure. The added drive-time experience is likely to positively influence their competence level, also helping to reduce violations and collisions.

Young Driver Policy Recommendation:

Expand driving permit holding period from 6 months to 12 months for 18-20 year old driver license applicants.

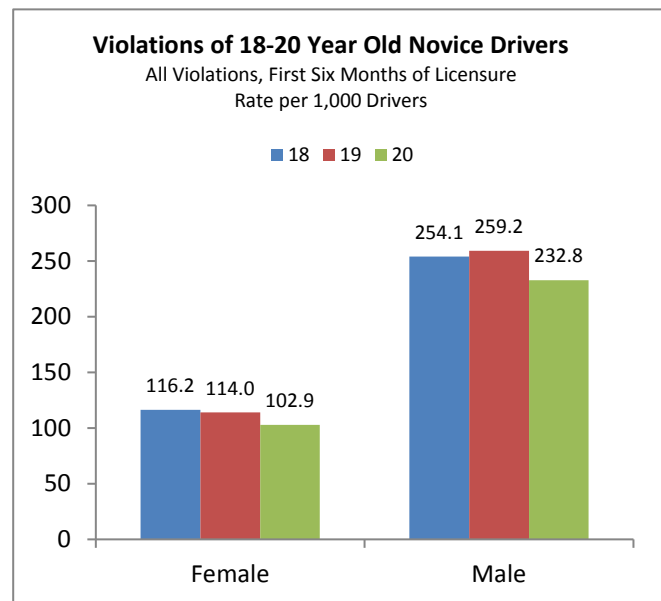
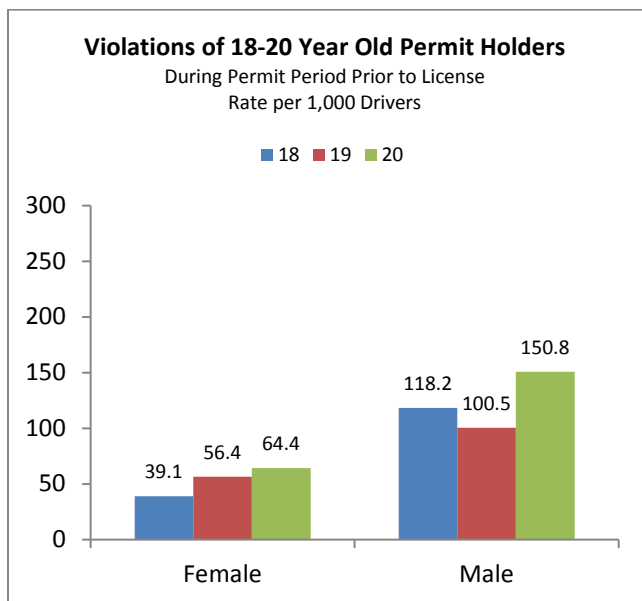
Current law does not require any permit period to be served by 18-20 year old new license applicants. The logic behind requiring a 12 month permit period for these novice drivers is the same as for the 16-17 year olds and the data shows that this age group is at a considerably greater risk of collision and injury. Hence, the permit requirement may be even more important here. Comparing the charts of the two age groups will help demonstrate the greater risk levels of the 18-20 year olds.

About 60% of the 18-20 year old new license applicants voluntarily get a permit to practice prior to testing. The data show that permit holders who become licensed at 18-20 have relatively fewer driving violations, collisions, and injury collisions while in their permit period compared to the first and second 6 months following licensure.

