Raising Safe Drivers
Parental Behaviors and Beliefs About Their Children Learning to Drive

January 28, 2021 | Noon (MT)

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About Webex

This webinar is being recorded and will be available on our YouTube Channel.

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Use the chat box to send questions. Please send questions to both panelists and host.
About the Center for Health and Safety Culture

We are an interdisciplinary center serving communities and organizations through research, training, and guidance to cultivate healthy and safe cultures.
Purpose

> Review the results of a survey of parents in Washington State about their beliefs and behaviors regarding teaching their children about safe driving practices
Concern

• Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teenagers in the U.S.

• Crash risk is particularly high immediately after one gets a driver’s license.
Opportunity

- Children and youth have many chances to learn about safe driving *before* they drive.
- Washington Traffic Safety Commission engaged the Center to explore the beliefs and behaviors of parents relating to actions they take to teach their children safe driving practices.
The Center’s Approach
The Center’s Approach

Five Parenting Behaviors
- Getting input
- Teaching
- Practicing
- Supporting
- Recognizing effort
The Participants

• 800 participants from Washington State recruited online in the Fall of 2019
• All had a child between the ages of 6 and 18
  • 54% were female
  • Median age was 40 years (mean 41, standard deviation 8.3 years)
  • 85% white, 4% Black or African American, 8% Asian, 3% American Indian or Alaska Native
  • Most (68%) had at least one child with a license to drive
Parental Concern

- **84%** agreed the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on Washington’s roadways should be zero.
- **61%** agreed that they would like to improve the safety of their driving.
- **89%** were moderately to extremely concerned about their child learning to drive safely.
“What are three skills a youth should have to be a good driver?”
## Parent Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Rarely, Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Usually, All the time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Getting input</strong> (asking their child about driving to get their child cognitively engaged)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong> their child about safe driving choices</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Practicing</strong> (by providing opportunities for their child to practice thinking about safe driving choices even before their child can actually drive)</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supporting</strong> their child’s learning by providing feedback and coaching</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recognizing</strong> their child’s effort and success by acknowledging their child as they learn about safe driving choices</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Parent Behaviors: Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>All the time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always wearing a seat belt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not speeding</td>
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<td>Creating space between other vehicles</td>
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<td>Stop signs/who has the right of way next</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stopping for yellow lights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying potentially risky situations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipating potential needs/actions of other drivers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being aware of what’s happening behind the vehicle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Driving with extra care near bicyclists and pedestrians</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoiding all distractions while driving (cell phones, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never driving after consuming alcohol or marijuana</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never driving when excessively tired or sleepy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking others to make safer choices (seat belt, no cell)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Parent Willingness

• Parents were more willing to engage in these conversations when their children were older (ages 16 to 18 compared to ages 6 to 12).

• Parents were more willing to engage in these conversations if it was shown that these conversations are effective.

• Most parents (79%) were moderately or more interested in having access to online resources that could help them engage in conversations about safe driving practices with their children.
## Parent Beliefs (Behavioral Beliefs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“As a parent, I play a critical role in teaching my child how to drive safely.”</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>“My child has been learning about driving for as long as they have been riding with me.”</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Children learn a lot about driving as they ride with their parents.”</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Driving is a skill you can only learn by doing yourself.”</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>41%</td>
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<tr>
<td>“As a parent, there isn’t really much I can do to teach my child how to drive safely.”</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There is no point in me talking to my child about safe driving because they never listen to me.”</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Parent Beliefs (Injunctive Normative Beliefs)

94% approved of engaging in conversations with their child to help them learn about safe driving practices
  – 91% perceived their spouse/partner would approve
  – 83% perceived their child would approve
  – 85% perceived most parents in WA would approve
Parent Beliefs (Control Beliefs)

76% indicated it was moderately or extremely easy to engage in conversations with their child to help them learn about safe driving practices

- 25% moderately or more likely to feel awkward or not know what to say about safe driving
- 22% moderately or more likely to not feel good about their own driving skills and therefore not want to talk about it with their child
- 40% wanting to say something about safe driving to their child but finding them not wanting to talk about it
Additional Findings

Social and emotional skills of parents were positively correlated with engaging in conversations with their child to help them learn about safe driving practices \((r = .30, p < .001)\).
Summary Highlights

• Most respondents (61%) agreed that they would like to improve the safety of their driving.
• Most parents (89%) indicated they were moderately to extremely concerned about their child learning to drive safely.
• Parents reported a higher willingness to engage in the conversations than actual behaviors.
• Most parents (79%) reported they would be moderately or more interested in having access to online resources that could help them engage in conversations about safe driving practices with their children.
Ideas to Ponder...

Traffic safety culture resides across the social ecology.
Ideas to Ponder...

Traditionally, we may see driving as skills focused on operating a vehicle.

What if we recognized driving also as a social and emotional skill?
Upcoming Events

• Annual Positive Culture Framework Training
  – February Training is FULL
  – Look for an announcement about our August open training

New

The Science of Stigma: A Training About What we Know and What We Can Do To Address Stigma
  – March 10-11, 2021 (virtual)
  – Register soon as this virtual class is limited to 20 participants
Other Services

Trainings
- Positive Culture Framework
- Communication Skills – Social Norms Marketing
- Leadership Skills
- Integration Skills

Guide Service

Assessments, Surveys, and Evaluation

Free Webinars
- Positive Culture Framework Skills: Leadership, Communication, and Integration
- The Science of Stigma
- Laws, Policies, and Rules – How do They Change Behavior?
- Social Ecology
- Challenges of Fear Based Approaches
- Hope and Concern
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