Driver Education in Pennsylvania

- Past
- Present
- Future
Driver Education in Pennsylvania

- National and State Research
- Study Findings
- Recommendations
Evaluations of Driver Education

1940s, 50s, and early 60s
  • Driver Education evaluations showed positive results.

Later 1960s and 70s
  • New studies show earlier studies were flawed; no safety benefit to driver education.
Evaluations of Driver Education

1980s – DeKalb Study

• Meant to settle the issue
• Results were contradictory and inconclusive
Evaluations of Driver Education

1980s to Today

• Most evaluations show no safety benefits

• Some show negative results

• A few show positive results
Why Driver Ed Doesn’t Reduce Crashes

- Early Licensure Effect
- Overconfidence
- Inadequate Time
- Strength of Other Influences
Why Driver Ed Doesn’t Reduce Crashes

- Failure of Single Technique
- Learning After Licensing
- Unsystematic Research
- Crashes As Measure of Success
Improvements to Driver Education

• What is Taught

• How It Is Taught

• Who Teaches It
Improvements to Driver Education

What Is Taught

Measure

Causes
Improvements to Driver Education

What Is Taught

Failures In:
- Visual Scanning
- Attention
- Adjusting Speed

Causes

Measure
Improvements to Driver Education
Visual Scanning

Risk Awareness Perception Training (RAPT)

Figure 6d. (1) Crosswalk (2) Cross Traffic
Attention Maintenance

Focused Concentration and Attention Learning (FOCAL)
Speed Adjustment

• Caused by multiple factors
• Not skill related
• Best countermeasures:
  – Traffic calming
  – Enforcement
  – Increased punishments
Improvements to Driver Education

• What is Taught

• How It Is Taught

• Who Teaches It
How It Is Taught

• Adopt Best Practices From Education Research

• Adopt techniques from other teen campaigns

• Use multi-phased approach
Improvements to Driver Education

• What is Taught

• How It Is Taught

• Who Teaches It
Who Teaches It

Expanded role for parents
Who Teaches It

Positive peer influence
Graduated Driver Licensing

- Multi-phased driver education
- No time discounts for driver education
- Additional driving tests
- Identification of junior drivers
Findings

Research to date has not been able to conclusively prove that driver education makes safer drivers.
Findings

Skills to overcome common causes of accidents can be taught.

Risk Awareness Perception Training (RAPT)

Figure 6d. (1) Crosswalk (2) Cross Traffic
The number of high schools offering driver education is in decline.

- From 2004-05: 372
- From 2011-12: 301
- Decline: -19%
Driver education program administration in Pennsylvania is split between the Department of Education and the Department of Transportation.
Pennsylvania’s driver education content standards are less specific than national standards.
The actual cost of driver education is in the range of $350 to $600 per student.
Pennsylvania’s point system for drivers functions as a driver education tool for drivers with multiple driving violations.
Parents are considered to be the principal enforcers of GDL regulations.
Recommendations

Graduated Driver Licensing

- New Parent’s Supervised Driving Guide
- Require submission of 65-hour log book when skill tested for license.
Recommendations

Mature Drivers/Continuing Education

- Require GDL Process for all new drivers, regardless of age.
- Place monitors in DL Centers to publicize law changes and save driving tips.
- Embrace social media as communications tool.
- Enhance mature driver information
Recommendations

Track Ongoing Research
Driver Education in Pennsylvania

Thanks for your attention

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