



Young Drivers

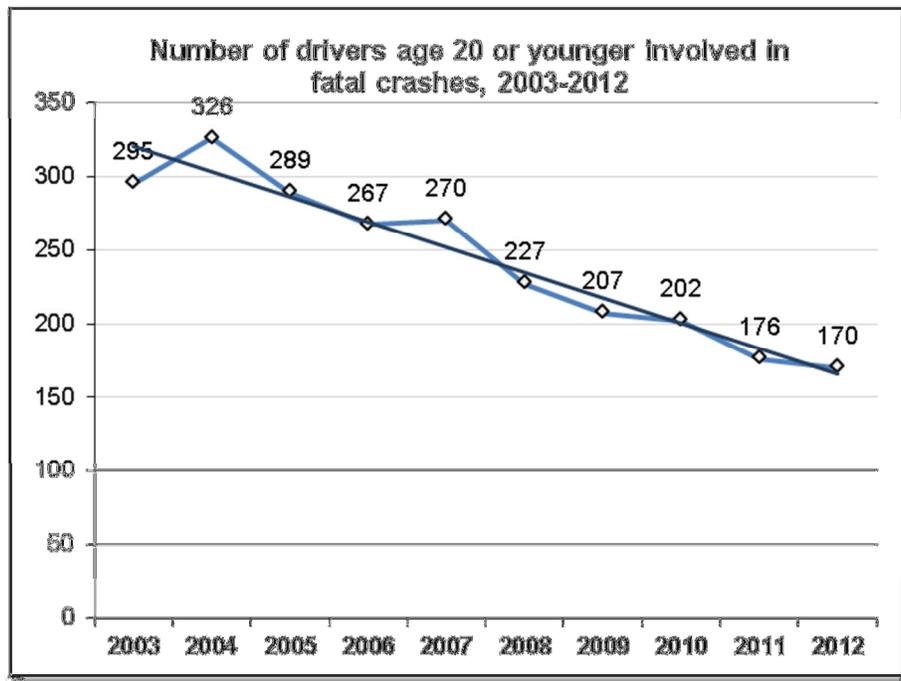
TARGET:

- GHSP's goal is to reduce the number of young drivers involved in fatal crashes by 25 percent from the 2008-2012 average of 196 to 147 by 2015.

EVIDENCE CONSIDERED

Crashes, Deaths, and Injuries

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among young people in North Carolina. During 2012, 170 drivers 20 years of age or younger were involved in a fatal crash, a decrease of 3% from 2011. The figure below shows the number of young drivers involved in fatal crashes in North Carolina from 2003 to 2012. As illustrated, North Carolina has seen substantial reductions in fatal crashes involving young drivers. From 2003 to 2012, fatal crashes dropped by 42%.

