



Young Drivers Survey Report – Summary

As a part of their ongoing work on young drivers, the British Columbia Automobile Association's Traffic Safety Foundation commissioned the Applied Research and Evaluation Services Department of the University of British Columbia to manage a survey of young drivers. The purpose of the survey was to examine a sample of young drivers in terms of their driving history, driving style, and driving behaviours, as well as their perceptions of the driving history, driving style and driving behaviours of their parents, in order to investigate the relationships among these variables.

For the purpose of this study, "young driver" was defined as a person between 19 and 24 years of age, inclusive. Drivers younger than 19 would have required parental permission to survey, and those over 24 years of age were considered to be moving out of the "young driver category". Additionally, as variables included having been in crashes and having been charged with driving offences, choosing 19 years of age as a lower limit helped ensure the participants had had some driving experience and the potential exposure to crashes and offences. On October 3, 2006, an advertisement went into the UBC student newspaper (circulation 20,000) asking registered drivers between 19 and 24 years of age who had parents who both drove to come to the ARES office to participate in a web-based survey for the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation.

It can not be claimed that the resulting sample of 139 female and 89 male young drivers is a wholly statistically accurate reflection of young drivers in British Columbia, as the sample size is too small and the sampling was not random. Nonetheless, there is no particular reason to believe that it is unrepresentative of BC's young drivers, and is certainly large enough to examine how the variables inter-relate, and from that make assumptions about how they may inter-relate in the larger population of young drivers.

For the most part, young drivers see themselves as good, safe drivers, even those with a history of offences and/ or crashes. Indeed, those with an offence history were more likely to describe themselves as "Skillful", "Assertive" and "Aggressive" than those with no driving offence history. Overall, they describe themselves as more cautious, more skillful, more assertive and more safe than the average driver, as well as being less timid. In terms of hazardous driving behaviours, they are most likely to run a yellow light and to speed, and least likely to drink and drive or take drugs and drive.

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Turning to the results on questions of sources of influence on these young drivers, they point to parents (especially the father) and driving schools/ instructors, as the sources of their driving knowledge and as the most important influences on their driving. They tend to describe their driving compared to an “average” driver in the same terms as they describe the driving of their parents, especially the same sex parent, and the same holds true for their assessment of the likelihood of performing hazardous driving behaviours and “Angry” driving. Finally, while offences predict crashes, there appears to be a “family” pattern of offences and crashes: offences and crashes in parents predict offences and crashes in young drivers, and offences and crashes in one parent predict offences and crashes in the other parent. However, it should also be noted that the media (TV, movies) and “friends” were identified in one open-ended question important influences, the former especially for the males.

If the influence of role modeling is as strong as it appears, it might be worthwhile to ensure that parents understand that their driving is likely shaping the driving of their children so that they can ensure that they are good role models.

Summary of Key Findings with Respect to Parental Influence

	YOUNG MALE DRIVERS	YOUNG FEMALE DRIVERS	BOTH MALE AND FEMALE
FATHER'S	<p>Positive relationship between their crash(es) and Fathers' crash(es).</p> <p>Rated themselves compared to average drivers lower than their Fathers in terms of being safe and cautious.</p> <p>Rated themselves about the same as their Fathers in terms of being skillful, assertive, calm and timid, and higher than their Fathers in terms of being an aggressive driver, compared to the average driver.</p> <p>Rated themselves as likely as their Fathers to not stop at a stop sign, to run a red light, and to drive after drinking, and more likely to run a yellow light, to exceed the speed limit, to drive and multitask, and to drive after using drugs.</p> <p>Rated themselves at about the same angry driving style as their Fathers.</p> <p>Having been in one or more crashes correlated positively with their Fathers being in one or more crashes.</p>	<p>Rated themselves compared to average drivers lower than their Fathers in terms of being safe, skillful, and assertive.</p> <p>Rated themselves about the same as their Fathers in terms of being cautious, calm, and aggressive, and higher than their Fathers in terms of being a timid driver, compared to the average driver.</p> <p>Rated themselves as likely as their Fathers to run a yellow light, to exceed the speed limit, to not stop at a stop sign, to run a red light, and to take drugs and drive, less likely than their Fathers to drink and drive, and more likely to drive and multitask.</p> <p>Rated themselves less likely than their Fathers to drink and drive, and more likely to drive and multitask.</p> <p>Rated themselves at about the same angry driving style as their Fathers.</p>	<p>How they learned to drive: Father 33.2%; greatest influence on driving style: Father 29.7%.</p> <p>Fathers charged with driving offences, 43.2% "no"; 35.4% "yes." Speeding was most common known offence for Fathers: 31.9%.</p> <p>Father in a traffic accident as driver, 38.4% "no"; 38.9% "yes."</p> <p>Rated Fathers more skillful, less cautious, more assertive, more aggressive, and less timid than their Mothers, while both Parents were rated about the same on driving safely and calmly.</p> <p>Rated Fathers as more likely to run a yellow light, exceed the speed limit, drive and multitask, and drive after drinking than their Mothers.</p> <p>Described their Fathers' driving style: Cautious/careful: 26.6%; Safe: 21.8%; Aggressive: 21.4%; Confident/good: 17.9%; Fast/will speed: 17.9%; Slow: 17.0%; Obey the law: 14.4%.</p> <p>Fathers were rated significantly higher on the Angry Driving Scale than Mothers.</p> <p>Fathers had a higher score on the summed Hazardous Driving Scale than Mothers.</p> <p>Fathers' driving style: 63.5% of the descriptors were positive.</p>

