TEENAGE DRIVING STUDY

Final Report with Executive Summary

Commissioned by

Washington State Legislature
Joint Transportation Committee

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Prepared by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Washington Legislative Joint Transportation Committee contracted with René Ewing & Associates, LLC to conduct a study of programs and policies which are intended to reduce accidents involving teenage drivers to include: graduated driver's licensing, traffic safety education, restrictions and enforcement policies.

This executive summary is meant solely for the purpose of informing policy makers in the Washington State Legislature of the effectiveness of those policies and programs and to offer suggested best practices for future policy consideration.

BACKGROUND

Two important facets of Washington State's current efforts to reduce accidents by teenage drivers are the intermediate license program and the traffic safety education program requirements. Washington implemented its intermediate license program in 2001 for drivers between sixteen and eighteen years of age. Under this program, holders of an intermediate license face restrictions on the hours in which they may operate a vehicle and the type and number of passengers that they have in the vehicle. These restrictions are lifted if the intermediate license holder is not involved in an accident, does not receive a traffic citation, and does not violate any of the intermediate license restrictions within twelve months of the issuance of the license.

Traffic safety education in Washington has undergone significant changes. The funding provided by Washington State for teenage traffic safety education was significantly reduced in the 2001-2003 biennium, causing many public schools to curtail or eliminate their traffic safety education programs. As a result the number of commercial driver training schools has expanded. The Department of Licensing is responsible for overseeing the operation of the commercial schools and setting the driver training school curriculum. The Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) oversees the operation of public school driver training programs.

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL STATISTICS

Globally	approximately
• Total # people killed in traffic accidents in 2000	1.26 million
• Estimated # of deaths in traffic collisions in 2020	2.0 million
• Total # people injured on the roadways annually	50 million
• # people killed in a day on the roads	3000
• Global annual economic loss due to traffic crashes	$518 billion

(Based on World Bank & WHO estimates)

Nationally

- The leading cause of death for 16 to 20 year olds is motor vehicle accidents.
- A study of 16 year olds following licensure shows that the crash rate immediately following getting their license is three times greater during the first 1000 miles of driving as compared to the next 2000 to 3000 miles of driving.
- States that allow licensing at age 16 or earlier tend to have higher teen crash rates.
- Fatal crash rates for all age groups are higher at night and particularly for 16 - 17 year olds.
- Teen drivers with teenage passengers in the vehicle are twice as likely to be involved in a fatal crash as teen drivers traveling alone. When multiple teen passengers are in the car, the crash risk increases even more dramatically.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or other substances is only one of the teen driving crash risk factors. Speed and following too close are actually higher risk factors for teen drivers.

- Approximately 450,000 teenagers are injured in vehicle accidents annually.
- New drivers tend to focus on the area just in front of the car and are concerned about their position in the driving lane. They are less likely to scan a wider range of view, glance at objects in their peripheral view and are not as likely to use the mirrors.
- A recent Johns Hopkins study showed that comprehensive graduated driver licensing programs yield about a 21 percent decline in 16 year old fatal crashes.
- In 2002, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimated the cost of 15-20 year-olds' crashes to be $40.8 billion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Lack of a systemic approach to preparing teenagers for driving safely is problematic at best. While there are bits and pieces of 'good stuff' in licensing, education, and enforcement, there is not a cohesive, integrated approach to preparing our young drivers for this responsibility.

This is an opportune time for policy makers to set the direction and support to create an outstanding program with the resources required to do it well. There is a continued interest by citizens to improve the safety of our highways and among Washington state agencies to improve our current teen driver programs.

The following is a summary of the research conducted and the recommendations to the legislature for consideration. These recommendations are listed in a sequence that mirrors the licensing process for young people and are not ranked by importance. See the full report for more comprehensive details.

LEARNER'S PERMIT STAGE

Current Washington state law allows a 15 year old to obtain a learner's permit if they are enrolled in a drivers' education program. Those not enrolled, may obtain a learner's permit at age 15 ½.

Washington State's statutes are below the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's (IIHS) recommended minimum age of 16 for obtaining a learner's permit.

A great deal of research indicates that maturity and experience are the two most critical factors in accident prevention. Neuroscience studies show that the human brain continues to develop until the mid 20s, particularly in the regions of decision making and risk taking behaviors, two of the most critical risk factors for teenage drivers. Therefore waiting until age 16 to obtain a learner's permit will allow the opportunity for the young driver to be a little more mature.

Recommendation 1 - Learner's Stage

a. It is recommended that the age for obtaining a learner's permit be changed from 15 to 16 years old, regardless of whether the teenager is enrolled in a drivers' education program.

b. It is recommended that in order to get a learner's permit or intermediate license, a driver under the age of 18 must be going to school or in a GED program, similar to the requirements in Illinois.

c. It is recommended at the time a parent/guardian signs for a teenage driver's learning permit or intermediate license at the Department of Licensing, the parent/guardian continue to be given documentation outlining the restrictions, sign that they have received and read the restrictions, and be given a log book for recording their teenage driver's required supervised driving practice hours.

Washington has no school attendance requirements for obtaining a learner's permit or intermediate license. Illinois recently passed legislation requiring school attendance or other form of academic standing in order for teenagers to have the privilege of driving.

Parental involvement in teenage driving is critical. Parents must know and understand the licensing laws and restrictions placed on their teenage driver, be adequately prepared to perform their role as coach and supporter of the concepts and learning taking place in driver

education programs, role model the driving behavior expected of teenage drivers, and enforce the legal requirements placed upon teenage drivers. Washington does not currently have a well defined structured approach for engaging parents productively in the driver training process.

A recent study demonstrated a lack of knowledge and understanding among Washington parents. Parents are not adequately informed of driving restrictions by the Department of Licensing when signing for their teenage driver's learner's permit or intermediate license. Driver education training providers are required to inform the parents of the requirements, but the study indicates an inadequacy in the current system.

GRADUATED DRIVER'S LICENSE

In 1996, Florida was the first state to adopt a three-tiered graduated driver's licensing system. Since that time all but 5 states (AZ, AR, KS, MN, ND) have adopted similar programs. All the research indicates that Graduate Driver's License (GDL) programs as a whole are effective in reducing 16-year-old drivers' fatal collisions rates nationally.

The more comprehensive and restrictive programs appear to have had the most positive collision reduction outcomes. States with learner's permits, intermediate license, and restrictions on night driving and number of passengers have seen increased results. Researchers studying the collisions involving 16 year old drivers in Pennsylvania following implementation of the GDL system noted that the decrease of 27% between 1999 and 2000 was due largely to the night time driving restrictions imposed between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.

The most effective GDL programs have the following characteristics:

Recommendation 2 - Graduated Driver's License

a. It is recommended that the Washington State graduated licensing laws should remain in place and full consideration be given to expanding the restrictions to be in alignment with the national recommended standards.

b. Night Time Driving Restrictions - It is recommended to extend the current driving restrictions from 1 am to 5 am be changed to 9 or 10 pm to 6 am.

c. Passenger Restrictions- It is recommended to extend the prohibition of teenage passengers during the intermediate stage from the current first six months of licensure to the entire intermediate license stage.

d. Violations and Sanctions- It is recommended that intermediate driver's licenses be suspended on the first violation for no less than 6 months and revoked upon the second violation until the age of 18.

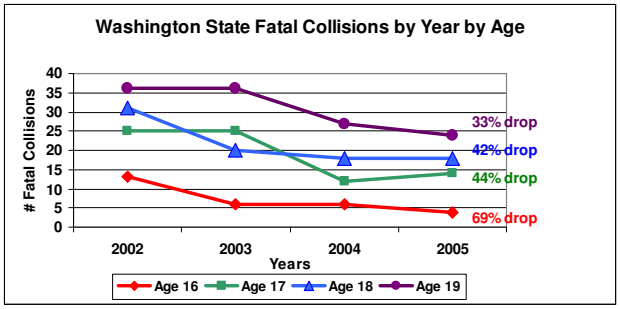
- minimum time limits for the learner's permit stage,
- restricted hours of unsupervised driving in the intermediate stage
- restricted number of teenage passengers in the intermediate stage
- minimum age at which one can have a full license

If teenage vehicle fatalities are to be reduced further, a more stringent graduated driver's license program appears to be the most successful option available to policy makers. All research agrees the licensing laws need to have three phases:

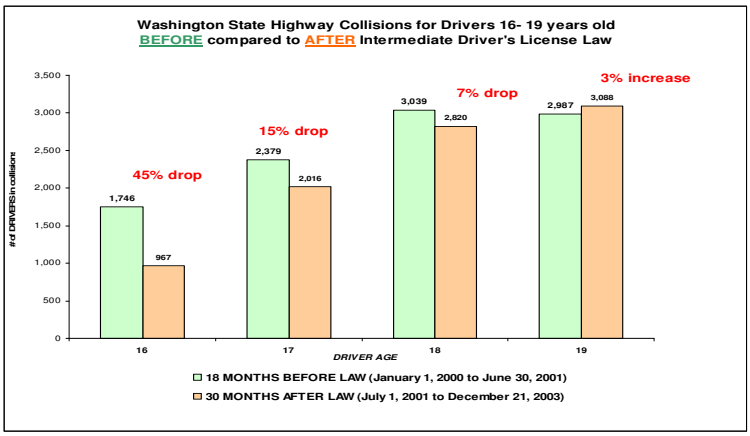
- a learner's permit with required hours of behind-the-wheel training and a minimum holding period before receiving an intermediate license,
- an intermediate phase with passenger and night time restrictions
- then full licensure without restrictions.

The best system sets:

- 16 as the minimum age for obtaining a learner's permit, and no less than six months driving with parent or guardian supervision with up to 50 hours of driving practice;
- an intermediate stage that extends to the age of 18 with restrictions on night driving hours and limits the number of teenage passengers (other than family members).



Since the implementation of Washington's intermediate licensing program in 2001, teenage fatalities have decreased 69% to 33% for drivers aged 16 to 19. In addition, there have been significant reductions in collision for 16 year olds. However, Washington's restrictions on teenage drivers fall behind the recommended national standard from Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

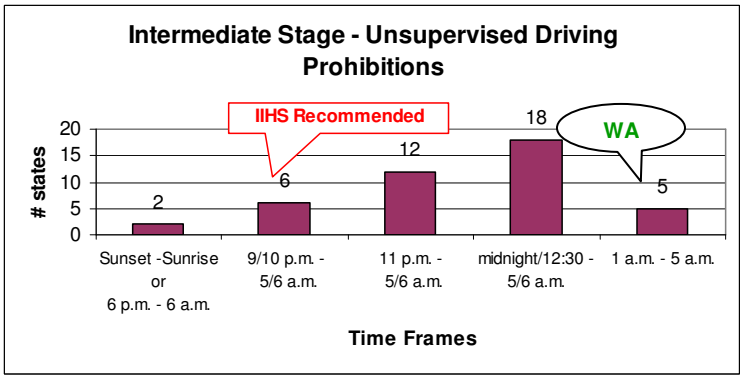


Research shows that stronger restrictions have the potential for saving the lives of teenagers, their passengers, and those who share the road with these young drivers, particularly the night time driving and passenger restrictions.

NIGHT TIME DRIVING RESTRICTIONS

Current Washington state law restricts intermediate drivers from driving at night from 1 to 5 a.m.

Studies on the time of day and hours that accidents most often occurred for teenage drivers led to the establishment of driving curfews for teenage drivers in many states. In 2004 nationally, 18% of the fatalities of teens in motor vehicles occurred between 9 p.m. and midnight, 22% occurred between midnight and 6 a.m. and 54% of the deaths occurred on Friday or Saturday. Some of the causes for this high rate of fatalities are that this is typically the time of day when teens are driving for recreational purposes and often involves drinking with teenage passengers in the car.

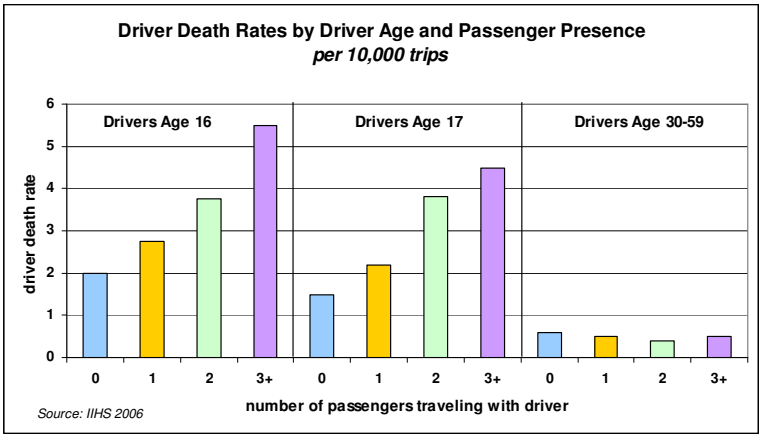


Recently published evidence shows that in states with a driving restriction that starts before midnight, there has been a 13% decrease in evening fatal crashes for 15 to 17 year old drivers.

National recommendations call for restricting night time driving from 9 or 10 p.m. to 5 or 6 a.m. At a minimum Washington should consider expanding the night time driving restrictions to be in line with the IIHS recommended restrictions to continue to reduce the number of fatalities.

TEENAGE PASSENGER RESTRICTIONS

Consistently across studies of teenage drivers the presence of passengers, especially teenage passengers, increased the risk of collisions due to the distraction. The collision risk is 3 - 5 times higher for 16 and 17 year old drivers with 2 or more passengers in the car than when they are driving alone. In 2004 in the US, 62% of 16-19 year old passenger deaths occurred when another 16 - 19 year old was driving.



In a study conducted by the University of North Carolina, collision risk is increased by 39% for 16 year old drivers with one passenger and by 182% with 3 or more passengers. For 17 year olds, the collision risk is increased by 48% for one passenger and by 207% for three or more passengers (University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center).

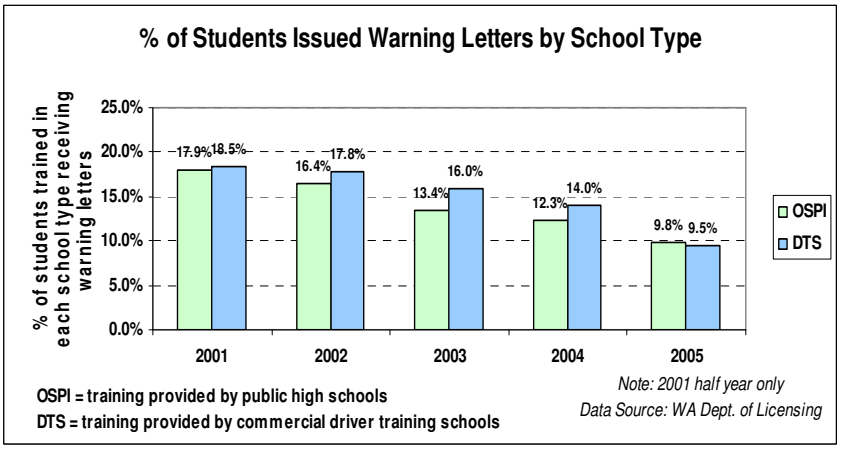
Washington state law states that teenage drivers may not have any passengers under the age of 20 unless they are members of their immediate family during the first six months of the intermediate license period. After 6 months, they may carry up to 3 passengers under the age of 20.

Given the above risk factors, Washington should extend its prohibition of teenage passengers throughout the intermediate license period. Increasing the stringency of passenger restrictions in Washington State could have major implications for reduced collisions involving young drivers.

VIOLATIONS AND SANCTIONS

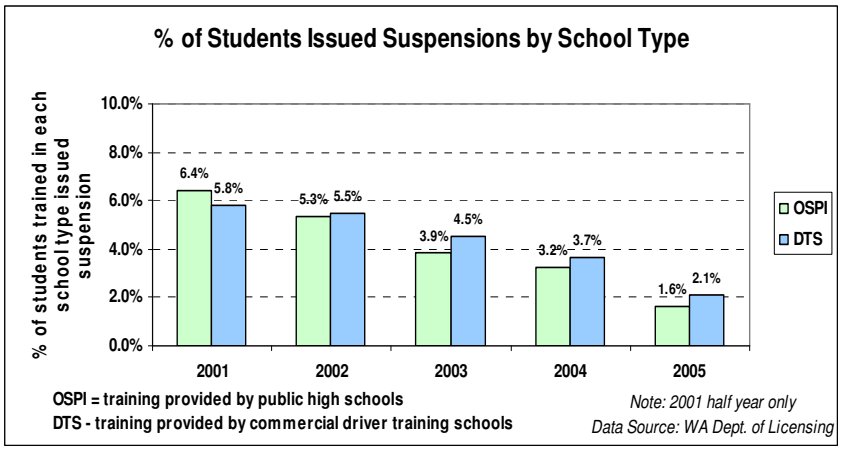
Currently in Washington, Department of Licensing sends a letter to the parent/guardian when a young driver has been cited for a first violation of the intermediate license restrictions, any other driving violation, or is in a collision. This is the only sanction action taken. There is no guarantee that the parent/guardian actually receives this letter. The letter is the only action for a first offense even though data shows that young drivers with violations are more likely to be killed or seriously injured in subsequent motor vehicle accidents.

For second offenses, the teenager's driving privileges are suspended for 6 months or until age 18, whichever is shorter. For three driving violations, their license is suspended until 18.



There is no indication that young drivers change their risky behaviors due to the current consequences for violating the restrictions of their intermediate license. A recent survey of teenage drivers in Washington indicated teenagers do not perceive Washington's sanctions for violations to be a deterrent to risky driving behaviors. This coupled with data that indicates many parents are not aware of the driving restrictions and 16% openly admit they don't enforce them with their teenage drivers, points out the need to better inform and hold drivers accountable beyond just a letter.

As indicated in the above graph, since 2001, teenage drivers trained by commercial driving schools (DTS) or public schools (OSPI) have had almost identical results in the percentage of warning letters or suspension of licenses. It should be noted that this data includes one particular poor performing large commercial driving school in Pierce County that was recently sanctioned by the Department of Licensing to cease doing business for lack of compliance with current regulations.