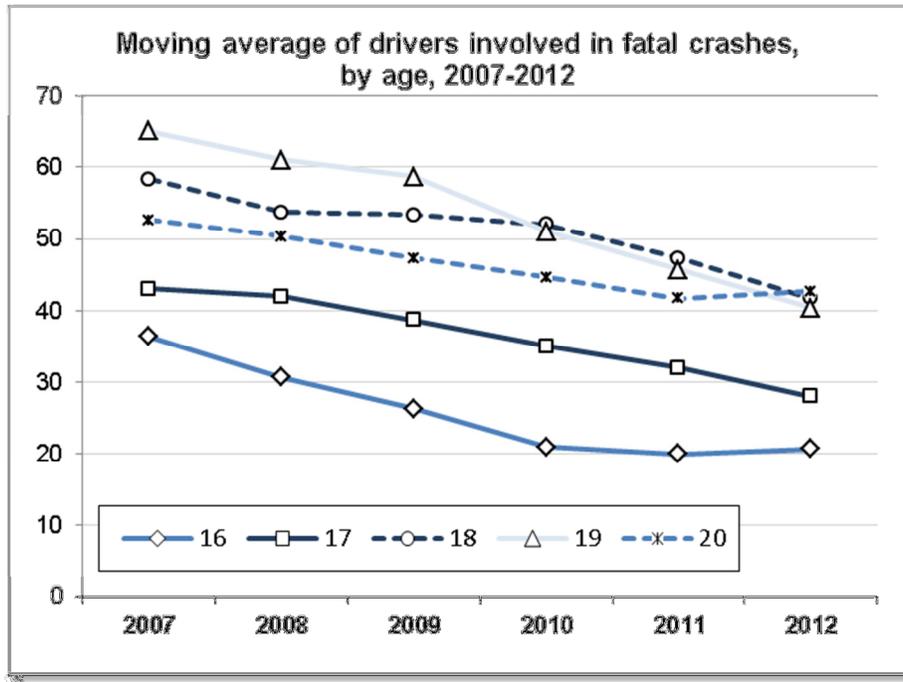


Source: FARS 2003 – 2012

Young Drivers

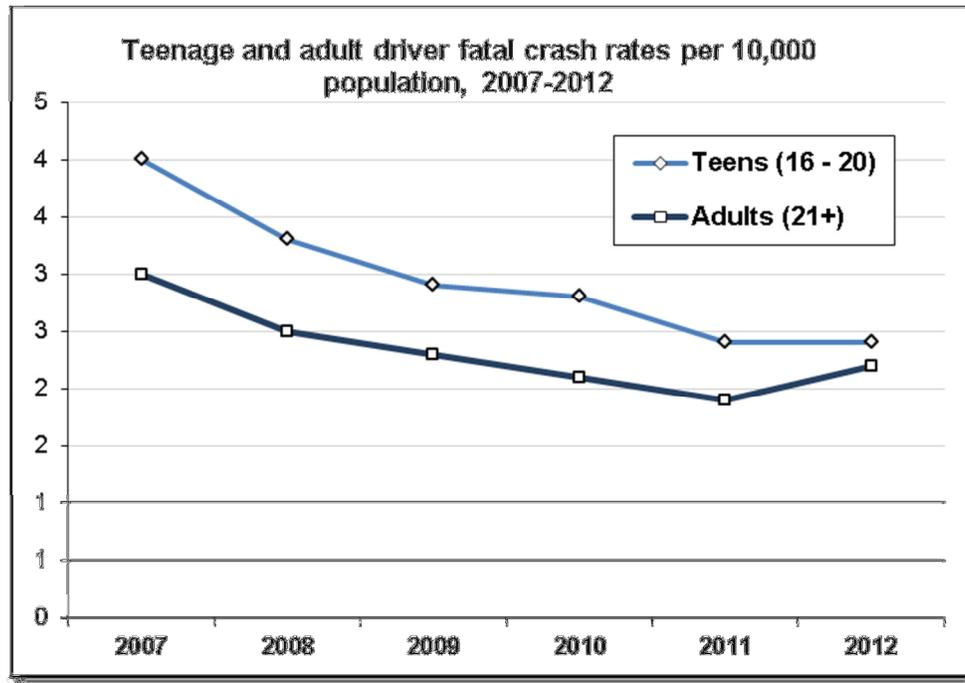


Involvement in fatal crashes has decreased for young drivers of all ages. The figure below shows the moving average of drivers in fatal crashes, separately for ages 16 through 20. Moving averages were used to smooth out the yearly fluctuations in fatalities for each individual age. Generally, 16-year-old drivers experience fewer fatal crashes than their older counterparts. Drivers age 17 have slightly higher involvements in fatal crashes, while involvement is higher still for ages 18 to 20. This is not surprising, since many 16 year-olds (and some 17 year-olds) do not have a license, and younger teens drive fewer miles, on average, than older teens. Perhaps the most important finding, however, is that involvement in fatal crashes has decreased since 2007 for young drivers of all ages.



Source: FARS 2007 – 2012

North Carolina's population has grown dramatically during the past decade. Consequently, it is important to examine crash involvements per capita in addition to simple counts. The figure below shows fatal crash rates per ten thousand population for young drivers and adult drivers. For young drivers, the fatal crash involvement rate per 10 thousand population declined 40% from 2007 to 2012. A similar downward trend is also evident among adult drivers, especially from 2007 onwards. However, among adult drivers the fatal crash involvement rate per 10 thousand population increased 16% from 2011 to 2012.