Summary Analysis

Violation Count

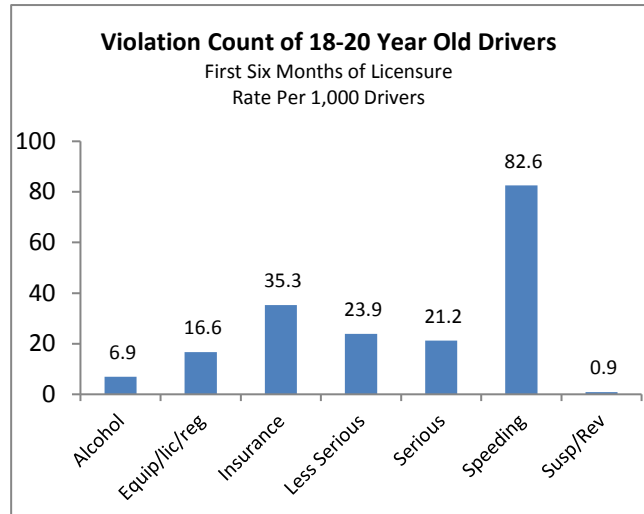
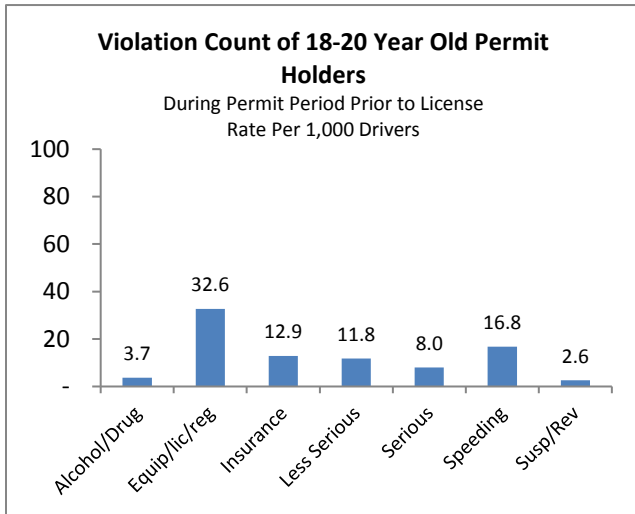
The 18-20 year old permit holders have a much reduced violation rate compared to license holders. Recall that a permit is voluntary with this group and that about 60% opt to get one to practice. Less than 10% go to a driver training school. Most 18-20 year old new licensees are poorly prepared to drive when licensed and the data show that they have a high rate of violation following licensure. Requiring a permit period of one year would ensure that they get at least some opportunity to practice under supervision prior to licensing.



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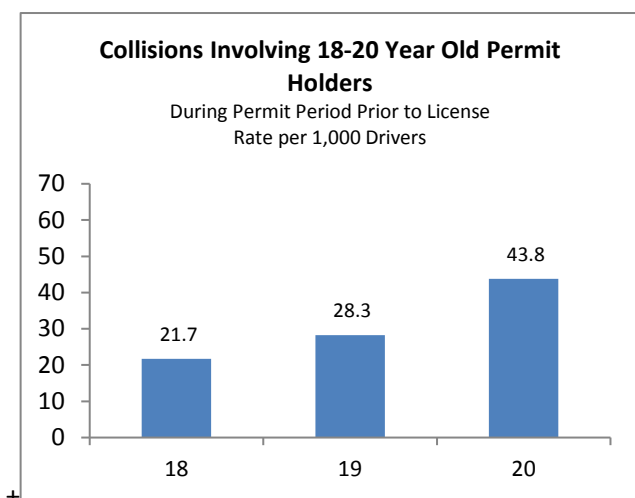
Violation Type

The types of violations change between permitted and licensed 18-20 year old drivers. Note the increase in general upon licensure, especially in the speeding category.