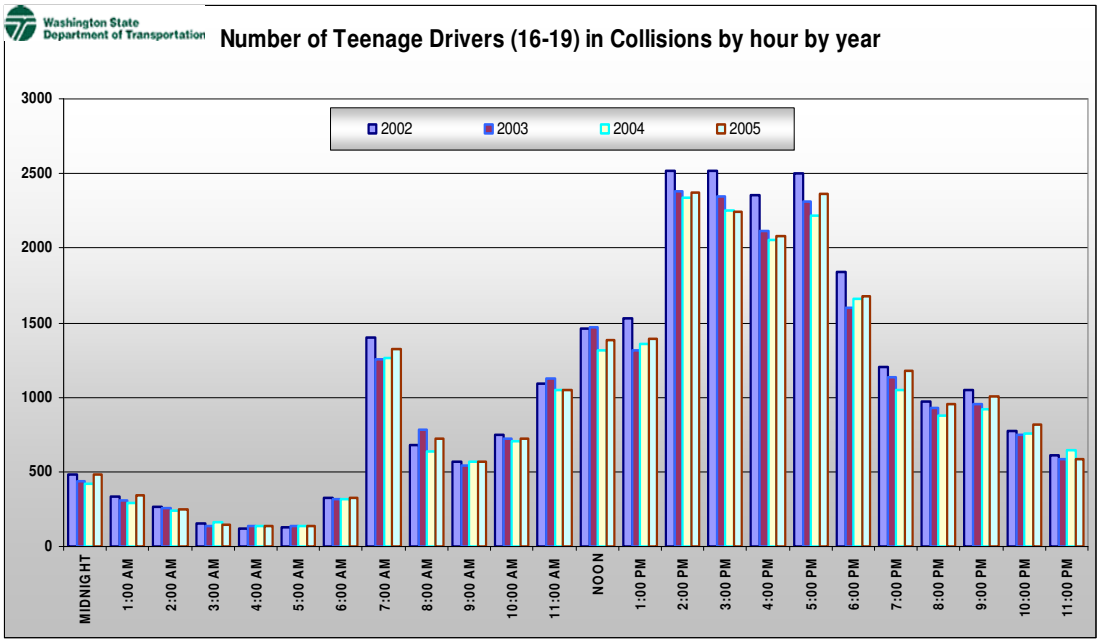
SCHOOL HOURS

According to Washington State Department of Transportation data, most teenage driver collisions occur in October, November, and December. Most commonly, accidents happen on Fridays. The most common hours of the day for teenage collision is from 2-6 p.m. and secondarily from 7-8 in the morning. Not coincidentally, these are the hours before and after school and the times when a teenage driver is more likely have teenage passengers in the car.

Recommendation 3 - School Hours

a. It is recommended that serious consideration be given by school districts around the state to starting high school at 9 a.m. and ending at 4 p.m.

b. It is recommended that high schools have a closed campus during lunch hour.



Some experts suggest that changing the hours of school could make an immediate impact on the number of collisions. In a recent University of Minnesota study on school start time, it was noted that the amount of sleep, time of day and circadian rhythms do play a part in how prepared a teenager is to learn. It is also true that despite their increased need for sleep, teenagers get less than they did as children. As they move through the teenage years, adolescents need increasing amounts of sleep. There are serious risks for adolescents when they are sleep deprived while they are behind-the-wheel. Having high school begin classes begin at 9 a.m. will allow teenagers to be more awake and alert when driving to school having had one or two more hours of sleep.

Changing the school end time to 4 p.m. would reduce the number of hours after school when students could be driving with passengers and without parental knowledge of their whereabouts. It should be noted that according to the FBI, the frequency of juvenile crime is about four times greater in the hours after school than during curfew hours. So decreasing the number of hours after school and before dinner time would have potentially even greater side effects than the reduction in traffic collisions for young drivers.

A study of three counties in North Carolina found that there was a higher rate of teenagers' motor vehicle crashes during the lunch hours in the two counties with open-campus lunch policies compared with the county without. It was noted that the students from the counties with open-campus lunch schools were carrying more passengers with them when they were involved in lunch hour crashes. Open campus lunch policies expose teenagers to additional driving time and encourage conditions in which multiple teens ride together, a known risk factor for crashes involving teen drivers.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERMEDIATE LICENSE

Washington law requires a teenage driver complete 50 hours of supervised driving practice with someone who has been licensed for 5 years or more, including 10 hours at night to qualify for the intermediate license. These hours are in addition to the driving requirements for traffic safety education program participation.

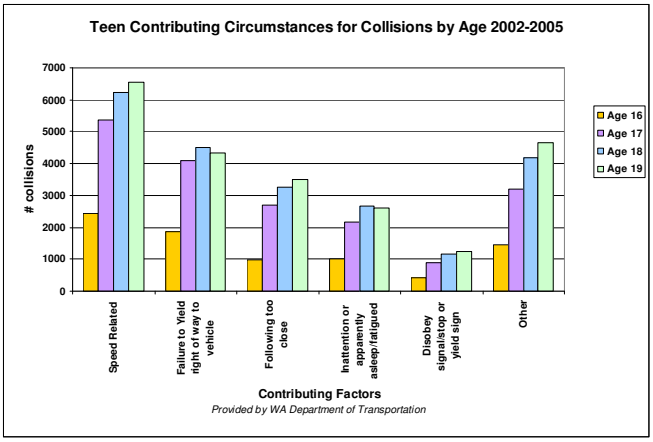
Currently parents/guardians have to sign a statement that they have provided the required number of supervised driving hours with their teenager. Department of Licensing is considering having parents/guardians complete and sign a log book documenting the number of supervised hours received by the teen driver when signing up for an intermediate license.

Recommendation 4 - Additional Requirements of the Intermediate License

a. It is recommended the Department of Licensing implement using a signed log book documenting the number of supervised hours received by the teen driver.

b. It is recommended to increase the number of supervised driving hours from 50 hours to 60 hours.

In Washington State, the top four contributing circumstances for teenage collisions are: speed, failure to yield right of way, following too close, and inattention, in that order. Requiring young drivers to have more behind-the-wheel experience under supervision will improve their ability to make better judgments about following, yielding and paying attention to surrounding conditions.



Increasing the number of hours will provide novice drivers with more experience in recognizing and developing the skills to overcome these contributing factors to collisions.

TRAFFIC SAFETY EDUCATION

CURRICULUM

There is no research data supporting that the current form of traffic safety curriculum has a demonstrable effect upon reducing teenage driving fatalities and collisions.

Currently, Washington traffic safety education programs vary in their approach to meeting the state requirements, depending on the provider type: commercial driving school or public school.

Commercial driving school curriculum must include a total of 30 hours of classroom instruction, and a minimum of 6 hours of behind-the-wheel training. Public school program curriculum must include 30 hours of classroom instruction, and a minimum of 4 hours behind-the-wheel training.

Neither provider type is required to have curriculum that is performance based nor tie the behind-the-wheel training time to "just learned" classroom training.

The most promising traffic safety education curriculum with demonstrated influence in teenage driving records is one that is performance based, such as the curriculum being used in Oregon. Their curriculum is based on risk analysis, decision making, and other factors that influence the teen driver rather than

Recommendation 5 - Traffic Safety Education

a. It is recommended that all driver education training curriculum must be consistently delivered throughout the state regardless of provider type.

b. It is recommended that the oversight of traffic safety education, regardless of the provider, be given to one state agency. The inconsistency of having two separate and different delivery requirements and curricula and oversight by two different departments is problematic at best and detrimental to student drivers at worst. Currently, commercial driving schools are providing training to ¾ of driver training students; therefore, it seems logical to consolidate program oversight under Department of Licensing.

just focusing on the basic driving skills. This performance based curriculum requirement would require that the traffic safety education providers certify that the student had met the learning objectives of the course and demonstrated competency in order to receive their certificate.

Drivers Education may help to reduce crashes by focusing on the initial "errors of inexperience" rather than trying to develop a "lifetime of responsible driving". Lack of driving experience is a major contributor to high crash rates for young drivers in the first few months of driving. Underlying many of the errors leading to accidents is failure to recognize a situation as hazardous.

The initial high rate of accidents immediately following licensure is attributable to errors of inexperience rather than high speed and irresponsible behavior. Other productive routes to fatality reduction have been through enforcement, vehicle design and occupant protection (seat belts and air bags) rather than the older standard driver education programs.

A study of accident reports shows the largest single category of error involves visual search (looking for the right things at the right time along the road ahead and to the side for cars and people who might enter the path, or behind when slowing, backing or changing lanes).

Next are attention errors (eyes pointed in the right direction but the mind is somewhere else - often a result of distraction or having to share attention among two or more situations.)

Third major category is speed - primarily not adjusting adequately to traffic or curves, slick surfaces and following too close.

The leading studies indicate the need for a two phased approach for traffic safety education. Phase one, similar to Washington State's, is the basics of handling the vehicle and basic mechanics of driving. Phase 2 is centered on decision making, risk evaluation, defensive driving and it teaches the young driver to observe the environment and the potential hazards. The second phase helps students learn consequences of their decisions and outcomes from their risky behavior such as speeding and following too close and moves beyond the mechanics of operating the vehicle in ideal conditions.

There are some highly recognized computer based programs that have been designed by AAA and others to aid in the classroom training of understanding the consequences of decisions.

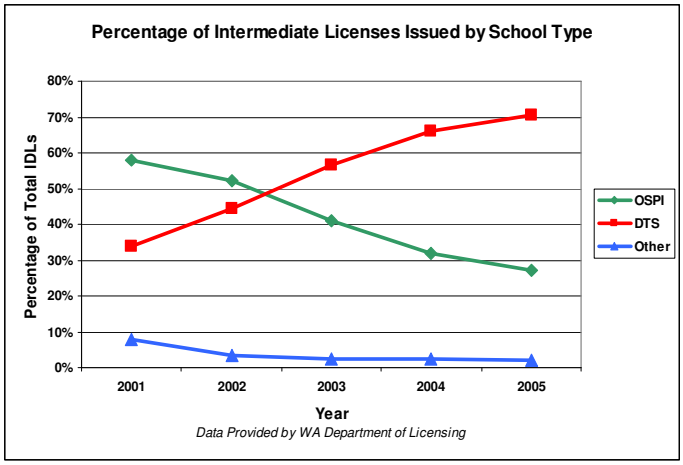
Recommendation 5 - Traffic Safety Education (cont'd.)

a. It is recommended that if the oversight is consolidated, additional funding be provided to support DOL's additional oversight duties.

b. It is recommended that an integrated curriculum of classroom time immediately followed by behind-the-wheel driving instruction that reinforces the classroom learning be mandated by all traffic safety education programs.

DELIVERY SOURCES

Currently there are Driver Training Schools offered in 29 counties in Washington State. The following graph illustrates the number of Intermediate licenses issued by commercial driving schools, public school programs and out of state programs. It is apparent that the decrease in funding for public school programs has resulted in an increase in the number of commercial driving schools.



The inconsistency of program requirements and oversight between Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and commercial driving schools is well known in the industry. Though the Department of Licensing is revising the requirements for commercial driving schools in Washington Administrative Code, Office of

Superintendent of Public Instruction requirements have not yet been revised to be consistent with Department of Licensing.

Regardless of driver training provider type, oversight of inconsistent programs is problematic and should be consolidated under one organization to provide a more comprehensive approach to preparing teenagers to drive. OSPI is no longer funded for Traffic Safety Education nor is there dedicated full time staff for oversight. Since the Department of Licensing currently oversees ¾ of training providers, it is logical they be given this responsibility. Additional resources would be required to support the oversight of these additional programs.

A key to successful driver training is an integrated curriculum, where classroom learning is immediately followed by supervised behind-the-wheel time that reinforces the classroom learning. Department of Licensing will be developing performance based curriculum for commercial driving schools in 2007 and this curriculum should support this learning concept. Public school programs should also be required to provide this curriculum. It is recommended that the Department of Licensing collaboratively develop the new curriculum with professional educators from OSPI to benefit from their knowledge of successful teenage education strategies.

Recommendation 6 - Parental Involvement

a. It is recommended that a comprehensive strategy be developed by Department of Licensing to engage parents/guardians in the teen driving process such as adding the requirement for a signed parent/guardian log of hours supervised to be submitted to Department of Licensing at the time of licensing.

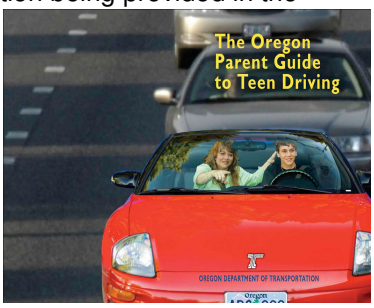
b. It is recommended that the traffic education curriculum include at least one session with parent/guardian participation to ensure they understand their responsibilities and the driving restrictions during the intermediate licensing stage.

c. It is recommended that Washington state traffic educators be required to supply a parental guide (in Spanish and English) to assist parents/guardians in supporting the curriculum similar to Oregon.

PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Research shows that engaging parents/guardians in the child's education yields better results, and traffic safety is no exception. Anecdotal information gained through our interviews indicates that many parents/guardians are unaware of the requirements of both traffic safety education and the intermediate drivers' license restrictions. Currently, driving instructors, whether public school or commercial, are expected to inform families of the restrictions imposed by the intermediate driver's license. Parental involvement with the traffic safety education program should require at a minimum parental understanding of these restrictions.

In the state of Oregon, parents/guardians are provided a step by step guide to help them reinforce the education being provided in the classroom and behind-the-wheel, thus making them a reinforcing mentor for the student. This was patterned after a mentoring program in Australia which has proven to be very successful. Oregon's parent/guardian guide provides an outline for each lesson and tips for the parent/guardian to support the student's Traffic Safety Education lesson plan. It includes a log parents/guardians must sign for the practice hours. Department of Licensing is considering implementing a requirement for students to actually produce a log signed by parents/guardians showing the hours the teenager has driven to meet behind-the-wheel hour requirements in order to receive their intermediate license.



PEMCO Insurance commissioned an independent, statewide phone survey that asked Washington residents several questions about graduated licensing and other issues. Nearly one-quarter of Washington state residents are unaware of the Intermediate Driver's License law. And although parents/guardians of teen drivers have much greater awareness of the law, 16 percent of them don't enforce it.

Many parents/guardians – nearly 80 percent – enforce their own "house rules" for teen drivers aside from what the state requires. According to the PEMCO Northwest Insurance Poll, 16 percent of Washington parents/guardians enforce a curfew, requiring their children to be home by

a certain time. Approximately 12 percent require their teenagers to maintain good grades (typically described as a 3.0 grade-point average) to keep their driving privileges.

Other house rules included: no driving at night or in bad weather (9 percent of parents/guardians); can only drive to school or work (7 percent); parents/guardians must know where the kids are going and who they're with (6 percent); and kids must pay for their own gas, insurance, and repairs (4 percent). Some parents/guardians prohibit distractions such as eating or using cell phones while driving (4 percent).

Liberty Mutual Group conducted a national survey in conjunction with SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) that found teenage drivers were most influenced by the driving behavior of their parents/guardians. The survey asked parents and students about their driving behaviors. The following table shows correlation of the results of that survey where students indicated their driving behaviors were patterned after their parents/guardians' driving behavior.

	Student Behavior	Parent Behavior
Speeding	67%	48%
Cell phone use while driving	62%	62%
Non-use of seat belts	33%	31%

GRADUATED DRIVER'S LICENSE ENFORCEMENT

One of the difficulties with the restrictions currently in place for intermediate drivers is the inability of law enforcement to stop a driver based solely on their young appearance for violating one of the intermediate license restrictions. Since the current law is only a secondary offense and not a primary, law enforcement can only cite a driver after they have broken another law. Though research shows that if teens follow the curfew and passenger restrictions they are less likely to be involved in an accident, law enforcement officers struggle to enforce these restrictions.

Recommendation 7 - Enforcement

a. It is recommended to change the intermediate drivers' license restriction violations from a secondary to primary offense.

b. It is recommended to initiate a voluntary program for providing some vehicle marker (like those used for persons of disability) that indicates the driver is a novice with restrictions on nighttime driving and passengers.

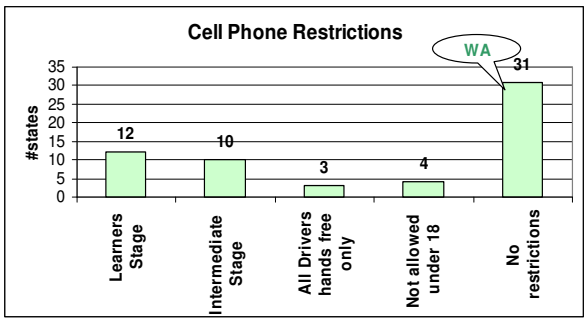
c. It is recommended that a statewide educational campaign similar to "Click It or Ticket" be funded to educate parents/guardians and the public about the teenage driving restrictions.

Several jurisdictions have been trying to find solutions to this profiling issue. Connecticut is currently experimenting with a program called *Young and Yellow* where parents/guardians are encouraged to put a yellow sticker on any vehicle their intermediate driver could be driving. This allows law enforcement the opportunity to enforce the restrictions as a primary offense. Forty-three states have some night time driving restrictions but 9 of them are secondary only. Thirty-six states have passenger restrictions but 10 of them are secondary offenses only.

Through our interviews we found that the Washington State Patrol in particular will always cite a young driver for violating one of the restrictions when they have been pulled over for another offense. Young people we interviewed indicated that they believe there are no consequences for violating these night time and passenger restrictions. We were told stories of how a young driver with a passenger was cited then called home and given permission to bring home the passenger and continue to drive in violation of the restrictions by their parents/guardians.

Law enforcement fully supports the restrictions and will enforce them when there is an opportunity but they acknowledge a need for education of the public and parents/guardians to support their enforcement efforts.

As this graph indicates a few states have recently enacted restrictions on cell phone use by teenagers while driving with a learner's permit or intermediate



license. Most of these restrictions have not been in place an adequate amount of time to prove the impact that these restrictions have on young drivers' accident rates. It should be noted that any distraction for a young driver is dangerous, whether it is another teenager in the car, talking on a cell phone, playing with the CD changer or putting on make-up.

POLICY OVERSIGHT

Recommendation 8 - Oversight

It is recommended that an oversight group of stakeholders and citizens be established to ensure a consistent integrated program with participants from Department of Licensing, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, commercial driving schools, insurance companies, parents/ guardians, and other interested stakeholders.

Preventing teenage fatalities and injuries due to vehicle accidents is a multi-faceted problem that spans across state and local agencies, parents, and other stakeholders. No one group or organization alone can resolve this threat to our youth. A systemic approach needs to be taken that includes stakeholders from all of these multiple interest groups to solve this systemic problem. Research and data continues to be released almost monthly on this subject. Therefore, it would be wise to continue to monitor this field of study for new innovations and policy recommendations. An oversight group would provide a forum for working through these complex issues and making recommendations to policy makers and agencies for improvements.

In the near future teenage driving programs and issues will be the subject of other Washington state agency studies. These studies should provide further insight into policy issues for the legislature to consider along with these recommendations.

CONCLUSION

Washington teenage driver fatalities and collisions are a systemic problem that requires a multi-faceted solution. The aforementioned recommendations taken together, rather than as individual pieces, could have an enormous impact:

- Waiting until 16 to get a Learner's Permit makes them a little more mature before starting to drive
- Having to have more hours behind-the-wheel gives them more experience
- Increasing the restriction on teenage passengers until 18 reduces one of the biggest distractions for a new driver
- Having the parents more involved in the learning increases the chances of helping parents to enforce the rules
- Having the night time driving and passenger restrictions a primary offense allows law enforcement to provide consequences for breaking the law
- Having school start a couple hours later increases the chances that the teen is more awake and alert while driving to school
- Closing the high school campus at lunch time removes one more opportunity for teens to be in a car together and involved in a collision
- Having school go until 4:00 cuts in half the number of hours after school when teens could be driving around together before dinner and get in an accident
- Having all the schools that teach traffic safety have the same regulations, curriculum expectations and accountability will ensure that all kids get the same classroom and behind-the-wheel training
- Funding the Department of Licensing to adequately monitor, audit and inspect all driver education programs will go a long way to begin to improve the quality of those programs
- Creating a campaign to educate parents, family and the public on the restrictions on young drivers will allow the community to help to reinforce those rules.

The sum of these recommendations will result in the ultimate goal of reducing the number of injuries and deaths to teenage drivers, their passengers, those who share the road with them and to spare the families of the victims from living with the devastation of serious injury or death.