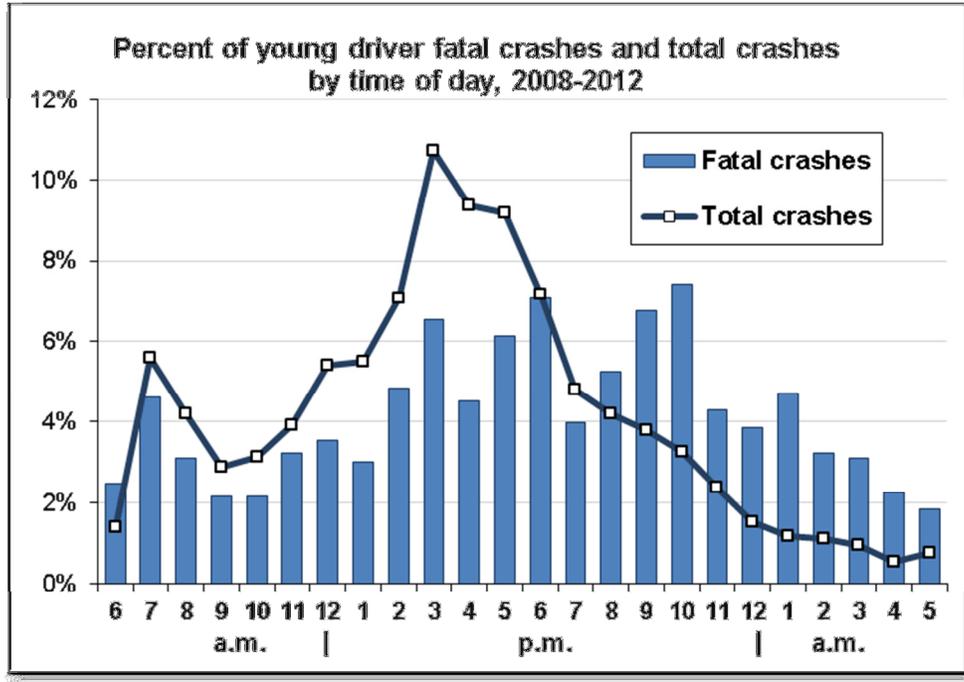
Source: FARS 2002 – 2011 and U.S. Census Bureau

Despite the reduction in young driver fatal crashes in recent years, young drivers in North Carolina continue to be over-represented in crashes and fatalities. In 2012, 16 to 20-year-olds comprised 7% of the population in North Carolina, yet they accounted for 13% of all crashes and 9% of fatal crashes.

During 2012, young drivers 16 to 20 years old were involved in 45,517 crashes in North Carolina. Consistent with previous years, males (53%) accounted for a somewhat greater proportion of crashes than females (47%). Crash-involved young drivers were most likely to be driving passenger vehicles (67%), followed by SUVs (17%) and pickup trucks (12%). In addition, more young driver crashes occurred on urban roads (58%) than rural roads (42%).

Young driver crashes also vary by time of day. The figure below shows the time of day of fatal crashes and total crashes from 2008 to 2012. When looking at total crashes (the line in the figure), there are distinct peaks near 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. This coincides with times when teens are driving to and from school. Young driver crashes drop off in the evening, and are very low late at night. By comparison, fatal crashes occur at all times of the day, including evening and late at night.

Young Drivers



The table on the next page lists the counties with the highest numbers of young drivers involved in fatal crashes from 2008 to 2012. Wake County had the most fatal crashes (59), followed by Mecklenburg County (49), Guilford County (41), Cumberland County (33), and Robeson County (30). In total, the 40 counties listed in the table account for 78% of all young drivers involved in fatal crashes in North Carolina from 2008 to 2012. The counties near the top of the table are generally those with the largest populations. When looking at the *rate* of young driver fatal crashes per 10,000 population, the counties which stand out are Columbus (12.31), Bladen (8.11), Harnett (6.32), Brunswick (6.18) and Lee (6.07). Many of these counties are located in the southeast (coastal) part of the state.