	YOUNG MALE DRIVERS	YOUNG FEMALE DRIVERS	BOTH MALE AND FEMALE
MOTHER'S	<p>4.5% learned to drive from their Mother.</p> <p>Rated themselves compared to average drivers lower than their Mothers in terms of being cautious and being timid.</p> <p>Rated themselves as having a more angry driving style than their Mothers.</p> <p>Rated themselves about the same as their Mothers in terms of being safe and being calm, and higher than their Mothers in terms of being skillful, assertive, and aggressive.</p> <p>Rated themselves as likely as their Mothers to not stop at a stop sign, and more likely to run a yellow light; to exceed the speed limit; to drive and multitask; to drink and drive; and to take drugs and drive.</p>	<p>15.8% learned to drive from their Mother.</p> <p>Having been in one or more crashes correlated with their Mothers having been in one or more crashes.</p> <p>When describing their driving style using more safety-related descriptors, they are more likely to use safety-related descriptors for their Mothers' driving style.</p> <p>Rated themselves as having a more angry driving style than their Mothers.</p> <p>Rated themselves compared to average drivers lower than their Mothers in terms of being safe, cautious, and calm.</p> <p>Rated themselves about the same as their Mothers in terms of being skillful and being timid, and higher than their Mothers in terms of being assertive and aggressive.</p> <p>Rated themselves as likely as their Mothers to run a red light and to drive after drinking, and more likely to run a yellow light; to exceed the speed limit; to drive and multitask; and to take drugs and drive.</p> <p>Compared to the average driver, females rated their Mothers as more safe, cautious, and calm than they rated themselves, while they rate themselves as more assertive and aggressive than their Mothers.</p>	<p>How they learned to drive: Mother 11.4%; greatest influence on driving style: Mother 16.2%.</p> <p>Mothers charged with driving offences: 60.7% "no"; 24.9% "yes." Speeding was most common known offence for Mothers: 19.2%.</p> <p>Mother in a traffic accident as driver: 45.0% "no"; 38.4% "yes."</p> <p>Respondents described their Mothers' driving style: Cautious/careful: 41.9%; Slow: 30.1%; Safe: 17.9%; Not confident/nervous: 13.1%; Fast/will speed: 10.5%.</p> <p>Mothers' driving style: 65.5% of the descriptors were positive.</p> <p>The pattern of female young drivers describing themselves more like they describe their Mothers and male young drivers describing themselves more like they describe their Fathers that was seen in charge history, crash history and Safe Driving Style Scale is also reflected in ratings for: safe; cautious; assertive; calm; and timid, compared to others.</p> <p>Rated their skillfulness neither significantly higher nor lower than that of either of their Parents.</p> <p>As their rated aggressiveness increased, so did the rated aggressiveness of their Parents.</p> <p>The likelihood of rating both their Parents as doing the behaviour increased as they rated the likelihood of them doing the behaviour. The behaviours were: run a yellow light; exceed the speed limit; drive and multitask; fail to stop at a stop sign; run a red light; drive after drinking; and drive after using drugs.</p> <p>Charged with a driving offence: 26.1% said "yes" (speeding was the most cited offence), and in terms of ever having been a driver in a crash, no matter how small, 37.9% said "yes."</p>

	YOUNG MALE DRIVERS	YOUNG FEMALE DRIVERS	BOTH MALE AND FEMALE
BOTH	<p>Restrictions on their driving, 34.8%.</p> <p>The more likely they use safe driving descriptors for their own style, the more likely they will use safe driving descriptors for the driving style of both Parents.</p>	<p>Restrictions on their driving, 36.0%.</p> <p>Females citing Parents as how they learned to drive were more likely to report having been in a crash.</p>	<p>How they learned to drive: Parents 24.5%; received some training from Parents: 63.8%; greatest influence: Parents 6.6%; one or more Parents as the greatest influence: 50.2%.</p> <p>49.1% knew of neither Parent having a driving offence; 33.7% had either the Father or Mother having one or more offences; and 17.2% had both Parents with one or more offences.</p> <p>38.7% knew of neither Parents having one or more crashes; 31.9% had either a Father or Mother having had one or more crashes; and 29.4% had both Parents with one or more crashes. Citing Father or Mother as how they learned to drive did not relate to charges or crashes.</p> <p>Parental driving restrictions: 35.5% overall; restrictions involving time of the day: 45.7%; no driving after dark: 16.2%; restrictions on passengers/friends: 7.9%.</p> <p>Driving style: Cautious/careful: 39.7%; Safe: 26.2%; Fast/will speed: 26.2%; Obey the law: 15.7%; Alert/aware of surroundings: 15.3%; Calm/relaxed/patient: 14.4%; Aggressive: 12.2%; Confident/good: 9.6%; Defensive: 6.7%.</p> <p>Being charged with one or more driving offences correlated positively with their Fathers and Mothers having been charged with one or more offences. When they report that they were involved in driving offences, they also tend to report that both their Parents were similarly involved.</p> <p>There is a positive correlation between their scores on the Angry Driving Scale and that of their Fathers, but not their Mothers.</p>

	YOUNG MALE DRIVERS	YOUNG FEMALE DRIVERS	BOTH MALE AND FEMALE
			<p>Rated their skillfulness neither significantly higher nor lower than their Parents, while for both their rated aggressiveness increased, and so did their rated aggressiveness of their Parents.</p> <p>The more likely they thought their Parents would undertake hazardous driving behaviour, the more likely they would also do so. Parents' driving style variables and hazardous driving variables did not predict young drivers' offences or crashes.</p>