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TEENAGE DRIVING STUDY
FINAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Washington Legislative Joint Transportation Committee contracted with René Ewing & Associates, LLC to conduct the following study of programs and policies which are intended to reduce accidents involving teenage drivers. This report reflects the results of that research, findings and recommendations. The contents are meant solely for the purpose of informing policy makers in the Washington State Legislature of the effectiveness of those policies and programs and to offer suggested best practices for future policy consideration.

BACKGROUND

The supplemental Transportation Budget enacted during the 2006 legislative session provided funding for the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) to contract for a review of existing research on programs and policies which reduce accidents involving teenage drivers, and an evaluation of the costs and benefits associated with them.

Two important facets of Washington State's current efforts to reduce accidents by teenage drivers are the intermediate license program and the traffic safety education program requirements. Washington implemented its intermediate license program in 2001 for drivers between sixteen and eighteen years of age. Under this program, the holder of an intermediate license faces restrictions on the hours in which he or she may operate a vehicle and the type and number of passengers that she or he may carry in the vehicle. These restrictions are lifted if the intermediate license holder is not involved in an accident, does not receive a traffic citation, and does not violate any of the intermediate license restrictions within twelve months of the issuance of the license. Since the implementation of the intermediate license program, there has been a significant decrease in accidents involving teenage drivers in Washington.

Traffic safety education in Washington has undergone significant changes. The funding provided by Washington State for teenage traffic safety education was significantly

reduced in the 2001-2003 biennium, leading many public schools to curtail or eliminate their traffic safety education programs. As a result, the number of commercial driver training schools has expanded to meet the demand. The Department of Licensing is responsible for overseeing the operation of the commercial schools and setting the driver training school curriculum. The Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) oversees the operation of public school driver training programs. This has resulted in inconsistencies in program requirements and the level of oversight being provided.

This study is specifically focused on the policies and programs that are aimed at reducing teen driver collisions: graduated driver's licensing, traffic safety education, and restrictions and enforcement policies.

METHODOLOGY

The project was broken into a series of three major phases 1- Understanding the current Washington state programs, 2 - Benchmarking with other programs nationally and internationally, and 3- Analyzing the data from phase 1 and 2 and making recommendations. The first phase included meeting with the project manager, key stakeholders such as Joint Transportation Committee members, and gaining agreement on the scope of the study. During these interviews, key benchmark programs from across the country were identified for inclusion in the study.

An examination of Washington state programs was conducted for the graduated license and traffic safety education. Data was provided by the Washington State Department of Licensing, Washington Traffic Safety Commission, Washington Department of Transportation, the Washington State Department of Health, the Washington Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction, and Washington State Patrol. Key individuals from agencies and other stakeholder groups were interviewed and are listed in Appendix 1 - Acknowledgements of this report.

An extensive study of existing national and international research on programs and policies designed to decrease teen driver accident rates was conducted. The consultants identified best practice programs and policies based on measurable results.

This phase included 1) identification of those programs and policies and 2) evaluating their adaptability to Washington state and 3) reviewing data from the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Transportation Resource Board, the National Conference of State Legislators, the National Safety Council, the American Automobile Association, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and others.

The last phase of the project was a thorough comparative analysis of the data gathered from Washington programs and the national and international search with a focus on identifying the best practices and the overall impact of teenage driving safety policies and programs.

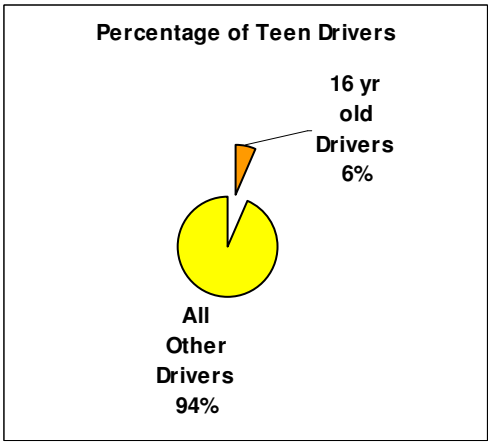
This report and the executive summary contain specific recommendations for improvement to current Washington programs and are based on the research of potential improvements and new programs which have shown success elsewhere.

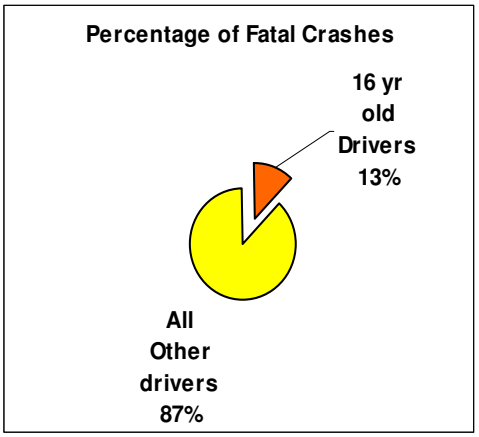
NATIONAL and INTERNATIONAL TRENDS

Vehicle accidents are the single biggest killer of 15 - 24 year-olds in industrial countries world wide. In 2004, 16-year-old drivers were involved in 957 fatal crashes that killed

1,111 people in the US. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) determined that the per mile driven teenage crash rate is approximately 10 times the rate of drivers aged 30 - 59 and more than twice the rate of 18 to 19-year-old drivers. In Washington state 1,426 people died in collisions involving 16 - 19 year-old drivers from 1993 - 2005.

US Driving Population

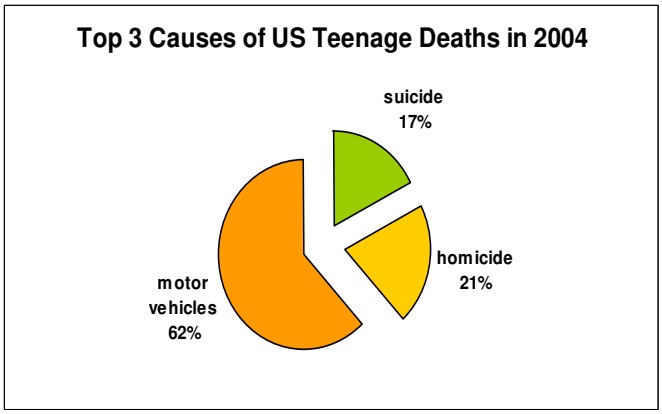


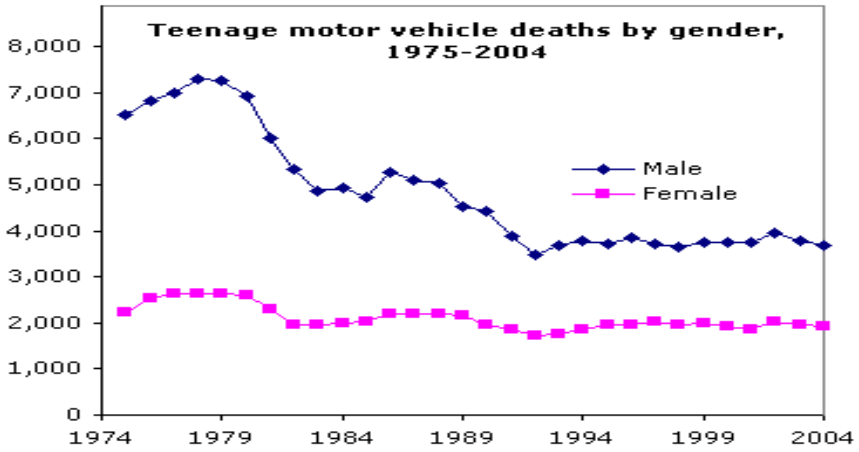


In 2002, motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of death among 13-19-year-old males and females in the United States. Thirty-eight percent of deaths among 13-19 year olds occurred in motor vehicle crashes, 42 percent among females and 36 percent among males. Due to the fact that the major cause of death for teenagers is motor vehicle accidents, there is a lot of interest around the world in addressing this issue, not only from traffic safety agencies but health agencies and policy makers.

Since 1975 the national trend shows a decrease in teenage motor vehicle deaths. This is due to many factors such as vehicle design, use of seat belts, air bags, DUI laws, enforcement, and changes in licensing laws.

Increased enforcement of DUI laws across the country has helped to lower the fatality and collision rates among all drivers including teenagers.





NATIONAL FACTS ABOUT TEENAGE DRIVERS

- The leading cause of death for 16 to 20 year olds is motor vehicle accidents.
- A study of 16 year olds following licensure shows that the crash rate immediately following getting their license is three times greater during the first 1000 miles of driving as compared to the next 2000 to 3000 miles of driving.
- States that allow licensing at age 16 or earlier tend to have higher teen crash rates.
- Fatal crash rates for all age groups are higher at night and particularly for 16 - 17 year olds.
- Teen drivers with teenage passengers in the vehicle are twice as likely to be involved in a fatal crash as teen drivers traveling alone. When multiple teen passengers are in the car, the crash risk increases even more dramatically.
- Approximately 450,000 teenagers are injured in vehicle accidents annually.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or other substances is only one of the teen driving crash risk factors. Speed and following too close are actually higher risk factors for teen drivers. (See Appendix 4 for the causes of teen collisions in Washington State).
- A great deal of research indicates that maturity and experience are the two most critical factors in accident prevention. For teenagers this is an even stronger factor as neuroscience studies show that the human brain continues to develop until the mid 20s, particularly in the regions of decision making and risk taking behaviors.
- New drivers tend to focus on the area just in front of the car and are concerned about their position in the driving lane. They are less likely to scan a wider range of view. They tend not to glance at objects in their peripheral view and are not as likely to use the mirrors. As they gain more experience, they begin to search the peripheral areas for possible hazards.
- A recent Johns Hopkins study showed that comprehensive graduated driver licensing programs yield about a 21 percent decline in 16 year old fatal crashes.
- In 2002, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimated the cost of 15-20 year-olds' crashes to be $40.8 billion.

Teenagers, as novice drivers, lack the experience and ability to perform many of the complex tasks of ordinary driving. Compared with experienced drivers, the novice driver is less proficient in detecting and responding to hazards and controlling the vehicle, especially at higher speeds.

It is normal for adolescents to take chances, succumb to peer pressure, overestimate their abilities and have emotional mood swings. These behaviors can all place the teenaged driver at greater risk for having an auto accident.

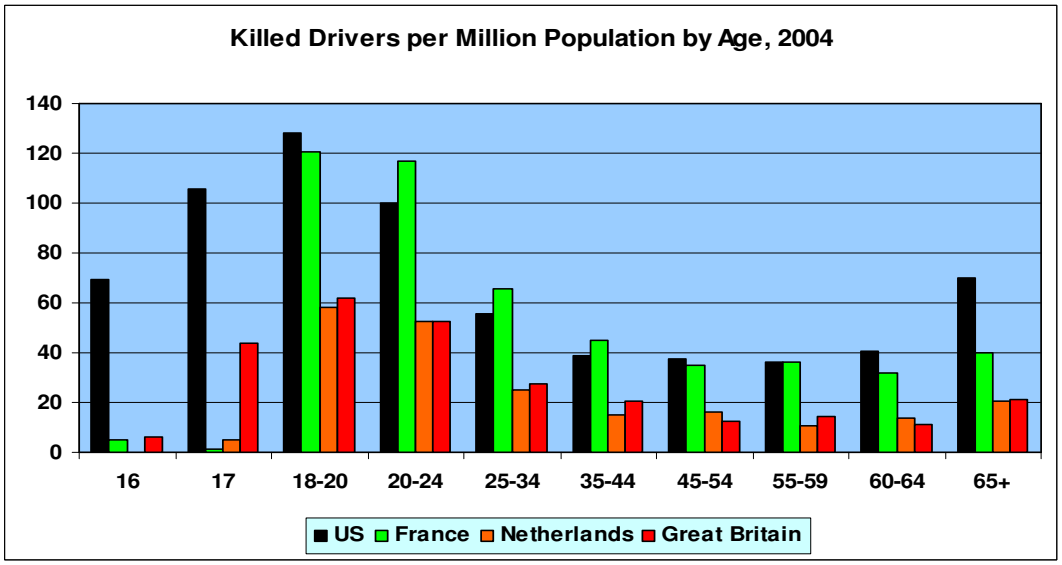
During the period 1982-2001, fatal alcohol related crash rates dropped by 60% for 16 to 17 year old drivers. Teenagers drink and drive less often than adults, but their crash risks are higher than adults when they do drink.

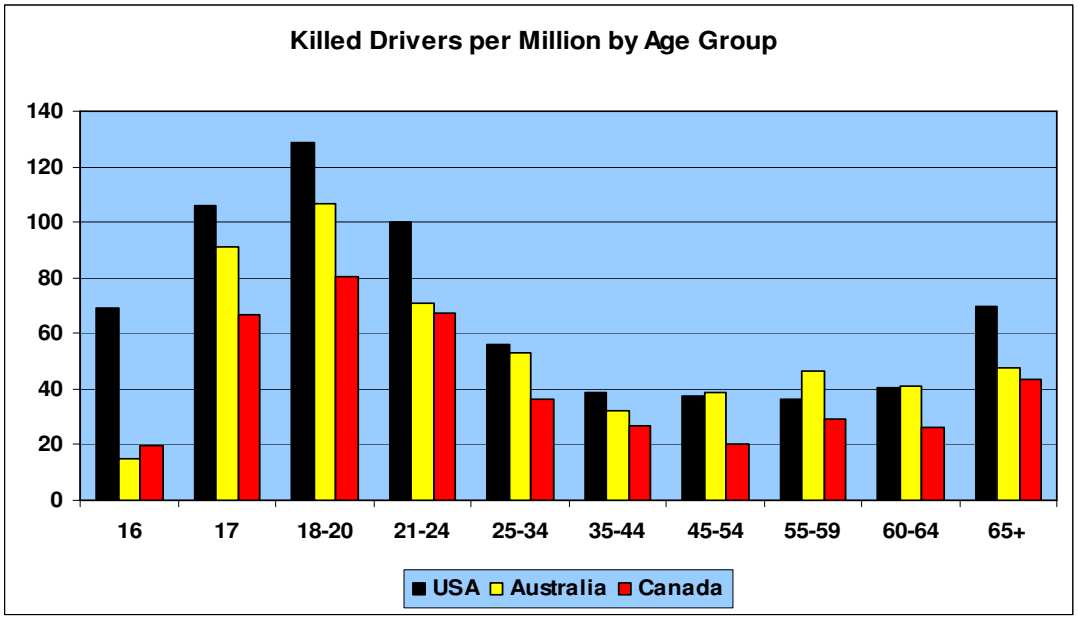
INTERNATIONAL FACTS

Globally	approximately
• Total # people killed in traffic accidents in 2000	1.26 million
• Estimated # of deaths in traffic collisions in 2020	2.0 million
• Total # people injured on the roadways annually	50 million
• # people killed in a day on the roads	3000
• Global annual economic loss due to traffic crashes	$518 billion

(Based on World Bank & WHO estimates)

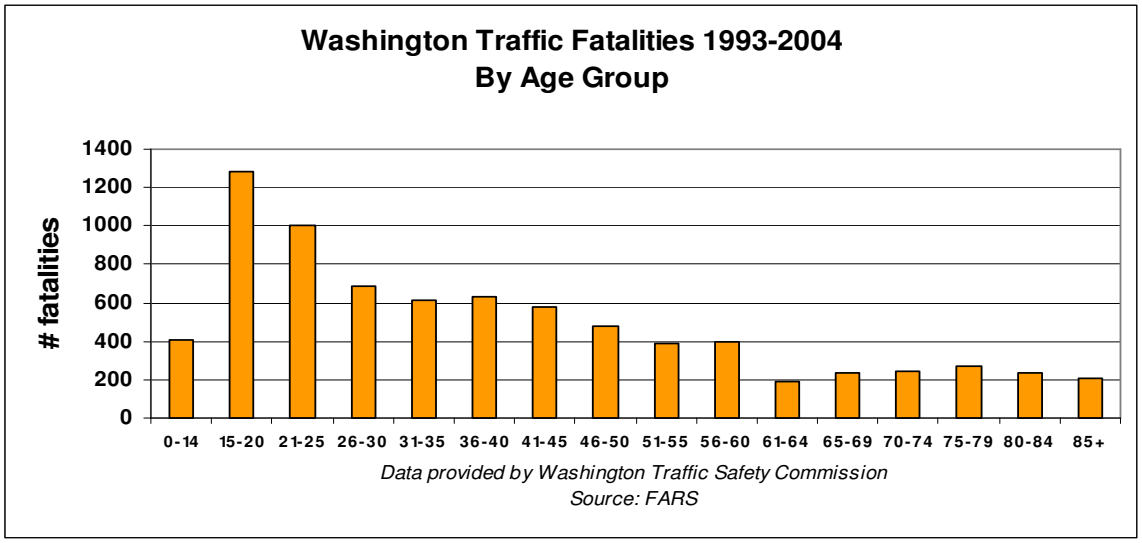
International trends are similar to the US with higher fatalities among teens as illustrated in the following graphs as reported by International Road Traffic and Accident Database (IRTAD). However, the US has a much higher number of 16 - 18 teen fatalities. In many European countries there are more stringent restrictions on young drivers and less availability of automobiles.





WASHINGTON STATE TRENDS

In Washington, as in the rest of the nation, 16 - 20 year olds have the highest rate of vehicle fatalities. However, since the implementation of the graduated licensing program in 2001, collisions and traffic fatalities of teenagers have significantly decreased.



The following tables show the number of licensed teenage drivers in Washington for the past four years compared to the collision rate for that same group during that period. The following charts and graphs indicate the impact of these policy changes. They are similar to the impact seen in other states with a graduated drivers licensing program.

*Total Number of Licensed Driver 2002 -2005					
	2002	2003	2004	2005	% Difference '02 -'05
AGE 16	*32,045***	*30,090*	*29,251*	*29,975*	-6.5%
AGE 17	*55,130*	*52,131***	*49,663*	*49,399*	-10.4%
AGE 18	*65,893*	*66,200*	*65,058***	*63,905*	-3.0%
AGE 19	*74,660*	*74,282*	*74,832*	*74,717*	0.1%
Total	***227,728***	***222,703***	***218,804***	***217,996***	-4.3%

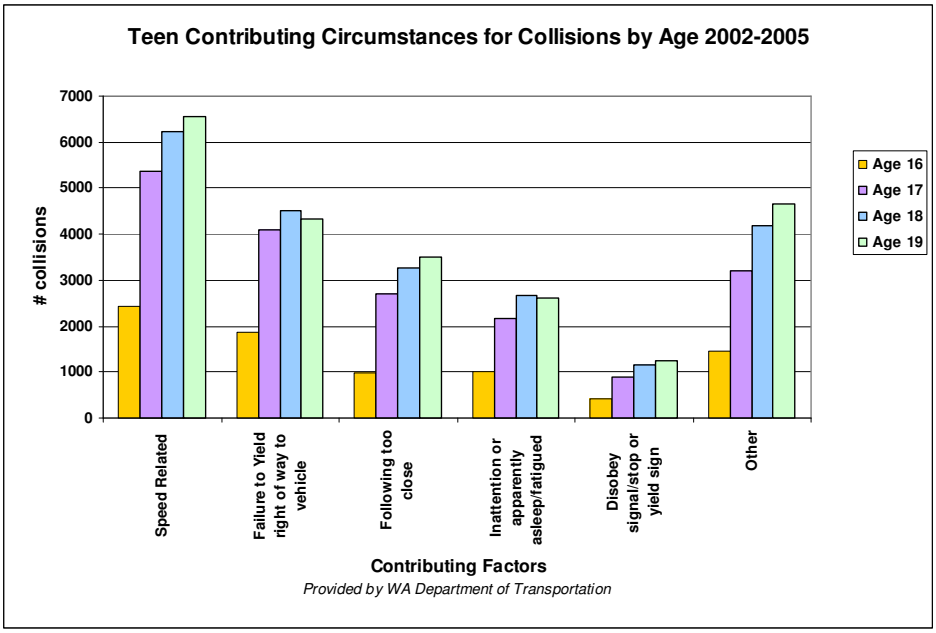
***Total Collisions 2002 -2005					
	2002	2003	2004	2005	% Difference '02 -'05
AGE 16	*2,707*	*2,698*	*2,506*	*2,510*	-7.3%
AGE 17	*6,633*	*6,067*	*5,913*	*6,094*	-8.1%
AGE 18	*8,197*	*7,540*	*7,235*	*7,468*	-8.9%
AGE 19	*8,105*	*7,756*	*7,735*	*8,218*	1.4%
Total	***25,642***	***24,061***	***23,389***	***24,290***	-5.3%

*Reports are run in January each year. Valid license data includes motorcycle and commercial endorsements but does not include ID Cards or permits. Source Washington State Department of Licensing Driver Database

**One could surmise that the growth of numbers in each cohort may be in part due to individuals postponing getting their license or avoiding the restrictions of the intermediate license.

