

Graduated Driver License Education

Location: Nebraska

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Category: **Cutting Edge Practice**

TITLE V/MCH BLOCK GRANT MEASURES ADDRESSED
Adolescent Motor Vehicle Mortality

BACKGROUND

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) was implemented in Nebraska in 1998 with small changes made in 2008. Still today, many parents don't know what driving restrictions GDL places upon novice teen drivers. Parents manage to find out how to get a driver's permit, but for most parents that is where the information stops. Nebraska parents are often not aware of penalties (points and fines), passenger restrictions, and night-time driving and cell phone use restrictions associated with GDL provisions.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Increase parental and teen knowledge on GDL driving restrictions. Increasing knowledge leads to better enforcement and compliance with GDL laws.

TARGET POPULATION SERVED

Teen drivers and their parents.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Through participation in the Child Safety Collaborative Innovation and Improvement Network (CS CollIN), the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NE DHHS) Injury Prevention Program created, tested, and distributed a GDL education card for parents and teens. The card contains information about important elements of the GDL law, such as prohibitions on teen drivers using cell phones, driving under the influence of alcohol, and engaging in nighttime driving from midnight to 6 am unless the teen driver is going to or from school activities or work. The card also explains limitations that the law places on the number and age of passengers that teen drivers are allowed

to transport and a requirement that all occupants riding with a GDL permit holder must wear a seat belt. The card format was tested first followed by content testing with parents and their teen driver. Five schools that implement the evidence-based program Teens in the Driver's Seat were asked to participate in a pilot program to find out the usefulness of the card. The GDL card was distributed to the 5 schools with parent surveys, teen surveys, and parent-teen driving agreements. We were interested in learning if the card contributes to increased knowledge of GDL among parents and teens and if it influences willingness to use a parent-teen driving agreement.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES/EVALUATION DATA

Survey responses demonstrated the card increased both parent and teen knowledge of GDL, with over 70% of parents and 80% of teens responding "agree" or "strongly agree." For parents and teens not using a parent-teen driving agreement, 79% indicated willingness to use one after receiving the GDL card. Based on feedback received from parents and teens, it was determined that the GDL card would be used for statewide distribution along with the agreement.

PROGRAM COST

The NE DHHS partnered with the Highway Safety Office, which provided resources to print the GDL card and offer it to the general public, including schools, driver education instructors and the Drive Smart Nebraska Coalition at no cost. The card was also made available online at ParentsDriveTheMessage.gov. The NE State Patrol agreed to distribute the card through their educational sessions at schools across the state. The Nebraska Medical Association promoted the card to physicians across the state through their newsletter. The Department of Motor Vehicles tested

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the card through its licensing stations but found that GDL driving restriction information would be better placed in the drivers manual (not currently in manual) as that is where most parents get their information about GDL and obtaining a permit.

ASSETS & CHALLENGES

Assets

Partnerships with the NDOT Highway Safety Office, Teens in the Driver Seat schools, NE Dept. of Motor Vehicles, State Patrol, driver education instructors, Child Safety Collaborative Innovation and Improvement Network and the Drive Smart NE Coalition.

Challenges

Getting feedback from parents and teens through the schools.

Overcoming Challenges

Through the Teens in the Driver Seat program, schools that participated in the parent and teen survey received activity points for their program. Schools were provided ideas on how to get surveys completed such as doing it as a class project and/or completed through parent teacher conferences.

LESSONS LEARNED

Getting feedback from stakeholders is vitally important. Although it can be difficult, a program must find a way to reach the targeted audience.

FUTURE STEPS

Continued spread of the GDL card and agreement to driver's education programs, GDL driving restrictions placed in the NE DMV driver's manual and use of the GDL information for policy change and /or education of policy makers.

COLLABORATIONS

Child Safety Collaborative Innovation and Improvement Network, NDOT Highway Safety Office, Teens in the Driver Seat schools,

PEER REVIEW & REPLICATION

N/A

RESOURCES PROVIDED

Graduated driving licensing informational card and parent-teen driving agreement

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Driving/Pages/Resources.aspx>

Key words: graduated driver licensing, parent-teen driving agreement, teen drivers, injury prevention

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