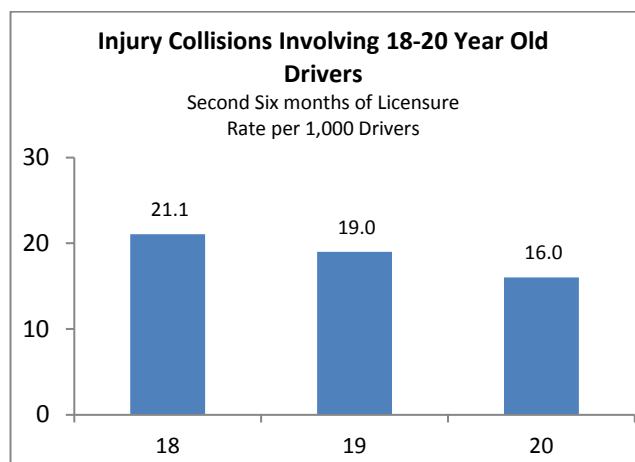
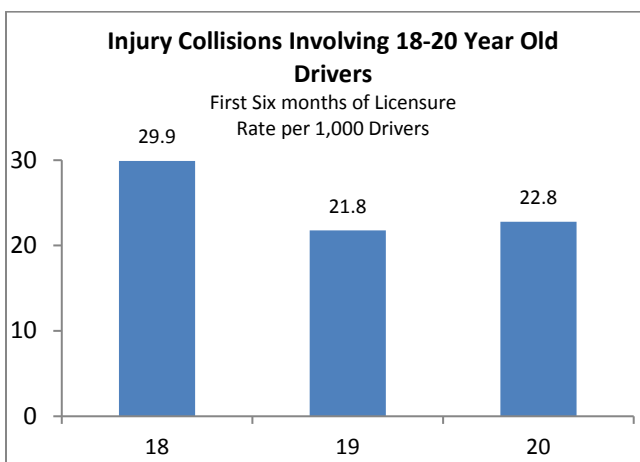
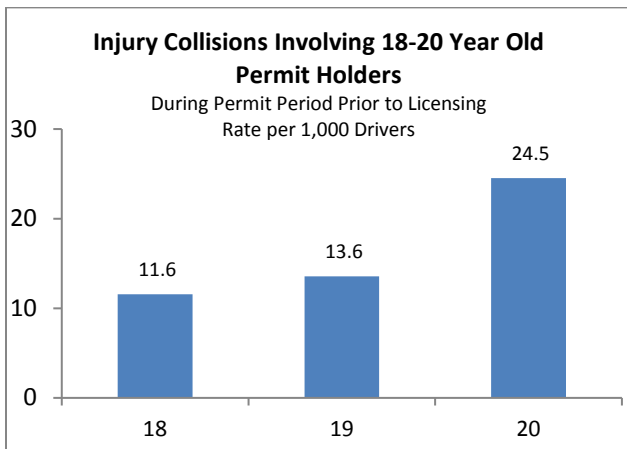
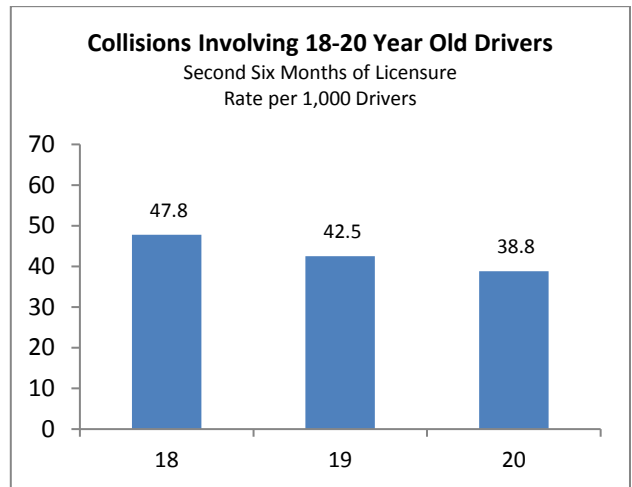
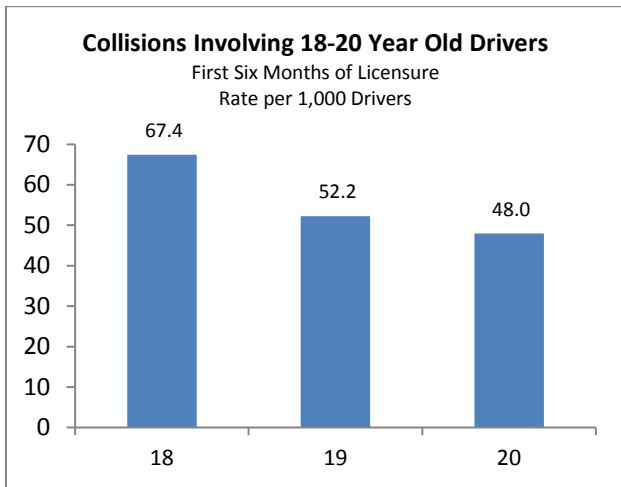


Collisions

The data shows a dramatic shift in the likelihood of both total collisions and collisions resulting in injuries following the current 6 month permit period. This is likely heavily influenced by the lack of supervision that occurs following licensure. Should the permit period be extended, at a minimum, a delay of this increase in collisions and injuries would likely occur. The added practice time would also contribute to a lessened risk of collision upon licensure, as we see a decline in both the collision and injury rates in the second 6 month period following licensure.



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Conclusion:

Requiring a permit period of 12 months for 18-20 year old novice drivers will have the immediate effect of delaying some of the expected behaviors resulting in violations, collisions, and injuries we'd see upon licensure. The added drive-time experience is likely to positively influence their competence level, also helping to reduce violations and collisions.

Young Driver Policy Recommendation:

Expand the requirement for behind-the-wheel practice from 50 hours to 100 hours.