Young Drivers



Young drivers involved in fatal crashes, 2008-2012

County	Young drivers involved in fatal crashes	Rate per 10,000 population	% of all 16-20 involved in fatal crashes
Wake	59	1.87	6.33%
Mecklenburg	49	1.64	5.26%
Guilford	41	2.12	4.40%
Cumberland	33	2.56	3.54%
Robeson	30	5.43	3.22%
Harnett	28	6.32	3.00%
Johnston	28	4.97	3.00%
Rowan	24	4.90	2.58%
Columbus	23	12.31	2.47%
Pitt	23	2.55	2.47%
Union	21	2.90	2.25%
Davidson	19	3.57	2.04%
Forsyth	19	1.54	2.04%
Onslow	19	1.97	2.04%
Orange	18	2.26	1.93%
Brunswick	17	6.18	1.82%
Cabarrus	16	2.58	1.72%
Rockingham	16	5.49	1.72%
Wayne	16	3.74	1.72%
Buncombe	15	2.08	1.61%
Randolph	15	3.09	1.61%
Catawba	14	2.67	1.50%
Nash	14	4.27	1.50%
Durham	13	1.33	1.39%
Iredell	12	2.16	1.29%
Lee	12	6.07	1.29%
New Hanover	11	1.48	1.18%
Sampson	11	4.91	1.18%
Surry	11	4.41	1.18%
Alamance	10	1.71	1.07%
Chatham	10	5.88	1.07%
Cleveland	10	2.67	1.07%
Duplin	10	5.27	1.07%
Wilkes	10	4.89	1.07%
Bladen	9	8.11	0.97%
Edgecombe	9	4.39	0.97%
Gaston	9	1.29	0.97%
Richmond	9	4.86	0.97%
Halifax	8	4.04	0.86%
Henderson	8	2.91	0.86%



STATEWIDE CAMPAIGNS/PROGRAMS

As mentioned in the Occupant Protection Chapter, young occupants who are fatally injured are less likely to be restrained. In fact, 60% of young drivers and passengers age 16 to 20 killed in crashes in North Carolina during 2012 were unrestrained. To address this problem, the Governor's Highway Safety Program developed "Click It or Ticket, Securing Your Future" to encourage safety belt use among teenage drivers. Click It or Ticket, Securing Your Future began in 53 high schools in 16 counties in the fall of 2005. The program requires drivers and passengers at participating schools to buckle their seat belts before leaving school property or risk losing on campus parking privileges. Participating schools are provided exit signs, a citation booklet, brochures that have parent/student agreements, and promotional items to use as incentives for students who are buckled. Students from 315 high schools in over 96 counties participated were listed as participants in Click It or Ticket, Securing Your Future in 2012. The program is currently being revamped and reestablished in schools across North Carolina.



Two other North Carolina programs supported by GHSP include StreetSafe and VIP for a VIP. StreetSafe is a hands-on driving program for young drivers designed to change the driving behaviors that cause moving violations, crashes, DWI's, injuries and death. During the program, young drivers witness and experience the consequences of improper motor vehicle operation, particularly in dangerous situations, but in a controlled environment. As a result, they gain the experience and information they need to appreciate driving safely. VIP for a VIP (Vehicle Injury Prevention for a Very Important Person) educates teen drivers about the dangers of driving impaired or distracted. The program brings the sight, sounds, and smell of a fatal vehicle crash to high school students in a dramatic way in hopes of embedding the consequences of these often senseless events into the minds of teenage drivers. The vision is that, at the end of the day, students will have a realistic picture of what can happen as a result of one moment of inattention. The program is delivered by volunteers from local Fire, EMS, Police, and State Highway Patrol agencies.

It should be noted that several other initiatives, such as "Booze It & Lose It", "No Need 2 Speed", and "Click It or Ticket" encompass young drivers as part of the overall driving population. These are discussed in detail elsewhere in the Highway Safety Plan.

SUMMARY

North Carolina has seen a substantial reduction in fatal crashes involving young drivers over the past decade. Between 2003 and 2012, fatal crashes decreased by 42%, with a drop of 3.4% in 2012 alone. These decreases have been evident for young drivers of all ages, and have also been observed when taking population changes into account.

Despite these improvements, motor vehicle crashes continue to be the leading cause of death among young people in North Carolina. The counties that account for the highest number of young drivers involved in fatal crashes are Wake, Mecklenburg, Guilford, Cumberland and Robeson counties. Columbus County is particularly noteworthy in having both a high number of young drivers involved in fatal crashes and a high rate per capita.