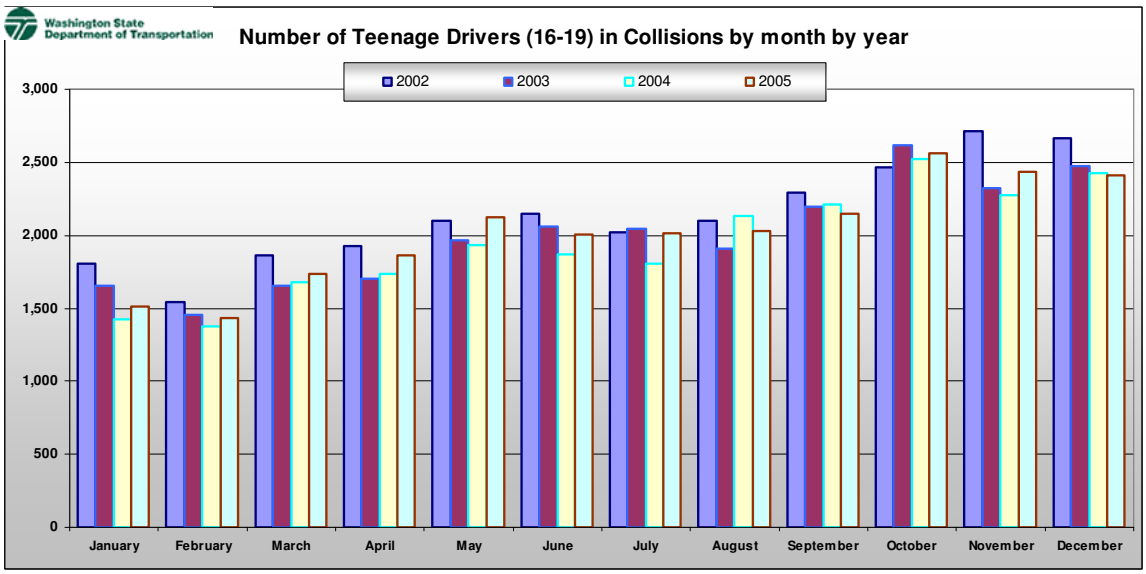
***Includes any Driver 16 to 19 (no exclusions). Source: Washington State Department of Transportation / Transportation Data Office / Collision Data and Analysis Branch

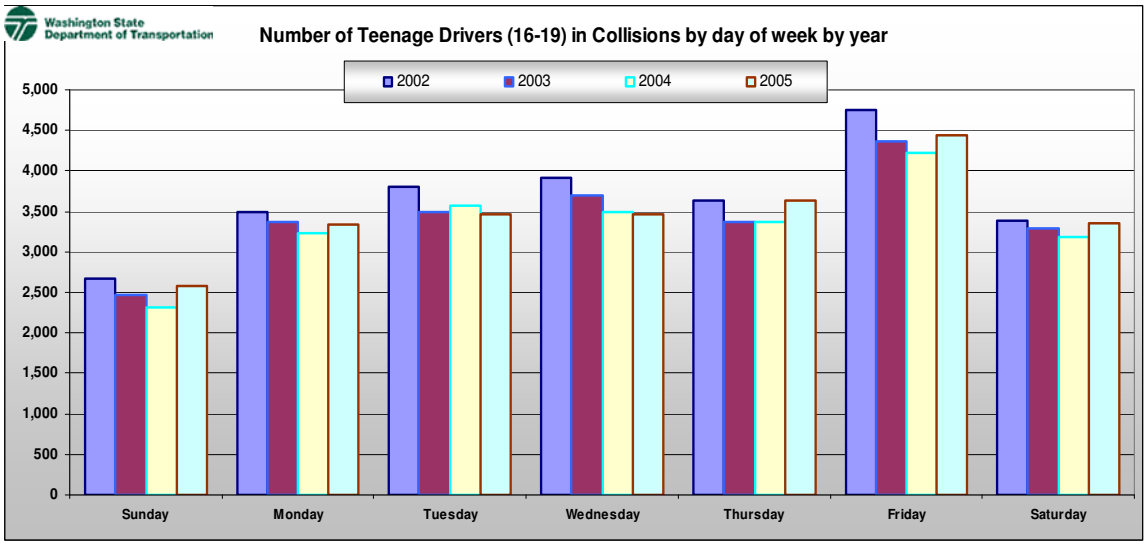
In Washington State, the top four contributing circumstances for teenage collisions are: speed, failure to yield right of way, following too close, and inattention, in that order.

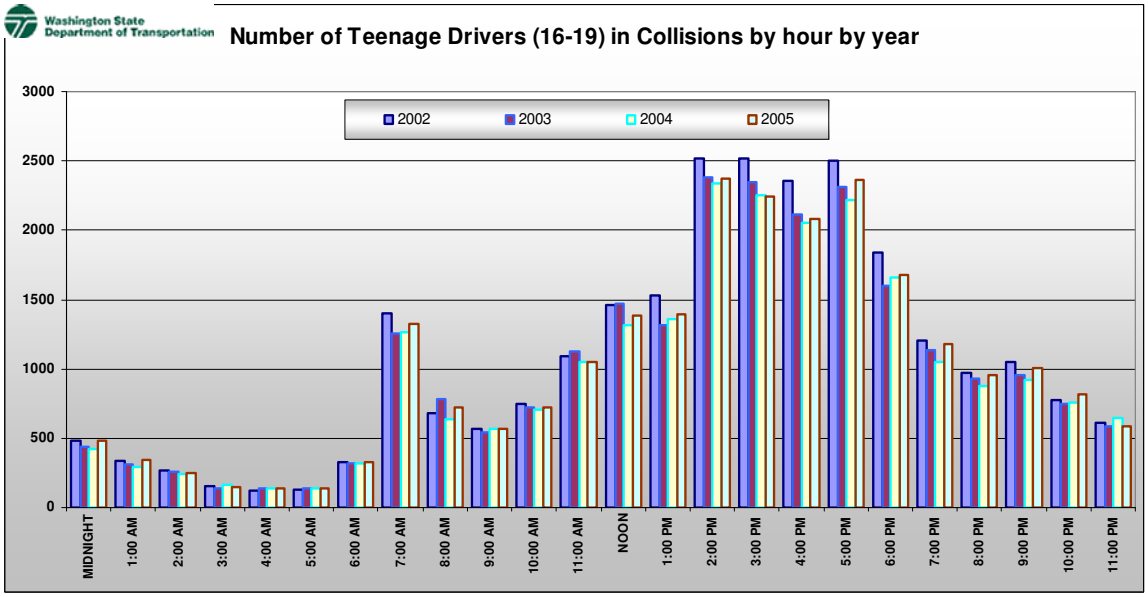


According to Washington State Department of Transportation data, most teenage driver collisions occur in October, November, and December. Most commonly, accidents happen on Fridays. The most common hours of the day for teenage collisions are from 2-6 p.m. and secondarily from 7-8 in the morning. Not coincidentally, these are the hours before and after school and the time when a teenage driver is more likely to have teenage passengers in the car.

The following graphs reflect the month of the year, the day of week, and the time of day that accidents involving teenage drivers have occurred most often over the past four years in Washington.







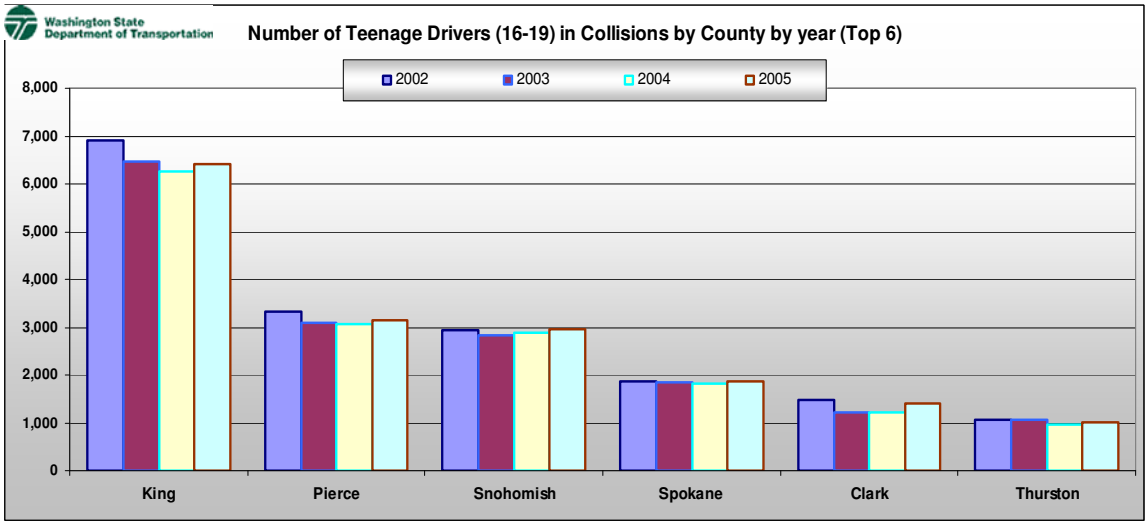
Some experts suggest that changing the hours of school could make an immediate impact on the number of collisions. In a recent University of Minnesota study on school start time, it was noted that the amount of sleep, time of day and circadian rhythms do play a part in how prepared a teenager is to learn. It is also the case that despite their increased need for sleep, teenagers get less than they did as children. As they move through the teenage years, adolescents need increasing amounts of sleep. There are serious risks for adolescents when they are sleep deprived while they are behind the wheel. Having high school begin classes at 9 a.m. will allow teenagers to be more awake and alert when driving to school having had one or two more hours of sleep.

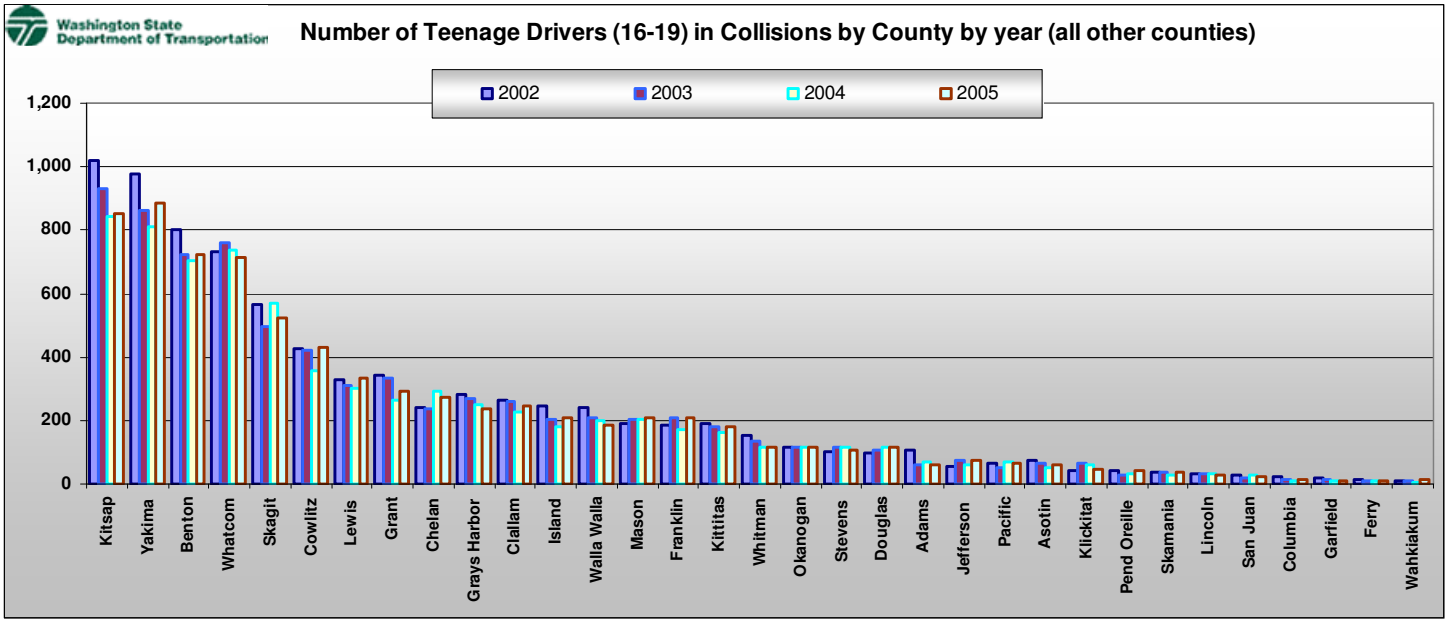
Changing the school end time to 4 p.m. would reduce the number of hours after school when students could be driving with passengers and without parental knowledge of their whereabouts. It should be noted that according to the FBI, the frequency of juvenile crime is about four times greater in the hours after school than during curfew hours. So decreasing the number of hours after school and before dinner time would have

potentially even greater side effects than the reduction in traffic collisions for young drivers. It is recommended that school districts refer to the Minnesota study for additional information on the impact to students, parents, employers, school athletics, school transportation, etc.

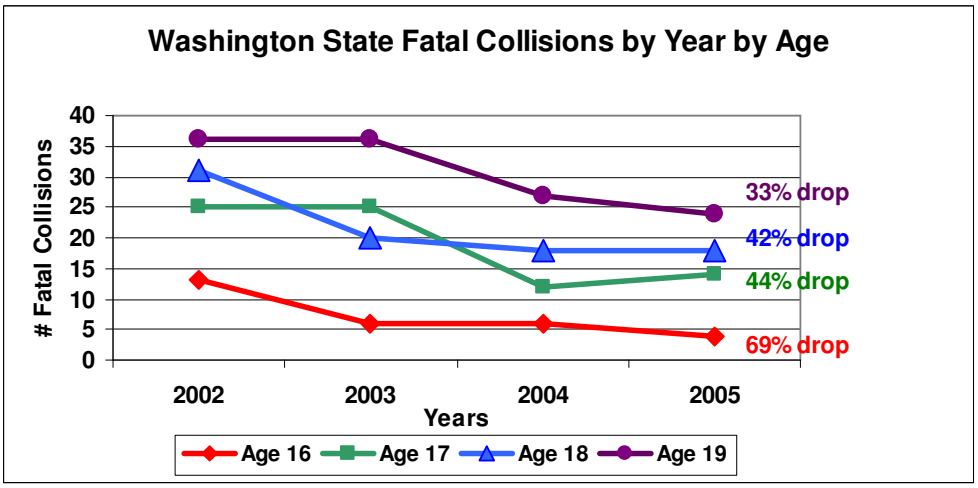
A study of three counties in North Carolina found that there was a higher rate of teenagers' motor vehicle crashes during the lunch hours in the two counties with open-campus lunch policies compared with the county without. It was noted that the students from the counties with open-campus lunch schools were carrying more passengers with them when they were involved in lunch hour crashes. Open campus lunch policies expose teenagers to additional driving time and encourage conditions in which multiple teens ride together, a known risk factor for crashes involving teen drivers.

The following graphs illustrate the number of collisions in Washington by county for the past four years. The decrease in the number of collisions is fairly consistent across all counties.

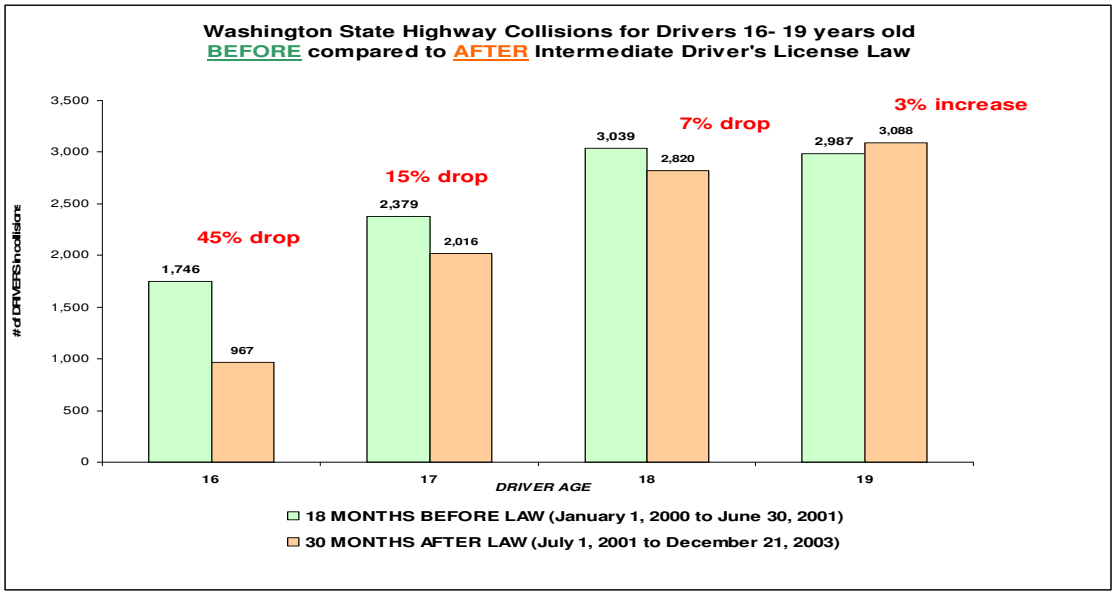




As indicated in the graphs below, highway related fatalities have decreased by 69% for 16 year olds, 44% and 42% for 17 and 18 year olds respectively and 33% by 19 year olds, while collisions decreased among 16 year olds by 45%, for 17 year olds by 15%, and for 18 year olds by 7% following implementation of the new graduated licensing system (2000 compared to 2003). The Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) is currently in the process of evaluating Washington's graduated driver license program data and is expected to report to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) in December of 2006. Department of Licensing has initiated a study of risk factors for all drivers that is scheduled to be released in 2007. Both of these studies may provide additional data and possible recommendations for reducing teenage driving collisions.