Key Takeaways from Research and Best Practice:

- According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, increasing the number of required practice hours from 50 to 70 hours would reduce collision claims among 16 and 17 year old drivers by 5% and fatal crashes by 1%.
- Research from Sweden found that learner drivers who made use of a longer learner period (118 hours of supervised practice on average) compared to a shorter learner period (41 to 47 hours of supervised practice) experienced about a 40% reduction in crash risk compared with learner drivers who did not.
- In Queensland, Australia, where a minimum practice requirement of 100 hours was adopted in 2007, there were reductions in both self-reported crashes and offenses between the former-GDL and current-GDL groups while young drivers still had their learner permit. In the former-GDL group, 6.2% of learner drivers reported a crash, which dropped to 1.9% for the current-GDL group while they held their learner permit. Similarly, 4.7% of the former-GDL learner drivers reported an offense, compared to 0.6% of the current-GDL group while they had their learner permit.

Summary Analysis:

Current law requires that drivers under age 18 must have 50 hours of experience in behind-the-wheel practice while holding an instruction permit under the supervision of a licensed adult driver. Practice under the supervision of a licensed adult, beyond that provided by a driver training school, is an effective way to ensure that inexperienced drivers become familiar with the skills necessary to safely operate a motor vehicle. Along with the recommended extension of the period of time for which an instruction permit would be required prior to licensing, the young driver would benefit from a similar extension of supervised practice.

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has a GDL crash reduction calculator, which uses Institute research to show how changes to state provisions might affect collision claims and fatal crash rates among young drivers. For every state and D.C., the Institute has estimated the effects of strengthening or weakening five key graduated driver licensing provisions: permit age, practice driving hours, license age and night driving and passenger restrictions. The projections are based on research showing what matters most when it comes to preventing fatal crashes and collision claims among teen drivers. According to this calculator, increasing the number of required practice hours from 50 to 70 hours (holding all other factors equal) would reduce collision claims among 16 and 17 year old drivers by 5% and fatal crashes by 1%. This calculator does not calculate collision claim and fatal crash reductions beyond 70 practice hours, as it utilizes the current best practice in the United States (70 hours of driving practice is only required in Maine).

While there is a degree of disagreement and inconclusiveness in the research, there are several notable studies that associate more on-road, real world driving experience with lower post-licensure crash involvement among young drivers.

Research from Sweden has shown a relationship between higher levels of supervised driving as a learner driver and reduced crash risk once licensed. To give novice drivers more time to gain experience, Sweden increased its

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learner's permit stage from 6 months to an optional 18 months, while retaining the licensing age of 18. The longer learner period resulted in learners obtaining more supervised practice. Learners who made use of the longer permit period accumulated on average, 118 hours of supervised practice. Learners who did not make use of the longer permit period accrued, on average, only 41 to 47 hours of practice. The research from Sweden found that learner drivers who made use of the longer learner period experienced about a 40% reduction in crash risk compared with learner drivers who did not.

The positive results from Sweden were used to support a minimum requirement of 100 to 120 driving practice hours in several Australian states. While a minimum requirement of 50 hours of supervised driving for learners is common nationally and internationally, three Australian States have set the requirement at 100 to 120 hours. Queensland is one of the Australian states that has a requirement of 100 hours of supervised practice, which is required to be certified in a logbook. In 2007, Queensland updated its GDL program to require 100 practice hours (previously there was no set number of hours for which drivers were required to practice). In addition, the update required 10 of the 100 practice hours to occur at night, the learner permit period to be extended from 6 to 12 months, and additional limits on mobile phone usage. A report written in 2011 compared a group of young drivers licensed under the former-GDL requirements in Queensland to young drivers licensed under the post-2007 (current) GDL requirements. On average, young drivers licensed under the former-GDL requirements received 63.28 hours of supervised driving practice, compared to 92.41 hours for the young drivers licensed under the current-GDL requirements. In addition, there were reductions in both self-reported crashes and offenses between the former-GDL and current-GDL groups during the learner permit period. In the former-GDL group, 6.2% of learner drivers reported a crash, which dropped to 1.9% for the current-GDL group while on their learner permit. Similarly, 4.7% of the former-GDL learner drivers reported an offense, compared to 0.6% of the current-GDL group while they had their learner permit.