We believe further reductions in the number of young drivers involved in fatal crashes are possible. To adjust for the confounding effect of economic conditions, five year averages were used as the baseline for setting goals. GHSP is working toward reducing the number of young drivers involved in fatal crashes 25% by 2015.

COUNTERMEASURES AND FUNDING PRIORITIES

To address the problem areas described above and to meet North Carolina's goals for 2015, GHSP focuses on strategies that have been proven effective in reducing motor vehicle crashes, injuries and fatalities. To assist in this process, GHSP uses the 7th Edition of NHTSA's *Countermeasures that Work* (CMTW). CMTW was designed to assist State Highway Safety Offices in selecting evidence-based countermeasures for addressing major highway safety problem areas.

GHSP is committed to exploring and evaluating innovative approaches to training young drivers, developing statewide initiatives to increase restraint use among young occupants, and offering evidence based resources and technical assistance to key stakeholders in North Carolina interested in improving young driver safety.

During FY2013, the GHSP funded the UNC Highway Safety Research Center (HSRC) to begin a formal evaluation of the StreetSafe program. Questionnaires were administered to hundreds of participants at StreetSafe sessions across the state to measure short-term changes in participants' knowledge, beliefs and behaviors. In FY2014, the UNC Highway Safety Research Center (HSRC) began a randomized control trial to examine and to measure long-term behavioral outcomes of StreetSafe participants. The evaluation will continue through FY2015.

GHSP will also fund a project to address the need for a statewide initiative targeting restraint use among children 8-15 years old. The goal will be to prepare CPS Technicians to address issues pertaining to this age group and the importance of restraints for tweens and young teens.

GHSP will continue to fund the North Carolina Teen Driver Resource Center (NCTDRC). The NCTDRC is an information resource center for five community sectors that can play a central role in improving young driver safety in North Carolina: law enforcement, state agencies, community organizations, parents of teenage drivers, and policy-makers. During FY2013, the UNC Highway Safety Research Center (HSRC) conducted fundamental work to inform the development of the NCTDRC. The HSRC examined the current teenage driver crash problem in North Carolina, documented the effects of several policies implemented to reduce teenage driver crashes, conducted interviews with over 500 parents of teen drivers, and developed a catalogue of programs currently being conducted in North Carolina to address teenage driver crashes and assessed the evidence for effectiveness of these programs. The NCTDRC is being launched in FY2014 and will continue to be expanded during FY2015.

GHSP is also evaluating a novel, evidence-based orientation session for parents of new drivers. *Time to Drive* was developed by HSRC to provide guidance to parents who will be supervising a novice teen driver. *Time to Drive* is the first parent program to employ unscripted video of real parent-teen interactions while driving. An evaluation of the program was launched during FY2014 and will continue in FY2015. Parents are being randomly assigned to the *Time to Drive* session or a comparison group. Parents complete questionnaires after the program to examine their knowledge and understanding of key issues related to teen driver safety (e.g., the importance of teens getting lots of practice in a wide variety of driving settings). Additionally, telephone interviews are being conducted with parents and



teens several months following the session to examine the effect of the program on parent supervisory behaviors.

Finally, GHSP is requesting a NHTSA Assessment of Driver Education during FY2015. GHSP will fund the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to lead the assessment.

MEDIA PLAN

GHSP will utilize earned media attention for youth and teen driving safety at this time. The media is much attuned with youth issues and media is very responsive at this time to all efforts to better educate and train the state's young drivers.

FY2015 YOUNG DRIVER PROJECTS

The following section outlines some of the key projects that are currently approved by the review team and officially part of the original submission of the FY2015 North Carolina Highway Safety Plan to address young driver safety. A complete listing of all projects, including the funding level and source, can be found in the Cost Summary at the end of this document. (Note: CMTW = NHTSA's *Countermeasures that Work*).