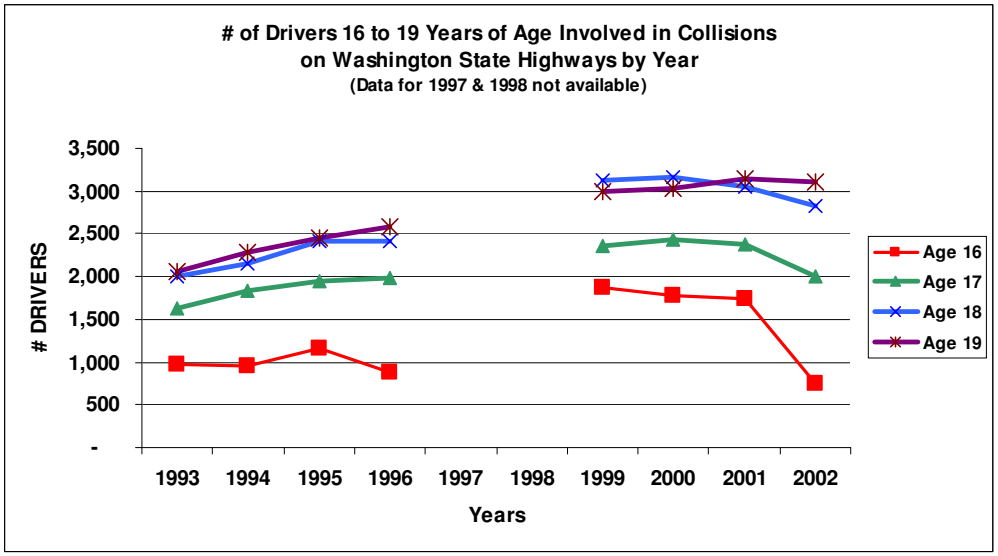


In Washington State we have seen a reduction in teenage collision rates immediately following the implementation of the Graduated Driver's License as illustrated in the following graph, particularly for 16 year olds.



Note: These figures are for highway-related collisions only (e.g. occurring on interstates, state routes, and US highways). They do not include figures for collisions on city streets and county roads. (Information provided by Washington State Traffic Safety Commission). Not all 19 year olds may have had intermediate licenses.

The following graph illustrates that after implementation of the graduated license program the prior trend of increasing collision rates for 17 and 18 year olds began to decrease as well. The trend for 19 year olds has not which is due partly to most 19 year olds no longer being under parental supervision.



POLICY BENCHMARKS

The following comparisons of various policies in the 50 states plus the District of Columbia are adapted from the 2006 Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), Highway Loss Data Institute Report. It compares the statutes in each state for the learner's permit, intermediate license including the restrictions on night time driving, number of teenage passengers, cell phone use, and the ages at which the restrictions are lifted.

In the opinion of the IIHS, no state has an optimal graduated licensing system. In an optimal system, the minimum age for a learner's permit is 16; the learner stage lasts at least 6 months, during which parents/guardians must certify at least 30 - 50 hours of supervised driving; and the intermediate stage lasts until at least age 18 and includes both a night driving restriction starting at 9 or 10 p.m. and a strict teenage passenger restriction allowing no teenage passengers, or no more than one teenage passenger.

Based on those optimal standards, IIHS rated the states from good to poor using the following point schedule:

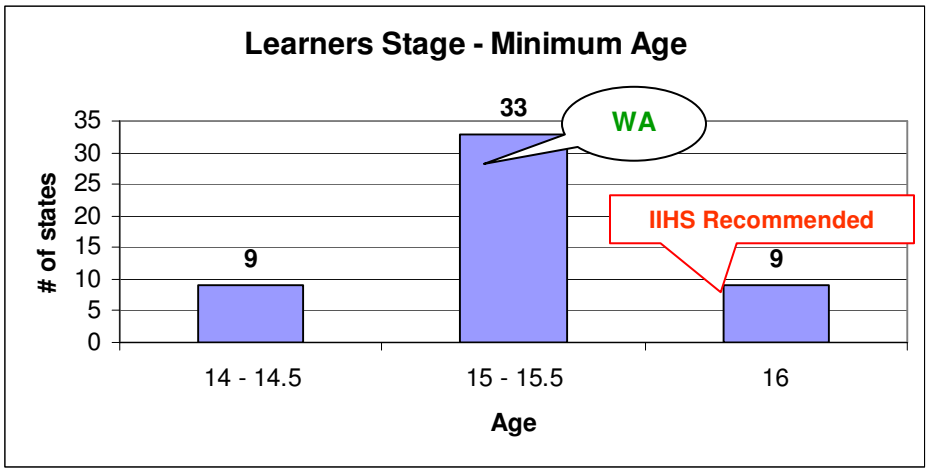
Learner's entry age	1 point for learner's entry age of 16
Learner's holding period	2 points of ≥6 mo.; 1 point for 3 - 5 mo.; none for < 3 mo.
Practice driving certification	1 point for ≥30 hrs; none for less than 30 hrs.
Night driving restriction	2 points for 9 or 10 p.m.; 1 point for after 10 p.m.
Passenger restriction	2 points for ≤ 1 underage passenger; 1 for 2 passengers; none for 3; where supervising driver may be < 21, point values were determined including the supervising driver as a passenger
Driver education	Where completion of driver education changed a requirement, point values were determined for the driver education track
Duration of restrictions	1 point if difference between minimum unrestricted license age and minimum intermediate license age is 12 or more months; night driving and passenger restrictions were valued independently

Good scored 6 or more points
Fair scored 4 or 5 points
Marginal scored 2 or 3 points
Poor scored less than 2 points.

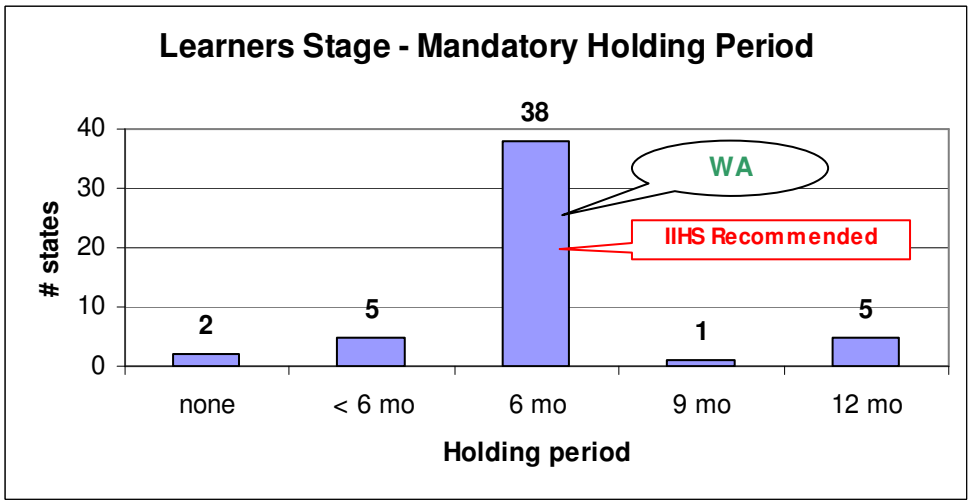
Washington was one of 26 states receiving a rating of good. The following graphs illustrate the comparisons between states; indicate where Washington policies fall, and the recommended policy restrictions from IIHS.

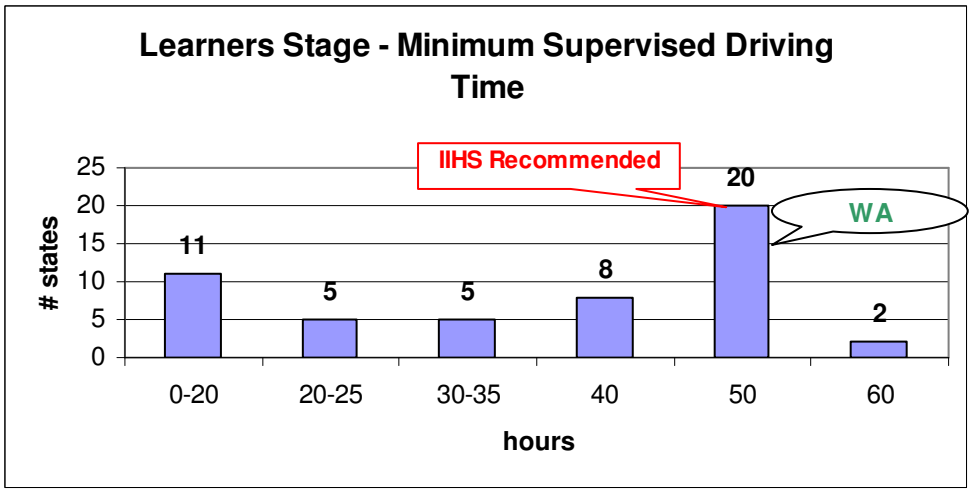
In general, Washington is within the recommended policy range for the learner's permit holding period, the supervised driving time for learners and the minimum age for intermediate license. The areas where Washington is outside the recommended standards are the minimum age for obtaining a learner's permit, restrictions for night driving, and number of teenage passengers.

Current Washington state law allows a 15 year old to obtain a learner's permit if they are enrolled in a drivers' education program. Those not enrolled may obtain a learner's permit at age 15 ½.

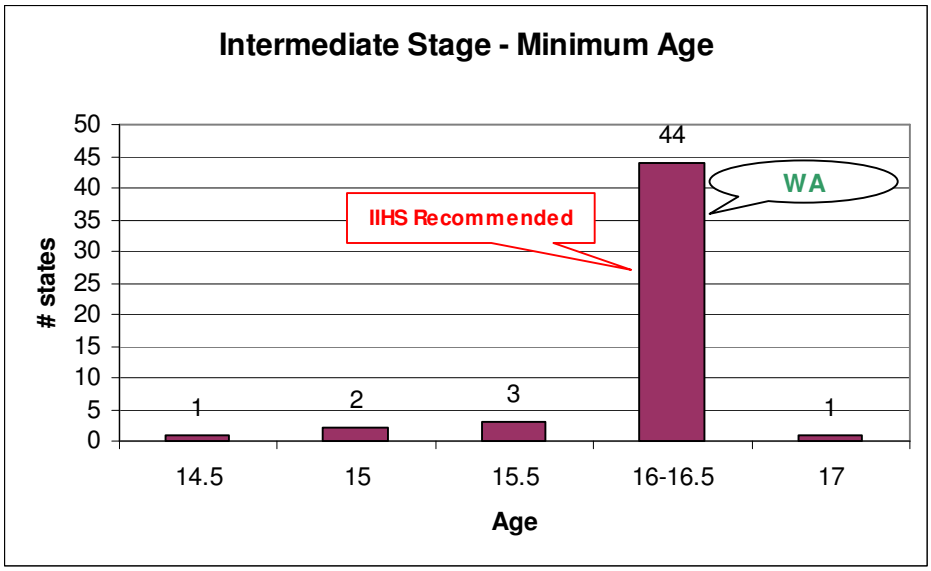


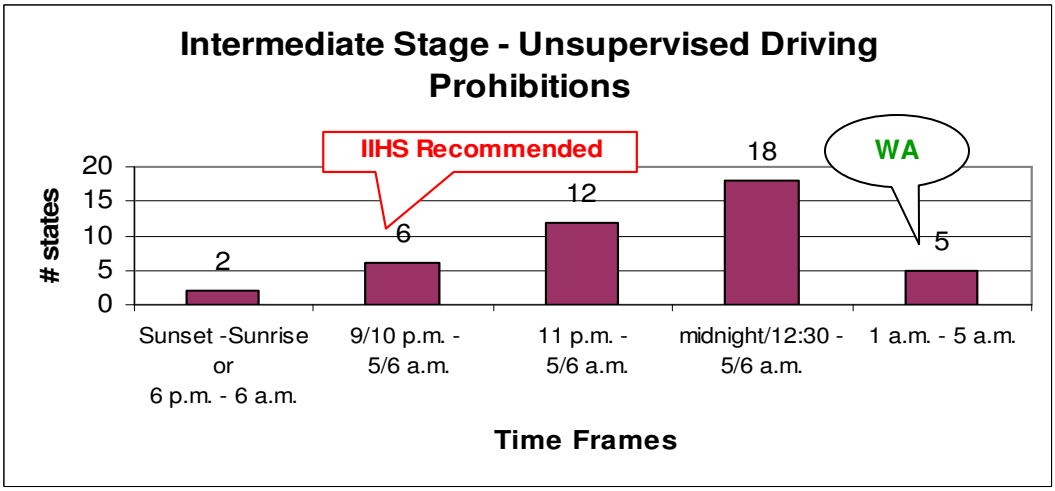
A great deal of research indicates that maturity and experience are the two most critical factors in accident prevention. Neuroscience studies show that the human brain continues to develop until the mid 20s, particularly in the regions of decision making and risk taking behaviors, two of the most critical risk factors for teenage drivers. Therefore waiting until age 16 to obtain a learner's permit will allow the opportunity for the young driver to be a little more mature.





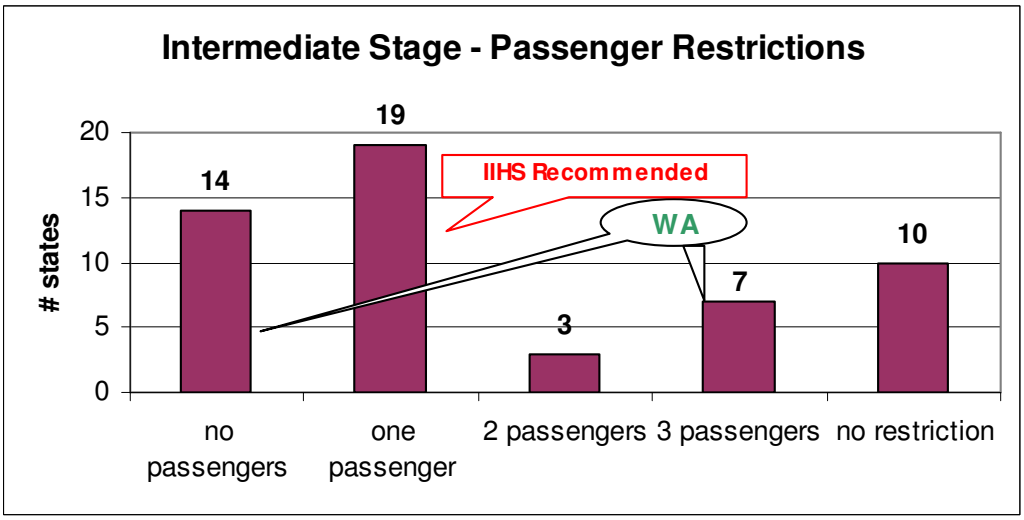
Note: Hours do not include Driver Education drive time



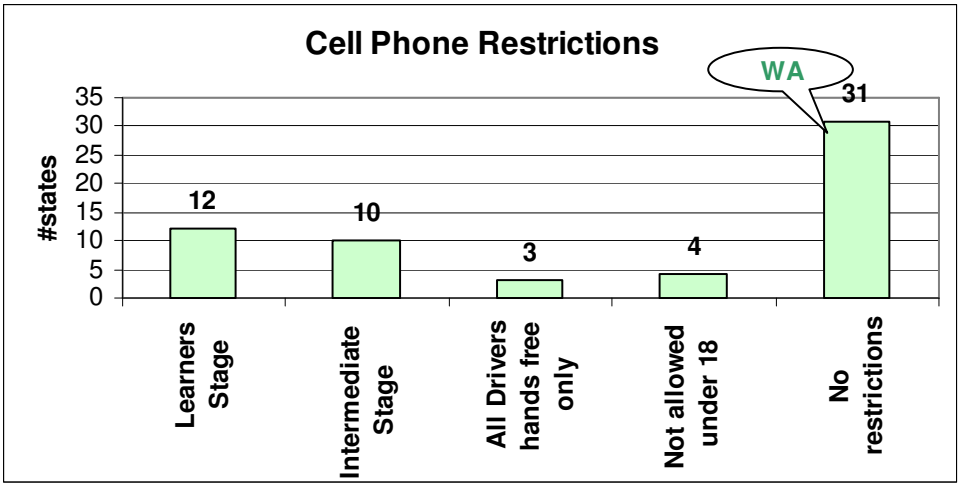


Studies on the time of day and hours that accidents most often occurred for teenage drivers led to the establishment of driving curfews for teenage drivers in many states. In 2004 nationally, 18% of the fatalities of teens in motor vehicles occurred between 9 p.m. and midnight, 22% occurred between midnight and 6 a.m. and 54% of the deaths occurred on Friday or Saturday. Some of the causes for this high rate of fatalities are that this is typically the time of day when teens are driving for recreational purposes and often involves drinking with teenage passengers in the car. Recently published evidence shows that in states with a driving restriction that starts before midnight, there has been a 13% decrease in evening fatal crashes for 15 to 17 year old drivers.

National recommendations call for restricting night time driving from 9 or 10 p.m. to 5 or 6 a.m. States with similar restrictions provide for exceptions when traveling to or from work for example. At a minimum Washington should consider expanding the night time driving restrictions to be in line with the IIHS recommended restrictions to continue to reduce the number of fatalities.



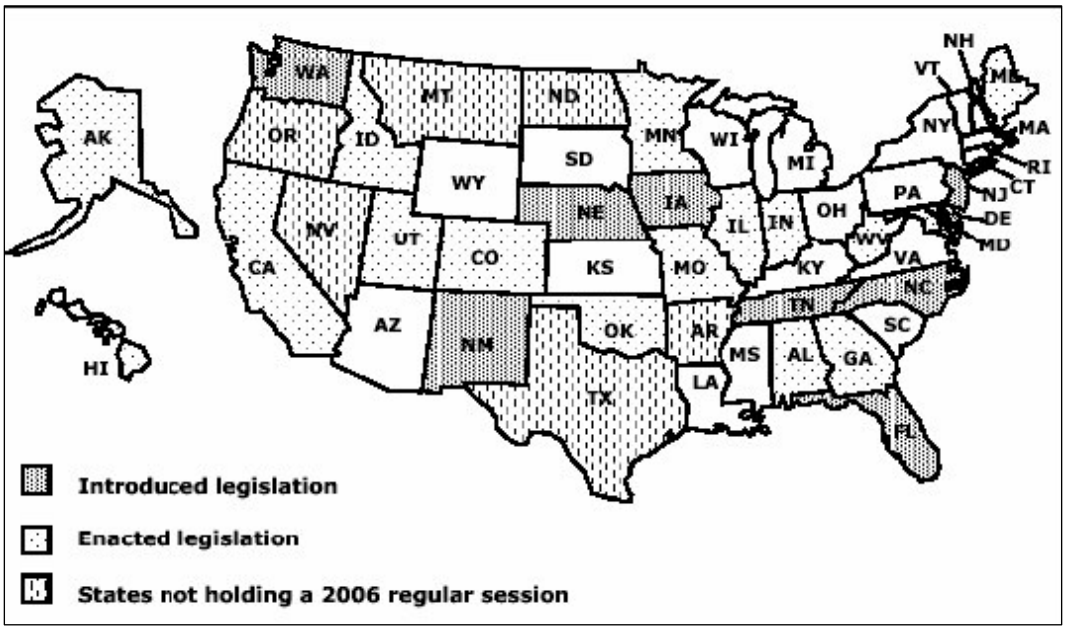
As the graph below indicates, a few states have recently enacted restrictions on cell phone use by teenagers while driving with a learner's permit or intermediate license. Distractions are contributing factors for motor vehicle crashes for both teenage and adult drivers. Eating, drinking, and adjusting the radio or the temperature controls each cause more crashes than cellular phone use. So any distraction for a young driver is dangerous, whether it is another teenager in the car, talking on a cell phone, playing with the CD changer or putting on make-up.