One concern regarding a practice requirement of 100 to 120 hours is that many young drivers who are disadvantaged by lack of ready access to either a supervisor or vehicle or both (such as those in small and remote communities, those financially disadvantaged and also those in families with more than one child of learner age) would have a challenge meeting this requirement. The analysis of Queensland's requirement found that this was not a major issue. Compared with the former-GDL participants, a smaller proportion of learners in the enhanced GDL program reported difficulty obtaining supervised practice, contrary to concerns raised about this difficulty.

Though the findings cited above support a move toward increasing the amount of required practice hours, there are also studies that are inconclusive on whether increased practice reduces crash rates among newly licensed teen drivers. A NHTSA report from 2012 cited several studies that find no association between the reported amount of practice during the learner stage and the likelihood of experiencing a crash post-licensure. They conclude that it is still not known if supervised driving experience is sufficient to achieve the goal of developing safe drivers.

A challenge to the success of increasing the driving practice hours required to obtain a license is the awareness of the parents to such a requirement. In a 2012 NHTSA report, the authors found that 82% of the surveyed parents in Washington believed there was a certain number of supervised driving hours required for novice drivers; however, only 30% of these parents knew the correct number of hours that were required of novice

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drivers. Therefore, getting the word clearly and effectively to parents about supervised hour requirements is especially important.

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Young Driver Policy Recommendation:

- Extend the no passenger restriction from 6 months to 1 year after the issuance of an intermediate license or until the holders reach 18 years of age, whichever occurs first.
- Reduce the number of passengers from three to one for any remaining period of the intermediate license.

Key Takeaways from Research and Best Practice:

Teen drivers are distracted in a much greater percentage of crashes than we previously realized. The most common forms of distraction leading up to a crash by a teen driver include: interacting with one or more passengers, cell phone use, looking at something inside/outside of the vehicle, singing/moving to music, grooming, and reaching for an object. Among all these forms of distraction, passengers and cell phones are the most common forms of distraction.

Passengers substantially increase the risk of a crash for young novice drivers.

Summary Analysis:

The comprehensive research by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety in “Unprecedented Look into the Causes of Teen Crashes” has found significant evidence that distracted driving is likely a much more serious problem than previously known. Researchers analyzed the 6 seconds leading to a crash in nearly 1,700 videos of teen drivers taken from in-vehicle event recorders. The results showed that distraction was a factor in 58% of all crashes studied, which is four times as many as NHTSA previously estimated based on police reports. It means distraction was a factor in nearly 6 out of 10 moderate-to-severe teen crashes.

The most common forms of distraction leading up to a crash by a teen driver included:

Interacting with one or more passengers	15%
Cell phone use	12%
Looking at something in the vehicle	10%
Looking at something outside vehicle	9%
Singing/moving to music	8%
Grooming	6%
Reaching for an object	6%

Passengers and cell phones were the most common forms of distraction and these factors can increase risks for teen drivers. The situation is made worse by the fact that young drivers have spent less time behind the wheel and cannot draw upon their previous experience to manage unsafe conditions.

Young Driver Legislation

NHTSA conducted an in-depth study to investigate the nature of passengers' influence on teenage driving. Risky driving behavior were more common in the presence of teenage peers. Other detailed results include:

- Teenage peers were the most commonly carried passengers
- Males were more likely than females to carry multiple teenage peers
- Drivers were 2.5 times as likely to engage in one or more potentially risky behaviors when driving with one teenage peer compared to driving with no passengers
- Drivers were 3 times as likely to engage in at least one risky behavior when driving with multiple teenage peers
- Loud conversation was 5 times more common when multiple teenage peers were in the vehicle (in comparison to driving with a parent/adult)
- Horseplay was 9 times more likely in the presence of multiple peers
- In general, the presence of siblings was unrelated to most of the driver and passenger behaviors

These studies show how important it is for the state to review the graduated driver licensing and distracted driving laws to ensure the appropriate restrictions are in place to provide as much protection as possible for teenage drivers.

Sources:

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Young Driver Policy Recommendation:

Require a 30 day permit period for all first time drivers 21 years of age or older. The requirement would not apply to those coming from out of state and exchanging their valid license for a Washington license.