Agency: Street Safe Solutions Inc
Project Number: DE-15-10-02
Project Title: Street-Safe Teen Driving Program
Budget: \$181,325
Local/State Match: \$0
Project Description: This is a continuation GHSP funding project which will expand services to the Orange, Washington, and Beaufort County area in North Carolina with equipment and to offer additional sessions, teaching at-risk young drivers and their parents the importance of wearing a seatbelt, the dangers of distracting driving, alcohol/drug use while driving and other important issues as it pertains to traffic safety. There are other goals/objectives in FY15 which this project wants to accomplish within these counties as well as current counties which project is working in.
CMTW: Chapter 1, Section 6.5; Chapter 2, Section 6.1, 7.1; Chapter 4, Section 2.2

Agency: UNC – Chapel Hill, HSRC
Project Number: DE-15-10-03
Project Title: Evaluate Street Safe Inc. Driver Training Program 2015
Budget: \$73,290
Local/State Match: \$0
Project Description: This is the 3rd year of GHSP funding for UNC-HSRC in evaluating the effectiveness, productivity and outcome of the Street-Safe Inc. Program. This evaluation will enable GHSP to have a better understanding of the program and how it affects teen drivers.
CMTW: Chapter 6, Section 2.1, 2.2

Agency: UNC – Chapel Hill, HSRC
Project Number: DE-15-10-04



Project Title: UNC “Time to Drive” Parent Coaching Session
Budget: \$84,824
Local/State Match: \$0
Project Description: This is the 2nd year of GHSP funding for UNC-HSRC utilizing the “Time to Drive” model approach, during 2nd year; they will continue to interview participants to measure longer-term effects of the program. Several groups with approximately 180 parents will participate in the education portion and provide feedback regarding the effectiveness of the model.
CMTW: Chapter 6, Section 3.1

Agency: UNC – Chapel Hill, HSRC
Project Number: DE-15-10-06
Project Title: Reducing Teenage Driver Crashes and Fatalities-What Do we Do Next 2015
Budget: \$127,784
Local/State Match: \$0
Project Description: This is the 3rd year of GHSP funding for UNC-HSRC in identifying, developing and eventually promoting the North Carolina Teen Driver Resource Center (NCTDRC) which will distribute teen driving safety educational materials to the public. Year three of this project will focus on the availability of the website which will be needed to increase public awareness of the resource. Continue to identifying teen driver programs in NC that need to be evaluated and provide guidance, assistance, advice and information that will enhance and address teen driver safety. There are other goals/objectives which will also be part of the FY15 time table.
CMTW: Chapter 6, Section 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1

Agency: Department of Public Instruction
Project Number: DE-15-10-07
Project Title: Driver Education Assessment
Budget: \$30,000
Local/State Match: \$0
Project Description: This is an initial project with Department of Public Instruction where the department will conduct a Driver Education Assessment to assess the Driver Education curricula which was developed to provide current information and techniques on teaching novice drivers the basics of motor vehicle operation.
CMTW: Chapter 6, Section 2.1, 2.2

Agency: UNC – Chapel Hill, HSRC
Project Number: SA-15-17-03
Project Title: Statewide Initiative Targeting Restraint Use among Tweens and Young Teens
Budget: \$102,274
Local/State Match: \$0
Project Description: This is an initial GHSP funding project which will eventually address the need for a statewide initiative targeting children 8-15 regarding Child Passenger Safety issues. The goal will be to prepare CPS Technicians to address issues pertaining to this age group and the importance of restraints for tweens and young teens. There are other goals/objectives which will also be part of the FY15 time table.



CMTW: Chapter 2, Section 6.1, 6.2

Agency: Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation
Project Number: SA-15-17-05
Project Title: Teen Safe Drivers: Expanding Teen Safe Driving Initiatives in Pitt County
Budget: \$72,252
Local/State Match: \$0
Project Description: This is the 2nd year of GHSP funding for this project which looks to effectively reduce the teen driving crash rate and/or injuries that have been occurring in Pitt County as it relates to teen drivers. The NC Crash data base documents Pitt County as one of the most dangerous counties in the state for young drivers. This project will continue to target seatbelt usage, DWI, distracted driving, speeding and acceptance of positive behaviors as well as other goals/objectives in FY15.
CMTW: Chapter 1, Section 6.4; Chapter 2, Section 6.1, 7.1; Chapter 3, Section 4.1; Chapter 4, Section 2.2