Illinois was the first state to ban cell phone

use by teen drivers. Not all states track cell phone involvement in motor vehicle crashes. Current data indicates that they are a factor in less than 1% of the crashes. However this is difficult to determine as it relies on self reporting although law enforcement agencies are beginning to collect data on cell phone use in correlation to accidents and citations. The cell phone restrictions have not been in place long enough to measure their effectiveness.

The following is a summary of legislation that has been introduced or enacted in the first half of 2006 as reported by the Health State Initiative completed by the Council of State Governments. The following map reflects the level of legislative activity in the area of Graduated Driver's Licensing legislation. The following paragraphs describe the legislation that was either enacted or proposed.



PROGRAM LENGTH AND TRAINING HOURS

Three states (Delaware, Illinois and Missouri) enacted laws in 2006 that increase program training hours for their state's graduated driver's licensing programs. Delaware made the graduated driver's licensing program 18 months long, divided into two segments of nine months each. Illinois increased the minimum hours of behind-the-wheel practice time for applicants for a driver's license from 25 to 50 hours, of which at least 10 hours must be at night. Missouri increased the minimum hours of behind-the-wheel instruction from 20 to 40 hours, including a minimum of 10 hours of behind-the-wheel driving instruction during the nighttime hours falling between sunset and sunrise.

In addition, bills pending in California and New Jersey would extend program training requirements. California would require participants to complete 10 hours, rather than six hours, of behind-the wheel training in the graduated driver's licensing program. New Jersey has two bills pending regarding program length. The first bill would require a completed course of behind-the-wheel training before a driving examination could be given to new drivers aged 17 or older who begin their graduated driver training with an examination permit, sometimes referred to as the "alternative route." The second bill

would increase the number of hours of behind-the-wheel driving education needed to obtain a special learner's permit from six hours to 12 hours.

Lawmakers in Iowa, Nebraska and Rhode Island also introduced bills to increase the number of training hours required to obtain a driver's license, but the bills died before the legislature adjourned in each state.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to requiring participants in graduated licensing programs to complete a certain number of classroom hours and behind-the-wheel hours, some states are attempting to require driver's license applicants to attend school regularly or show proof that they have graduated from high school or have received an equivalency certificate. In 2006, Illinois enacted such a provision.

Illinois lawmakers decided that graduated driver's licenses will not be issued to any applicant who is under 18 years of age and is not legally emancipated by marriage, unless the applicant has graduated from a secondary school, is enrolled in a course leading to a general educational development (GED) certificate, has obtained a GED certificate, is enrolled in an elementary or secondary school or college or university, is not a chronic or habitual truant, or is receiving home instruction and submits proof of meeting any of those requirements at the time of application.

The law also states that applicants under 18 years of age who provide proof acceptable to the agency that the applicant has resumed regular school attendance or home instruction or that their applications were denied in error will be eligible to receive graduated licenses if other requirements are met.

GRADUATED DRIVER'S' LICENSE PROGRAMS

In 1996, Florida was the first state to adopt a three-tiered graduated drivers' licensing system. Since that time all but 5 states (AZ, AR, KS, MN, ND) have adopted similar programs. All the research indicates that Graduated Drivers' License (GDL) programs as a whole are effective in reducing 16-year-old drivers' fatal crash rates nationally.

The more comprehensive and restrictive programs appear to have had the most positive collision reduction outcomes. States with learner's permits, intermediate license, and restrictions on night driving and number of passengers have seen increased results. Researchers studying the collisions involving 16 year old drivers in Pennsylvania following implementation of the GDL system noted that the decrease of 27% between 1999 and 2000 was due largely to the night time driving restrictions imposed between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.

The most effective GDL programs have the following characteristics

- minimum time limits in the learner's permit stage,
- restricted hours of the day of unsupervised driving in the intermediate stage,
- restricted number of teenage passengers in the intermediate stage,
- minimum age at which one can have a full license.

Washington law requires a teenage driver complete 50 hours of supervised driving practice with someone who has been licensed for 5 years or more, including 10 hours at night to qualify for the intermediate license. These hours are in addition to the driving requirements for traffic safety education program participation.

If teenage vehicle fatalities are to be reduced further, more stringent graduated drivers license programs appear to be the most successful option available to policy makers. All research agrees the licensing laws need to have three phases -

- a learner's permit with required hours of behind-the-wheel training and a minimum holding period before issuing an intermediate license,
- an intermediate phase with passenger and night time driving restrictions,
- then full licensure without restrictions.

The best system sets

- 16 as minimum age for obtaining a learner's permit, and no less than six months driving with parent or guardian supervision with up to 50 hours of driving practice;
- An intermediate stage that extends to the age of 18 with restrictions on night driving hours and limits the number of teenage passengers (other than family members).

The limit on passengers stems from research showing that when you have one or two passengers in the car, the crash risk increases 3 to 5 times as compared to a teen driving alone.

COST BENEFIT

A study done by Dee, et.al., reported in the Journal of Health Economics, suggests that the graduated drivers' licensing (GDL) regulations reduced the number of teen fatalities. In 2002, there were 2215 traffic fatalities among 15 -17 year-olds in the 38 states that had implemented the GDL. A 5.6% reduction (the minimum improvement) implies that there would have been 131 additional teen deaths in those states if they had not adopted the new licensing regulations. The 10 states in their sample that did not introduce the GDL by the end of 2002 had 409 teen traffic fatalities. In those states, implementing GDL regulations would have prevented at least 23 of those deaths annually.

From a policy perspective, these estimates can be used to conduct a "back of the envelope" welfare analysis of the hypothetical adoption of GDL in the 10 states without such requirements by the end of 2002. A recent meta-analysis suggests that the value of a statistical life for prime age workers has a median value of about $7.3 million (in 2002 dollars) in the US, implying that 23 young lives saved in 2002 would, at a minimum, be valued at $167.9 million. On the cost side, the administrative burden associated with GDL is fairly trivial in that these policies typically require one additional visit to the licensing office and only minimum additional law enforcement activities.

The most significant cost of the GDL is the restricted driving at night with other teen passengers. The magnitude of these costs is difficult to quantify. However, a crude comparison of the dollar value of the lives in these 10 states ($167.9 million) to the number of 15 - 17 year olds (1.9 million individuals) who would be subjected to the regulations in these states. These numbers imply that the dollar benefit in terms of lives saved per constrained teen is roughly $88. Many teens might be willing to pay this amount for the privilege of full licensure. But it should be noted that this analysis does not take into account the benefit of non-fatal injury reduction where the statistical costs of injuries are estimated from $20,000 to $70,000 each. The World Health Organization and World Bank estimate that globally the annual economic loss due to traffic accidents is $518 billion. As a result, most citizens and policy makers are not willing to remove these restrictions based on a cost analysis.

Using this same logic, Washington's investment in the Department of Licensing budget for oversight of the driver training schools is $758,000 per year. This is a small investment on the part of the state to save the lives of teenagers and make the highways safer for all drivers.

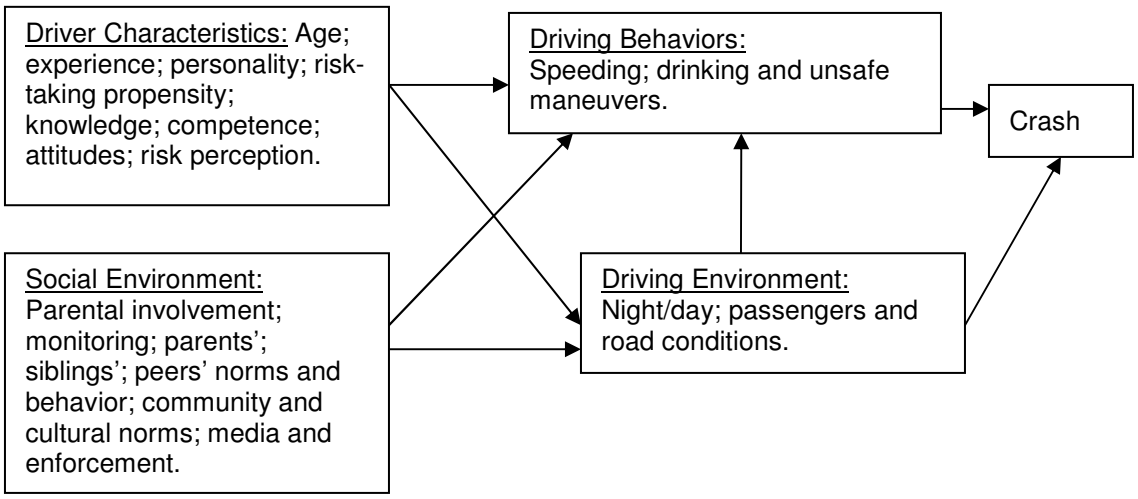
In December of 2006, The Insurance Information Institute announced that auto insurance premiums were expected to remain unchanged with some drivers seeing a decrease in their rates. They indicated the declining number of auto accidents, safer cars, new auto theft technology, fraud fighting efforts and the graduated licensing laws for teen drivers as key factors contributing to the rate slow down.

CRASH RISK

There is a need for a more holistic approach to reducing the traffic accidents among teenagers in Washington State. Research has shown there are several factors which impact the risk of accidents for teens. The model shown here illustrates that there are several interrelated factors that impact the likelihood of teen drivers being involved in an accident:

- overall risky behavior,
- perception of risk/hazard,
- personality,
- immaturity,
- inexperience,
- teenage passengers,
- cognitive decision making,
- societal pressures,
- driving impaired by alcohol or drugs,
- lack of understanding of consequences for decisions made.

Figure 1: Model for Predicting Young Driver Crash Risk



Source: Shope, J. T. & Bingham, C. R. (2003). Driver education and training: Future research needs. NTSB Public Forum. University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute.

Teenagers, and especially male teenagers, do not perceive hazardous situations as risky. Therefore, they develop unrealistic optimism and self-confidence that leads to poor choices and increased risk of accidents. Not only do they perceive hazards as less risky, they do not detect the hazards as quickly as an experienced driver.

Several studies have found that experience reduces accidents by as much as 50 - 70%. This is supported by the fact that the highest collision rate among 16 year olds is during the first six months of driving.

Studies also indicate that teens licensed at 18 have a lower initial collision risk. When researchers analyzed driver errors among young drivers, the errors reduced steadily as they gained more experience.

NIGHT TIME DRIVING RESTRICTIONS

Current Washington state law restricts intermediate drivers from driving at night from 1 to 5 a.m.

As stated earlier, studies on the time of day and hours that accidents most often occurred for teenage drivers led to the establishment of driving curfews for teenage drivers in many states. In 2004, nationally, 18% of the fatalities of teens in motor vehicles occurred between 9 p.m. and midnight, 22% occurred between midnight and 6 a.m. and 54% of the deaths occurred on Friday or Saturday.

The following Study of Night-Time Driving Restriction results were reported by AAA.

State (Study Year)	Restricted Times	Results
North Carolina (2000)	9 p.m. - 5 a.m.	Among 16 year olds, overall nighttime crashes were reduced 47%, compared to 22% reduction in daytime crashes (**net 25% reduction attributed to nighttime restrictions**).
North Carolina (2001)	9 p.m. - 5 a.m.	Compared with 1996 pre-GDL, 16 year-olds were **43% less likely to experience a nighttime crash** in 1999, 20% less likely to experience a daytime crash.
Florida (2000)	11 p.m. – 6 a.m.	**Total crashes among 16 year olds were reduced 17% during nighttime hours** and 7% during the daytime.
Michigan (2001)	Midnight - 5 a.m.	Overall crash risk for 16 year-olds was reduced by 25% in 1999 compared to 1996. **Risk of a nighttime crash was 53% lower in 1999 vs. 1996** while risk of a crash during daytime hours was 24% lower (net 29% reduction in risk attributed to nighttime restrictions)
PA, NY, MD and LA (1984)	Varying by locale	Crashes during curfew hours involving 16-year-old drivers **dropped 69% in Pennsylvania, 62% in New York, 40% in Maryland, and 25% in Louisiana.**
Detroit, Cleveland, and Columbus, were compared to Cincinnati (1990)	Varying by locale	**23% reduction in fatal and non-fatal motor vehicle injurie**s for 13- to 17-year-olds as passengers, drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists during the curfew hours.
47 Cities with Curfew, 77 without (1993)	Varying by locale – fatality/injury rates compared for 9 p.m.-5:59 a.m.	**23% reduction in fatal motor-vehicle injuries for 13- to 17-year-olds during curfew hours** when they compared cities with and without general curfews.
NJ, PA, Upstate NY, DE and CT (1996)	Varying by state – comparisons made	States with restrictions on the unsupervised driving of 16-year-old drivers had **lower teenage crash rates** than did states without such restrictions.
47 States (1996)	Varying by locale	Studying data from 47 states over a 10-year period, found that **curfews for 15- to 17-year-olds were associated with a 28% reduction in multiple-vehicle fatal crashes and a 25% reduction in single-vehicle crashes**.

TEENAGE PASSENGER RESTRICTIONS

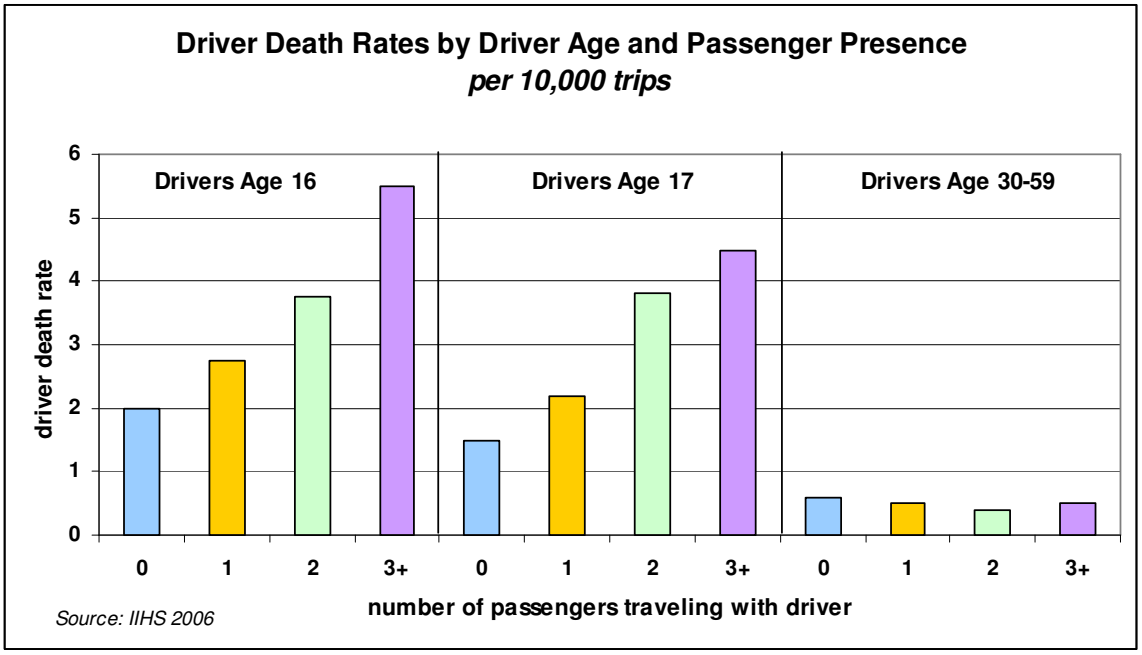
Washington state law states that teenage drivers may not have any passengers under the age of 20 unless they are members of their immediate family during the first six months of the intermediate license period. After 6 months, they may carry up to 3 passengers under the age of 20.

Consistently across studies of teenage drivers the presence of passengers, especially teenage passengers, increased the risk of collisions due to distraction. The collision risk is 3 - 5 times higher for 16 and 17 year old drivers with 2 or more passengers in the car than when they are driving alone. In 2004 in the US, 62% of 16-19 year old passenger deaths occurred when another 16 - 19 year old was driving.

Crash Risk with Passengers

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2006

Driver Age	Alone	Passenger(s)
16	2.28	4.72
17	1.77	3.52
18	1.77	3.366
19	1.16	3.23
20-24	1.50	2.54
25-29	1.28	1.69
30-59	1.00	1.00



In a study conducted by the University of North Carolina, collision risk is increased by 39% for 16 year old drivers with one passenger and by 182% with 3 or more passengers. For 17 year olds, the collision risk is increased by 48% for one passenger and by 207% for three or more passengers (University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center). Increasing the stringency of the passenger and nighttime restrictions in Washington State could have major implications for reduced collision involvement among young drivers.

GRADUATED DRIVER'S LICENSE ENFORCEMENT

One of the difficulties with the restrictions currently in place for intermediate drivers is the inability of law enforcement to stop a driver based solely on their young appearance for violation of the intermediate license restrictions. Since the current law is only a secondary offense and not a primary, law enforcement can only cite a driver after they have broken another law. Though research shows that if teens follow the curfew and passenger restrictions they are less likely to be involved in an accident, law enforcement officers struggle to enforce these restrictions.

Several jurisdictions have been trying to find solutions to this profiling issue. Connecticut is currently experimenting with a program called *Young and Yellow* where parents/guardians are encouraged to put a yellow sticker on any vehicle their intermediate driver could be driving. This allows law enforcement the opportunity to enforce the restrictions as a primary offense. Forty-three states have some night time driving restrictions with only 9 of them having secondary enforcement only. Thirty-six states have passenger restrictions with 10 of them having secondary offenses only.

Through our interviews we found that the Washington State Patrol, in particular, will always cite a young driver for violating one of the restrictions when they have been pulled over for another infraction. Young people we interviewed indicated that they believe there are no consequences for violating these night time and passenger restrictions. We were told stories of how a young driver with a passenger was cited then called home and given permission by their parents/guardians to bring the passenger home and continue to drive in violation of the restriction.

Law enforcement fully supports the restrictions and will enforce them when there is an opportunity, but they acknowledge a need for education of the public and parents/guardians to support their enforcement efforts.

TRAFFIC SAFETY EDUCATION

CURRICULUM

There is no research data supporting that the current form of traffic safety curriculum has a demonstrable effect upon reducing teenage driving fatalities and collisions.

Currently, Washington traffic safety education programs vary in their approach to meeting the state requirements, depending on the provider type: commercial driving school or public school.

Commercial driving school curriculum must include a total of 30 hours of classroom instruction, and a minimum of 6 hours of behind-the-wheel training. Public school program curriculum must include 30 hours of classroom instruction, and a minimum of 4 hours behind-the-wheel training.

Neither provider type is required to have curriculum that is performance based nor tie the behind-the-wheel training time to "just learned" classroom training.

The most promising traffic safety education curriculum with demonstrated influence in teenage driving records is one that is performance based, such as the curriculum being used in Oregon. Their curriculum is based on risk analysis, decision making, and other factors that influence the teen driver rather than just focusing on the basic driving skills. This performance based curriculum would require that the traffic safety education providers certify that the student had met the learning objectives of the course and demonstrated competency in order to receive their certificate.