Key Takeaways from Research and Best Practice:

- Only two states have a program requiring older novice drivers 21+ to get a permit—Connecticut and Maryland.
- Using 2014 fatality rates of 5 additional states including Washington, the data indicate that:
 - The 18-20 year old age group has a markedly lower fatality rate in both Connecticut and Maryland
 - The 21+ group is comparable to Washington’s fatality rate, which is better than the remaining states in the comparison group
- The data infers that the proposed 18-20 year old mandatory 12 month permit requirement is probable to have a reduced fatality rate
- The 21+ group may improve—the data will have to play out over time.
- At a minimum, under this proposal, the 21+ novice drivers would each have an opportunity to practice their driving under supervision and will be at least slightly better prepared to become licensed.

Summary Analysis:

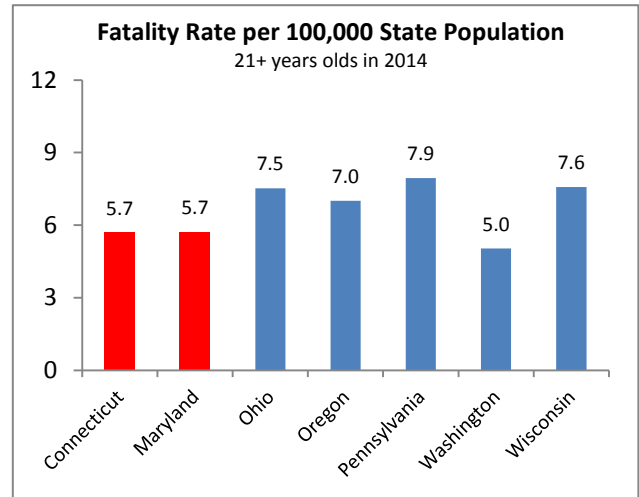
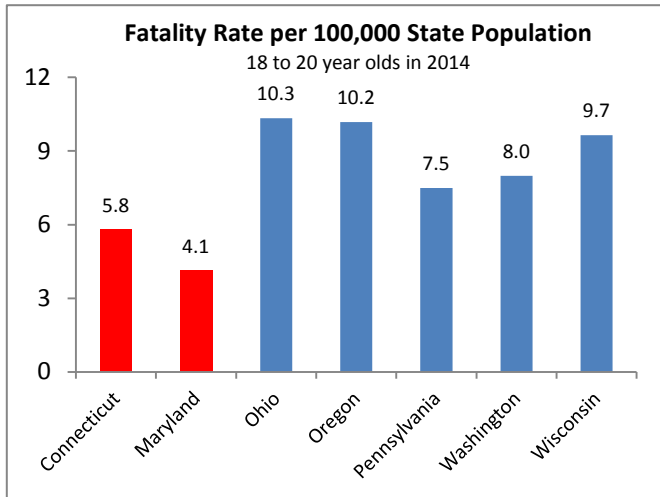
Very little data is available on mandatory permits for adult novice drivers over 21 years of age. Further, the two states which impose these requirements also have generally more stringent licensing rules in other areas, making it a leap to state the better fatality rates there are directly caused by the permit requirement. That said, should Washington State move to follow these best practices, we would be taking steps to better prepare the relatively small population over 21 who is acquiring their first driver license.

In Connecticut, any person over 18 who wishes to become licensed is required to have a learners permit for at least 45 days.

In Maryland, anyone over 25 needs to have a learner’s permit for 45 days and those under 25 must possess a permit for a full 9 months. Additionally, all novice drivers, regardless of age, must complete a driver training curriculum.

The 18-20 year old groups in both of these states show a considerably lower fatality rate and the 21+ group is comparable to Washington’s rate without the permit requirement and better than the comparison states.

Young Driver Legislation



Scope:

Washington licenses around 200,000 drivers each year. Of these, the number of applicants over 21 who've never had a prior license is about 27,000 and about 60% of these get a permit on their own under the current system. This leaves a balance of about 11,000 who would become "new" permit customers. Currently, these applicants are not required to complete any practice driving nor are required to participate in any driver training program. Assuming they can pass the knowledge and skills tests, they are free to drive anywhere and at any time on Washington's roads. Besides the obvious benefit of this proposal where they'd each have at least an opportunity to practice driving in a supervised setting, they would also be paying the permit fee of \$25 which would equate to around \$275,000 in new annual revenue.

Conclusions:

Requiring a novice driver to get a permit is a best practice and just makes good sense. A 30 day imposition should not pose an undue burden upon most applicants and has a high likelihood of saving some traffic collisions, avoidance of some injuries, and saving some lives.

Data Sources:

Fatalities data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) dataset for 2014 available at:

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>.

State population data derived from US Census files available at: <http://www.census.gov/topics/population.html>