Drivers' education may be able to reduce crashes by focusing on the initial "errors of inexperience" rather than trying to develop a "lifetime of responsible driving". Lack of driving experience is a major contributor to high crash rates for young drivers in the first few months of driving. Underlying many of the errors leading to accidents is failure to recognize a situation as hazardous.

The initial high accident rate for new drivers is attributable to errors of inexperience rather than high speed and irresponsible behavior. Other more productive routes to fatality reduction have been through enforcement, vehicle design and occupant protection (seat belts and air bags) rather than through the standard driver education programs.

One can surmise from the research that many factors other than traffic safety courses have led to the decrease in accidents for teenagers. The risks they choose are influenced by their personal motives, values, their perceived consequences of breaking the law, in addition to experience and education. It is important for programs to be designed with a more holistic approach to take these into account.

A study of accident reports shows the largest single category of error involves visual search (looking for the right things at the right time along the road ahead and to the side for cars and people who might enter the path, or behind when slowing, backing or changing lanes).

Next are attention errors (eyes pointed in the right direction but the mind is somewhere else - often a result of distraction or having to share attention among two or more situations.)

Third major category is speed - primarily not adjusting adequately to traffic or curves, slick surfaces and following too close.

The leading studies indicate the need for a two phased approach for traffic safety education. Phase one, similar to Washington State's, is the basics of handling the vehicle and basic mechanics of driving. Phase 2 is centered on decision making, risk evaluation, defensive driving and it teaches the young driver to observe the environment and the potential hazards. The second phase helps students learn consequences of their decisions and outcomes from their risky behavior such as speeding and following too close and moves beyond the mechanics of operating the vehicle in ideal conditions.

There are some highly recognized computer based programs that have been designed by AAA and others to aid in the classroom training of understanding the consequences of decisions.

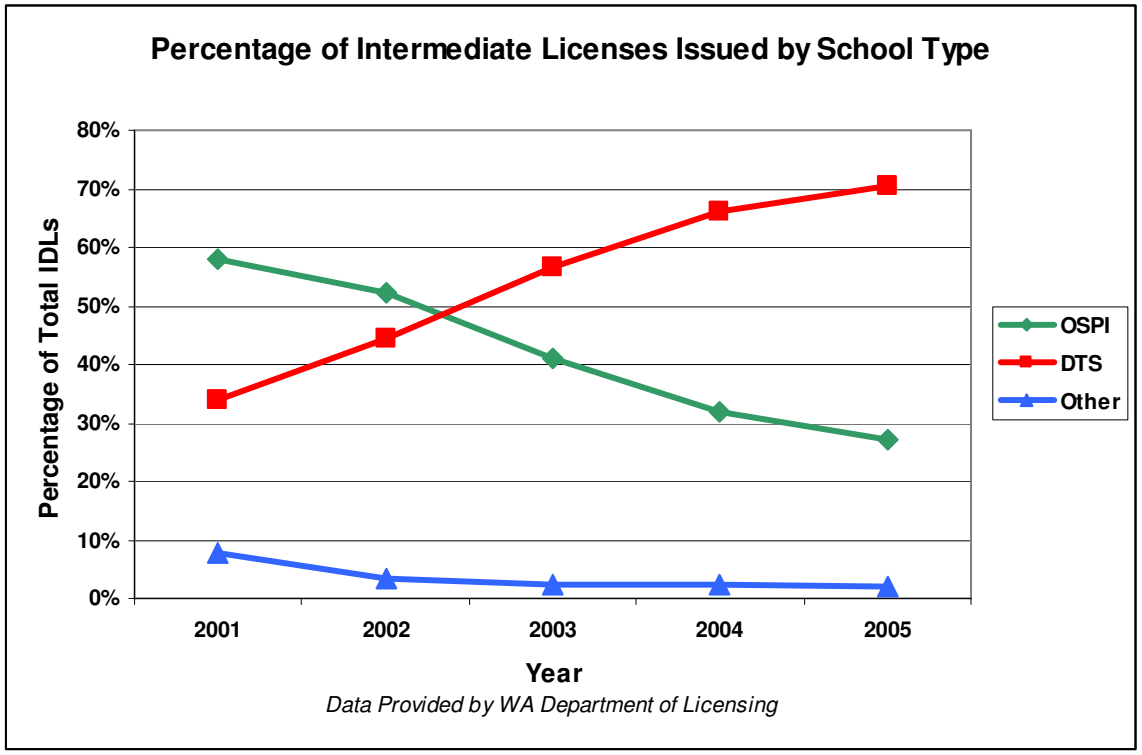
DELIVERY SOURCES

Currently there are Driver Training Schools offered in 29 counties in Washington State. Young drivers in the other counties must rely on public school driver training or travel to a neighboring county. The following table provides a listing as of November 2006 of the number of commercial driving training schools by county.

County	Total Schools	County	Total Schools
Benton County	8	Mason County	2
Chelan County	3	Okanogan County	1
Clallam County	5	Pacific County	2
Clark County	13	Pend Oreille County	1

Columbia County	1	Pierce County	34
Cowlitz County	5	San Juan County	3
Franklin County	3	Skagit County	4
Grant County	3	Snohomish County	23
Grays Harbor County	2	Spokane County	22
Island County	3	Stevens County	1
Jefferson County	2	Thurston County	7
King County	60	Walla Walla County	3
Kitsap County	11	Whatcom County	9
Kittitas County	3	Yakima County	5
Lewis County	4	**TOTAL**	**243**

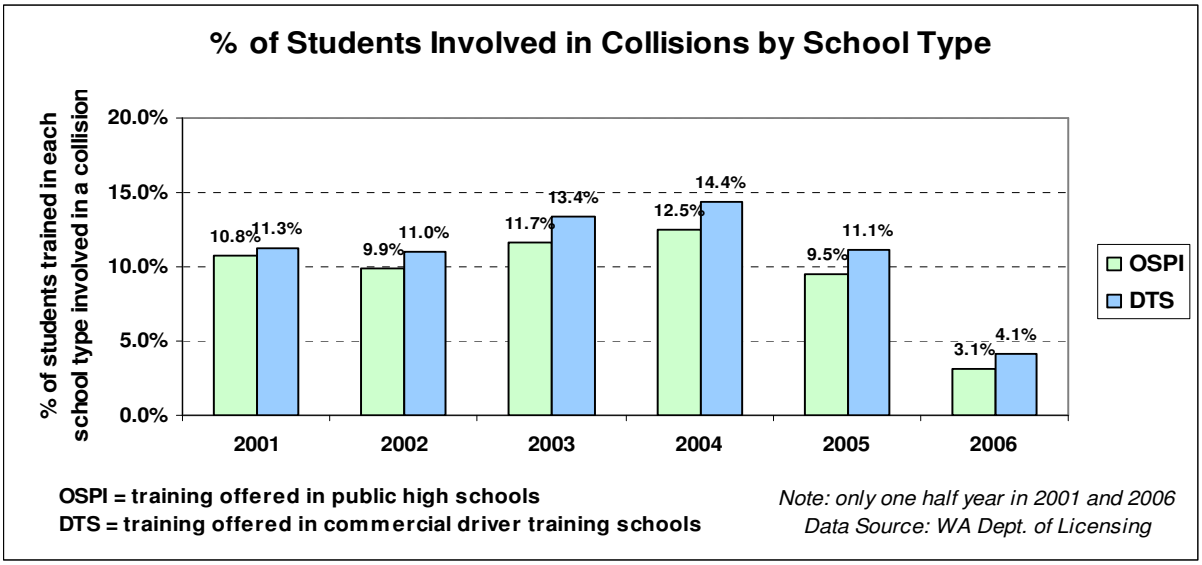
The following graph illustrates the number of Intermediate licenses issued by commercial driving schools (DTS), public school programs (OSPI) and out of states (Other) programs. It is apparent that the decrease in funding for public school programs has resulted in an increase in the number of commercial driving schools.

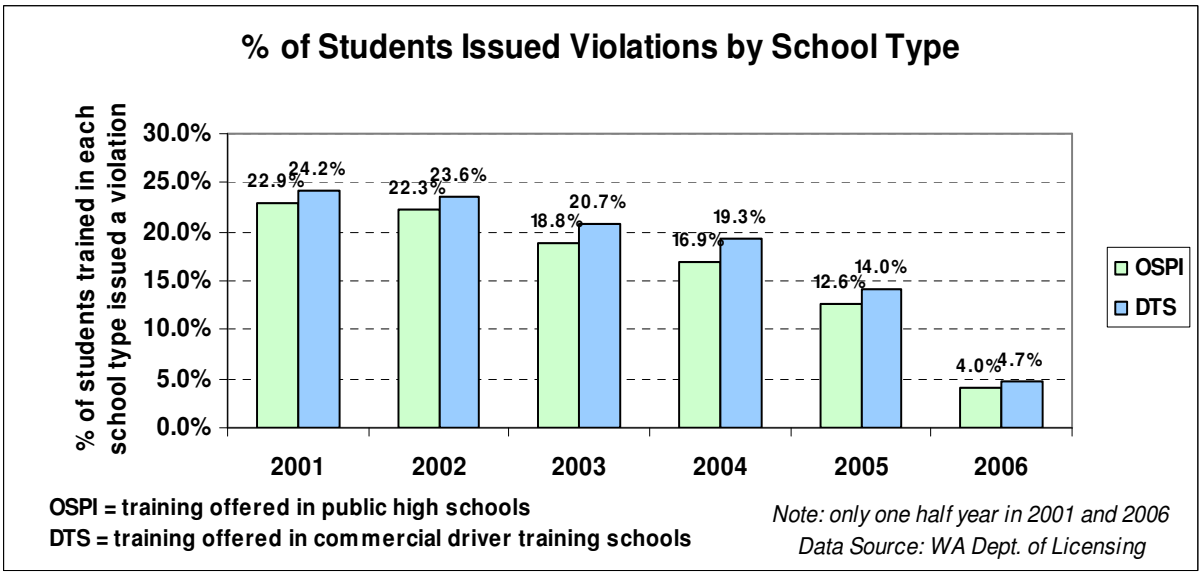


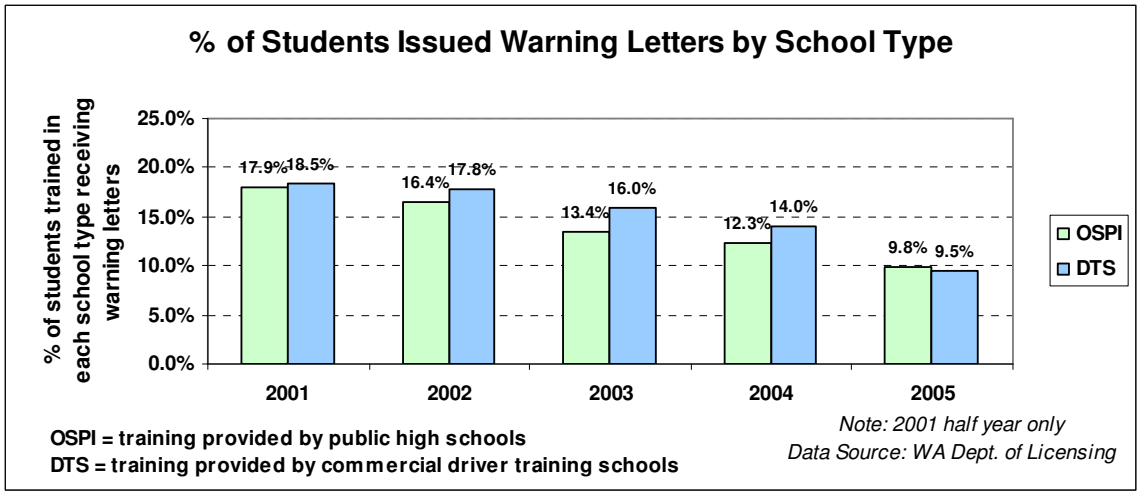
The inconsistency of program requirements and oversight between Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Department of Licensing for commercial driving schools is well known in the industry. Though the Department of Licensing has revised the requirements for commercial driving schools in Washington Administrative Code, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction requirements have not yet been revised to be consistent with Department of Licensing. For example, currently the Office of

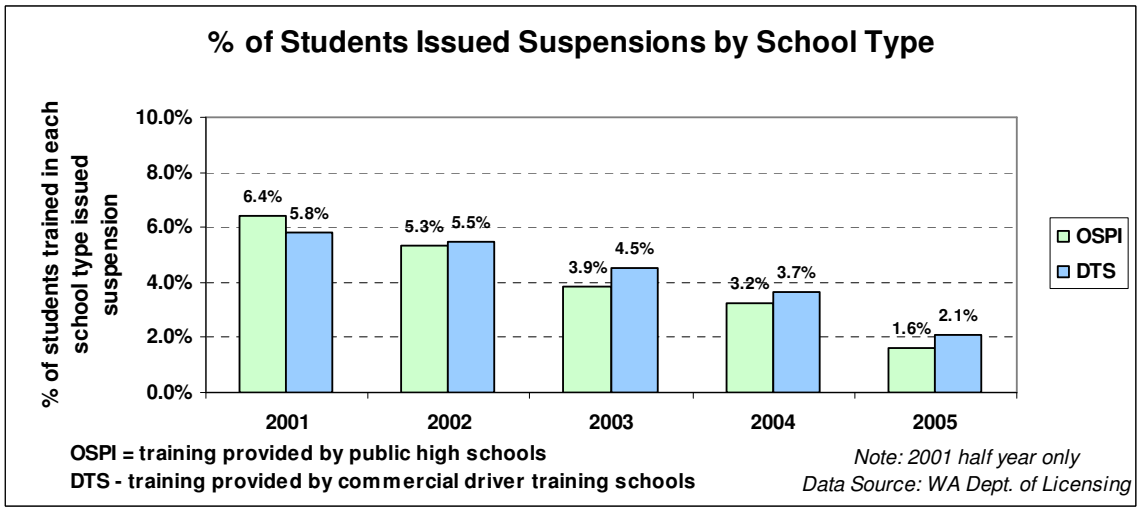
Superintendent of Public Instruction requires 4 hours of driving time while commercial schools are now required to provide 6 hours.

The following series of graphs provided by the Department of Licensing show a comparison of the outcomes of traffic safety education as provided by public school programs (OSPI) and commercial driver training schools (DTS). They illustrate the percentage of students trained by commercial schools and public schools licensees who were in accidents, received violations, warning letters or suspended licenses. The differences between the two programs are not significant. It should also be noted that this data includes one particular poor performing large commercial driving school in Pierce County that was recently sanctioned by the Department of Licensing to cease doing business for lack of compliance with current regulations.









VIOLATIONS

Currently in Washington, the Department of Licensing sends a letter to the parent/guardian when a young driver has been cited for a first violation of the intermediate license restrictions, any other driving violation, or in a collision. This is the only sanction action taken. There is no guarantee that the parent/guardian actually receives this letter. The letter is the only action for a first offense even though data shows that young drivers with violations are more likely to be killed or seriously injured in motor vehicle accidents.

For second offenses, the teen driver's privileges are suspended for 6 months or until age 18, whichever is shortest. For three driving violations, their license is suspended until age 18.

There is no indication that young drivers change their risky behaviors due to the current consequences for violating the restrictions of their intermediate license. In fact, the teenagers interviewed indicated that they did not see the current warning letter as a deterrent to breaking the restrictions and some teenagers were unaware that there was a warning letter process.

INSTRUCTOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Department of Licensing is currently implementing new WACS that increase the knowledge and competencies required for commercial driving school instructors, including required continued professional education, more frequent criminal background checks, and best practices information sharing. Currently there are no requirements for commercial driving instructor continuing professional education. The WACs will require 16 hours annually for trainer of trainers, 8 hours annually for driving instructors, and will include training workshops and best practices information sharing.

Public school programs overseen by the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction have different requirements. For endorsed classroom teachers, a conditional behind-the-wheel instructor certification can be issued that requires 60 hours of continued professional development in traffic safety education every two years. For certified traffic safety education instructors in public schools, the requirement is 40 hours of professional continuing education every five years.

FUNDING

In 1989, the per pupil cost of providing Traffic Safety Education in the public schools was $287.90 with a state reimbursement rate of $137.00 per student. In 1992, the state provided an additional $60 per student for low income drivers. In 1999, that cost rose to $421.19 per pupil while state reimbursement rose only 16 cents to $137.16 and remained there for several years. This funding was provided by the Traffic Safety Fund, a dedicated fund funded by fines from violators. Some of the funding was eroded to support other issues, such as the Becca Act. The funding was then moved to the general fund, where it is no longer dedicated to Traffic Safety Education. In 2001, the legislature eliminated Traffic Safety Education funding for all but low income students. In the 2002 legislative session, the funding for low income students and OSPI oversight of Traffic Safety Education programs in public schools was eliminated.

Currently, the Washington state budget provides for eight FTEs and $738,000 annually to support Department of Licensing's Driver Training School oversight function. This program provides for licensure, auditing, and regulating curriculum requirements for commercial driver training schools only. Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is responsible for the oversight of public school programs with one part time employee.

OSPI is not funded nor staffed to conduct on site program audits. OSPI approved programs are required to be reaccredited each year, however, reaccreditation only involves the school program stating they meet the program requirements; there is no onsite evaluation or audit. Department of Licensing is currently revising the Train the Trainer for Traffic Safety Education instructors and in the coming year will be revising the driver training curriculum as well. Both will be required to be utilized by all commercial driver training schools.

There is a fundamental issue regarding Traffic Safety Education funding in Washington for policy makers. Is the safety of our children being compromised by a continual degradation of dedicated funding for good Traffic Safety Education, regardless of the provider? With two types of providers, private commercial driving schools and school district programs, there is inconsistent oversight and funding. School districts have lost their state funding and approximately only 170 schools (not districts) are now providing a Traffic Safety Education program for their teenage students.

The focus of public education on meeting the core WASL educational requirements has overshadowed providing funding for preparing young drivers for the life threatening choices they make behind the wheel.

Commercial driving schools are profit based entities and struggle with the economic benefit to them of the increasingly stringent rules for protecting new drivers and others on the road. It is therefore important that policy makers provide direction and funding for maintaining a high performing traffic safety education program in the state, regardless of the provider. Alternative providers such as community colleges, like the Oregon model, could be explored.

PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Research shows that engaging parents/guardians in a child's education yields better results, and traffic safety is no exception. Anecdotal information gained through our interviews indicates that many parents/guardians are unaware of the requirements of both traffic safety education and the intermediate drivers' license restrictions.

Currently public school and commercial driving instructors are expected to inform families of the restrictions imposed by the intermediate driver's license. The lack of parental involvement in their teenager's traffic safety education program results in minimal parental understanding of the licensing restrictions and does not prepare the parent or guardian to provide the supervised driving practice time in alignment with the classroom and instructor supervised instruction.

Parental involvement in teenage driving is critical. Parents must know and understand the licensing laws and restrictions placed on their teenage driver, be adequately prepared to perform their role as coach and supporter of the concepts and learning taking place in the driver education program, role model the driving behavior expected of teenage drivers, and enforce the legal requirements placed upon teenage drivers. Washington does not currently have a well defined, structured approach for engaging parents effectively in the driver training process.

In the state of Oregon, parents/guardians are provided a step by step guide to help them reinforce the education being provided in the classroom and behind-the-wheel, thus making them a reinforcing mentor for the student. This was patterned after a mentoring program in Australia which has proven to be very successful. Oregon's parent/guardian guide provides an outline for each lesson and tips for the parent/guardian to support the student's traffic safety education lesson plan. It includes a log parents/guardians must sign for the practice hours. Department of Licensing is considering implementing a requirement for students to actually produce a log signed by parents/guardians showing the hours the teenager has driven to meet behind-the-wheel hour requirements in order to receive their intermediate license. Currently, parents only sign a statement the requirements have been met.

PEMCO Insurance commissioned an independent, statewide phone survey that asked Washington residents several questions about graduated licensing and other issues. Nearly one-quarter of Washington state residents are unaware of the Intermediate Driver's License law. And although parents/guardians of teen drivers had a much greater awareness of the law, 16 percent of them said they don't enforce it.

Many parents/guardians – nearly 80 percent – enforce their own "house rules" for teen drivers aside from what the state requires. According to the PEMCO Northwest Insurance Poll, 16 percent of Washington parents/guardians enforce a curfew, requiring their children to be home by a certain time. Approximately 12 percent require their

teenagers to maintain good grades (typically described as a 3.0 grade-point average) to keep their driving privileges.

Other house rules included: no driving at night or in bad weather (9 percent of parents/guardians); can only drive to school or work (7 percent); parents/guardians must know where the kids are going and who they're with (6 percent); and kids must pay for their own gas, insurance, and repairs (4 percent). Some parents/guardians prohibit distractions such as eating or using cell phones while driving (4 percent).

Liberty Mutual Group conducted a national survey in conjunction with SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) that found teenage drivers were most influenced by the driving behavior of their parents/guardians. The following table shows correlation of the results of that survey where students indicated what their driving behaviors were compared to what their parents/guardians' indicated were the parent's driving behavior.

	Student Behavior	Parent Behavior
Speeding	67%	48%
Cell phone use while driving	62%	62%
Non-use of seat belts	33%	31%

RECOMMENDATIONS

Lack of a systemic approach to preparing teenagers for driving safely is problematic at best. While there are bits and pieces of 'good stuff' in licensing, education, and enforcement, there is not a cohesive, integrated approach to preparing our young drivers for this life threatening responsibility and the safety of teenagers and those who share the road with them is at risk.

There is an opportunity for Washington policy makers to create and support an outstanding teenage traffic safety program with the necessary resources to make it successful. There is continued interest by citizens to improve the safety of our highways and a desire among Washington state agencies to improve our current teen driver programs. The following recommendations are submitted to the legislature for consideration:

1. Learner's Permit Stage
    a. It is recommended that the age for obtaining a learner's permit be changed from the current 15 with enrollment in a drivers education program or 15 ½ without, to 16 years old regardless of enrollment status.
    b. It is recommended that in order to get a learner's permit or intermediate license, a driver under the age of 18 must be going to school or in a GED program, similar to the requirements in Illinois.
    c. It is recommended at the time a parent/guardian signs for a teenage driver's learning permit or intermediate license at the Department of Licensing, the parent/guardian continue to be given documentation outlining the restrictions, sign that they have received and read the restrictions, and be given a log book for recording their teenage driver's required supervised driving practice hours.

2. Graduated Licensing

   a. It is recommended that the Washington State graduated licensing laws should remain in place and full consideration be given to expanding the restrictions to be in alignment with the nationally recommended standards.

   b. Night Time Driving Restrictions - It is recommended to extend the current driving restrictions (from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m.) to 9 or 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

   c. Passenger Restrictions- It is recommended to extend the prohibition of teenage passengers during the intermediate stage from the current first six months of licensure to the entire intermediate license stage.

   d. Violations and Sanctions- It is recommended that intermediate driver's licenses be suspended on the first violation for no less than 6 months and revoked upon the second violation until the age of 18.

3. School Hours

   a. It is recommended that serious consideration be given by school districts around the state to starting high school at 9 a.m. and ending at 4 p.m.

   b. It is recommended that high schools have a closed campus during lunch hour.

4. Additional Requirements of the Intermediate License

   a. It is recommended that at the time of getting an intermediate license, the parent/guardian must provide the Department of Licensing a signed log book documenting the number of supervised hours received by the teen driver.

   b. It is recommended to increase the number of supervised driving hours from 50 hours to 60 hours.

5. Traffic Safety Education

   a. It is recommended that all driver education training curriculum must be consistently delivered throughout the state regardless of provider type.

   b. It is recommended that the oversight of traffic safety education, regardless of the provider, be given to one state agency. The inconsistency of having two separate delivery requirements and two different sets of curricula and oversight by two different departments is problematic at best and detrimental to student drivers at worst. Currently, commercial driver training schools are providing training to ¾ of driver training students; therefore, it seems logical to consolidate program oversight under Department of Licensing with collaboration with OSPI on curricula design.

   c. It is recommended that if the oversight is consolidated, additional funding be provided to support the Department of Licensing's additional oversight duties and to provide quality performance based curricula and assistance to driver training schools, regardless of the provider.

   d. It is recommended that an integrated curriculum of classroom time immediately followed by behind-the-wheel driving instruction that reinforces the classroom learning be mandated by all traffic safety education programs.

6. Parental Involvement

   a. It is recommended that a comprehensive strategy be developed by Department of Licensing to engage parents/guardians in the teen driving process, such as

adding the requirement for a signed parent/guardian log of supervised driving hours to be submitted to Department of Licensing at the time of licensing.

b. It is recommended that the traffic education curriculum include at least one session with parent/guardian participation to ensure they understand their responsibilities and the driving restrictions during the intermediate licensing stage and to prepare them for their role in reinforcing their teenager's professional driving instruction.

c. It is recommended that Washington state traffic educators be required to supply a parental guide (in appropriate languages as needed) to assist parents/guardians in supporting the curriculum similar to Oregon's.

7. Enforcement

a. It is recommended to change the intermediate drivers' license restriction on night time hours and passengers violations from a secondary to primary offense.

b. It is recommended to initiate a voluntary program for providing some vehicle marker (like those used for persons of disability or the *Young and Yellow* program) that indicates the driver is a novice with restrictions on nighttime driving and passengers.

c. It is recommended that a statewide educational campaign similar to "Click It or Ticket" be funded to educate parents/guardians and the public about the teenage driving restrictions.

8. Oversight

It is recommended that an oversight group of stakeholders and citizens be established to ensure a consistent integrated program with participants from Department of Licensing, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, commercial driving schools, insurance companies, parents/guardians, and other interested stakeholders. Research and data continues to be released almost monthly on this subject. Therefore, it would be wise to continue to monitor this field of study for new innovations and policy recommendations.

In the coming year teenage driving programs and issues will be the subject of other Washington state agency studies. These studies should provide further insight into policy issues for the legislature to consider along with these recommendations.

CONCLUSION

Washington teenage driver fatalities and collisions are a systemic problem that requires a multi-faceted solution. The aforementioned recommendations taken together, rather than as individual pieces, could have an enormous impact:

- Waiting until 16 to get a Learner's Permit makes them a little more mature before starting to drive
- Having to have more hours behind the wheel gives them more experience
- Increasing the restriction on teenage passengers until 18 reduces one of the biggest distractions for a new driver
- Having the parents more involved in the learning increases the chances of helping parents to enforce the rules
- Having the night time driving and passenger restrictions a primary offense allows law enforcement to provide consequences for breaking the law

- Having school start a couple hours later increases the chances that the teen is more awake and alert while driving to school
- Closing the high school campus at lunch time removes one more opportunity for teens to be in a car together and involved in a collision
- Having school go until 4:00 cuts in half the number of hours after school when teens could be driving around together before dinner and get in an accident
- Having all the schools that teach traffic safety have the same regulations, curriculum expectations and accountability will ensure that all kids get the same classroom and behind-the-wheel training
- Funding the Department of Licensing to adequately monitor, audit and inspect all driver education programs will go a long way to begin to improve the quality of those programs
- Creating a campaign to educate parents, family and the public on the restrictions on young drivers will allow the community to help to reinforce those rules.

The sum of these recommendations will result in the ultimate goal of reducing the number of injuries and deaths to teenage drivers, their passengers, those who share the road with them and to spare the families of the victims from living with the devastation of serious injury or death.

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APPENDICES

1- Acknowledgements
2- References
3- Matrix of Policies Comparison of 50 States and District of Columbia
4- Washington DOT Data for Teen Contributing Circumstances

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APPENDIX 1

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Name	Organization
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Beretta, Gina	WA Traffic Safety Commission
Bernard, Michael	WA State Department of Transportation, Collision Data Branch
Cochran, Tana and staff	WA Department of Licensing, Driver Training Schools
Damon, Dennis & Lorraine and family	Son, Jason, killed in a car driven by a teenage driver
Davis, Dan	WA State Department of Transportation, Collision Data Branch
Doane, Dick	WA Traffic Safety Commission
Dunn, John	WA State Department of Transportation, Collision Data Branch
Hansen, Alex	Washington Traffic Safety Association
Harris, Tom	Sears Driving School
Hartsock, Lt. Sean & other WSP officers	Washington State Patrol
Harvey, John	Oregon Department of Transportation, Driver Education
Jones, Allan	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Kinnunen, David	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Knous, Heather	WA Traffic Safety Commission
Limotti, Brian	WA State Department of Transportation, Collision Data Branch
Loomis, Becky	Department of Licensing
Mansfield Averill, Gloria	Pierce County DUI Task Force
Overstreet, Dave	AAA Washington/Inland
Papen, Jeff & others	911 Driving School
Salzberg, Dr. Phil	WA Traffic Safety Commission
Skinner, Betty	Kitsap County MADD
Sloan, Craig	WA Department of Licensing, Driver Training Schools
Williams, Kathy	WA Department of Health

APPENDIX 2
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APPENDIX 3: POLICY COMPARISON MATRIX showing all the states and the various options and restrictions for teenage drivers.

Stage: Learners

Requirements	Options					
Minimum entry age	14 - 14.5		15 - 15.5			16
Optimal: 16 # of states	9		33			9
States	AK, AR, ID, IA, KS, MI, MT, ND, SD		AL, AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, HI, IL, IN, LA, ME, MD, MN, MS, MO, NE, NV, NH, NM, NC, OH, OK, OR, SC, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, **WA**, WV, WI, WY			CT, DE, DC, KY, MA, NJ, NY, PA, RI
Mandatory holding period	None	< 6 mo	6 mo			9 mo	12 mo
# of states	2	5	38			1	5
States	NH, NE	AZ, ID, IL, IN, WY	AL, AK, AR, CA, CT, DE, DC, HI, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MD, MT, NV, NJ, NM, NY, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, **WA**, WV, WI,			VA	CO, FL, CA, NC, VT
Optimal: 6 months							
Minimum amount of Supervised Driving	0 - 20	20 - 25 hr	30-35 hr	40 hrs	50 hrs		60 hrs
# of states	11	5	5	8	20		2
States	AR, HI, IN, LA, MA, MS, NJ, NC, ND, SD, TX	AZ, CT, IA, NH, NY	AL, ME, MN, WV, WI	AK, GA, MO, OK, SC, UT, VT,VA	CA, CO, DC, DE, FL, ID, IL, KS, MI, MT, NE, NV, NM, OH, OR, PA, RI, TN, **WA**, WY		KY, MD
Optimal: 30 - 50 hours							

Stage: Intermediate

Requirements	Options					
Minimum entry age	14.5	15	15.5	16 - 16.5		17
Optimal: 16.5 # of states	1	2	3	44		1
States	SD	ID, MT	MS, NM, SC	AL, AK, CA, CO, CT, DE, DC, FL, GA, HI, IL, IN, IA, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MO, NE, NV, NH, NY, NC, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, **WA**, WV, WI, WY		NJ
Unsupervised driving prohibition	Sunrise - sunset or 6 pm - 6 am	9 or 10 pm - 5 or 6 am	11 pm - 5 or 6 am	Midnight or 12:30 - to 5 or 6 am		1 am - 5 am
Optimal: # of states	2	6	12	18		5
9 or 10 pm - 5 am States	ID, SC	DE, MS, NV, NY, NC, SD	CA, DC, FL, HI, IL, IN, LA, MT, OK, PA, TN, WY	AL, CO, CT, GA, IA, KY, ME, MD, MA, MI, NE, NJ, NM, OR, TX, UT, VA, WI		FL (after 17), NH, OH, RI, **WA**

Restrictions on Teenage Passengers (family members usually excepted) ***Optimal: no more than 1 teenage passenger***	No passengers	One passenger	2 passengers	3 passengers
3 mo # of states	2	none	none	none
States	IN, NV			
6 mo or 2nd 6 mo # of states	11	6	1	4
States	AK, CO, DC, GA, ME MD, MA, OR, UT, VT, **WA**	CO, GA, IL, MO, MT, NH	DC	MO, MT 2ND 6 Mo - OR, **WA**
12 mo # of states	none	2	none	1
States		RI, VA		VA (After 12 mo)
Period of license # of states	1	11	2	2
States	CT	DE, HI, KY, NJ, NM, NC, OK, TN, TX, WI, WY	NY, SC	WV, AL

No restrictions on Passengers # of states	10	No intermediate license # of states	5
States	FL, ID, IA, LA, MI, MS, NE, OH, PA, SD	States	AZ, AR, KS, MN, ND

Stage: Restrictions lifted at Age

Requirements	Options				
Nighttime restrictions	16	16 ½	16 ¾	17	18
# of states	4	8	1	22	9
States	ID, MS, MT, SD	AK, ME, NM, NC, OK. SC, TX, WY	WI	AL, CA, CO, DE, HI, IL, IA, KY, LA, MD, MI, NE, NH, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, TN, UT, **WA**, WV	CT, DC, FL, IN, MA, MO, NV, NJ, VA
Optimal: until 18					
Passenger restrictions	16	16 ½	16 ¾	17	18
# of states	2	13	3	13	4
States	MT, NV	AK, IL, IN, ME, NH, NM, NC, OK, SC, TX, UT, VT, WY	CT, MD, WI	AL, CA, CO, DE, HI, KY, MA, NY, OR, RI, TN, **WA**, WV	DC, MO, NJ, VA
Optimal: until 17					
No restrictions					
# of states	7				
States	AZ, AR, KS, LA, MI, MS, NE				

Cell Phone Restrictions

Learners Stage	
# of states	12
States	CO, CT, DE, DC, IL, ME, MD, MN, NJ, TN, TX, WV
Intermediate Stage	
# of states	10
States	CT, DE, IL, ME, MD, MN, NJ, TN, TX, WV
All Drivers - hands free only	
# of states	3
States	CA, DC, NY
Not allowed under 18	
# of states	4
States	MD, MN, NC, RI
No restrictions	
# of states	31
States	FL, GA, HI, ID, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, MA, MI, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NM, NY, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, SD, UT, VT, VA, **WA**, WI , WY

IIHS rating of States

Grade	# of states	States
Good (6 or more points)	26	AK, CA, CO, DE, DC, GA, HI, IL, KY, ME, MD, MA, MO, NV, NJ, NY, NC, OK, OR, PA, RI, TN, UT, VA, **WA**, WI
Fair (4 -5 points)	13	AL, CT, FL, IN, IA, LA, MI, NH, OH, TX, VT, WV, WY
Marginal (2 - 3 points)	11	AR, ID, KS, MN, MS, MT, NE, NM, ND, SC, SD
Poor (<1 point)	1	AZ

APPENDIX 4- CONTRIBUTING CIRCUMSTANCES

Washington State Department of Transportation

UNDER 23 UNITED STATES CODE-SECTION 409, THIS DATA CANNOT BE USED IN DISCOVERY OR AS EVIDENCE AT TRIAL IN ANY ACTION FOR DAMAGES AGAINST THE WSDOT OR ANY JURISDICTIONS INVOLVED IN THE DATA

	DRIVER AGE 16					DRIVER AGE 17					DRIVER AGE 18					DRIVER AGE 19					DRIVER AGE 16-19
CONTRIBUTING CIRCUMSTANCE	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**Total**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**Total**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**Total**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**Total**	**Total**
SPEED RELATED	599	618	592	625	2,434	1,447	1,324	1,251	1,343	5,365	1,649	1,517	1,461	1,592	6,219	1,723	1,589	1,545	1,704	6,561	20,579
FAILURE TO YIELD RIGHT OF WAY TO VEHICLE	492	482	451	440	1,865	1,147	992	957	1,003	4,099	1,243	1,098	1,071	1,104	4,516	1,163	1,046	1,055	1,056	4,320	14,800
FOLLOWING TOO CLOSE	272	224	244	231	971	788	619	623	668	2,698	926	803	770	773	3,272	953	841	816	877	3,487	10,428
INATTENTION OR APPARENTLY ASLEEP/FATIGUED	279	291	188	251	1,009	564	572	505	511	2,152	692	731	623	616	2,662	590	693	638	677	2,598	8,421
DISOBEY SIGNAL/STOP OR YIELD SIGN	96	100	116	97	409	237	233	197	210	877	324	255	268	305	1,152	302	284	309	353	1,248	3,686
OTHER	51	97	150	165	463	79	164	298	356	897	82	239	362	402	1,085	102	221	402	470	1,195	3,640
DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL	27	28	39	15	109	97	85	81	75	338	144	161	157	161	623	216	246	245	241	948	2,018
DEFECTIVE EQUIPMENT	47	47	39	31	164	106	100	82	77	365	156	133	131	94	514	160	137	139	129	565	1,608
OVER CENTERLINE	55	45	47	46	193	134	124	89	80	427	148	123	97	102	470	153	106	94	94	447	1,537
IMPROPER TURN	36	57	45	54	192	88	90	89	114	381	129	113	111	124	477	98	107	115	141	461	1,511
IMPROPER PASSING	17	23	27	17	84	63	44	48	42	197	106	86	81	54	327	91	72	59	73	295	903
IMPROPER BACKING	27	24	27	28	106	45	45	55	55	200	61	56	59	52	228	66	53	61	61	241	775
IMPROPER U-TURN	16	15	10	14	55	44	38	33	44	159	44	30	42	46	162	39	44	31	47	161	537
FAILURE TO YIELD RIGHT OF WAY TO PEDESTRIAN /PEDALCYCLIST	6	12	11	7	36	29	20	19	15	83	30	31	36	28	125	18	40	27	34	119	363
DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS	1	3	2	2	8	9	17	9	11	46	14	16	23	16	69	25	23	27	32	107	230
APPARENTLY ILL	1	2	1	1	5	9	7	4	8	28	7	6	1	7	21	5	7	9	14	35	89
FAILING TO SIGNAL	4	1	1	1	7	7	8	2	4	21	7	8	12	5	32	5	6	5	9	25	85
HEADLIGHT VIOLATION	3	3	2	2	10	8	7	5	4	24	3	7	7	4	21	7	4	4	6	21	76
IMPROPER SIGNAL	3	1	1	2	7	2	2	2	2	8	4	1	1	7	13	5	2	2	6	15	43
DISREGARD FLAGGER-OFFICER	1	1	2	1	5	2	2	0	1	5	0	5	2	2	9	3	3	4	4	14	33
IMPROPER PARKING LOCATION	2	1	0	2	5	1	2	3	3	9	3	1	1	3	8	8	0	1	2	11	33
HAD TAKEN MEDICATION	0	0	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	2	0	3	6	0	1	0	4	5	17