



# YOUTH CAPACITY-BUILDING

Beliefs and risk perception have a significant impact on whether young people will engage in risky driving behaviour. There is a disconnect between what youth think safe driving is and what it actually is. Youth also have different attitudes and ideas of the perceived risk of different types of unsafe driving behaviour. There is a need to equip young people with strategies to prepare them for safe driving, prevent them from engaging in unsafe driving behaviour and help them safely avoid a collision to ultimately improve youth empowerment and wellbeing.

## Recommendations and implementation strategies

### Conduct a needs assessment to understand what youth need to become better drivers

A needs assessment done for youth, by youth can help organizations determine gaps in road safety knowledge and skills among youth as well as understand youth perspectives on road safety. Youth are very in tune to gaps in youth driving knowledge and skills as well as road safety improvements needed in their neighbourhoods and communities. Determining young peoples' needs can ensure that programming and messaging are adequately addressing those needs to facilitate behaviour change and improved road safety.

#### *Strategies to implement this recommendation:*

- Use a variety of methods such as surveys, forums, skills questionnaires and facilitate peer-to-peer conversations to collect data for your needs assessment.
- Co-develop needs assessment questions with youth for relevancy.

### Increase and reinforce gaps in road safety knowledge and skill through a variety of mediums

Youth have multiple priorities as well as differing abilities, experiences and levels of comfort. Providing a variety of avenues for youth to build road knowledge and skills can maximize reach and increase interest in road safety. Youth can engage with road safety information and skills through art, music, theatre-based learning, advocacy and more. There are common characteristics of effective programming that engage young people: it should be interactive, fun and in comfortable spaces that include an approachable and relatable facilitator.

#### *Strategies to implement this recommendation:*

- Create and deliver road safety information across a variety of youth-friendly online platforms including Instagram, TikTok and YouTube.
- Use traditional media such as television and radio to deliver messaging to youth.
- Develop arts-based programming such as making crafts, painting a mural and photography for more accessible programming.

### Provide in-person and virtual opportunities to practise skills that promote safe driving

Driver inexperience is decreased knowledge and understanding of road rules, inability to safely navigate through dangerous driving environments and scenarios, and poor vehicle control. It is a



contributing factor for high rates of crashes among young drivers. Capacity-building can focus on improving young people's knowledge of the consequences of unsafe driving. Increased knowledge about the dangers of unsafe driving can contribute to young people holding themselves and each other accountable when engaging in unsafe driving behaviour.

*Strategies to implement this recommendation:*

- Determine what virtual reality options are available to integrate into your programming and show young people the consequence of unsafe driving in a safe manner
- Develop driver skill training in a controlled environment outside of standard driver education for young people who want to augment their learning
- Design an easy-to-use, visually appealing telemetric app for young drivers that can monitor driving behaviour and incentivize safe driving behaviour

**Incentivize youth to care about road safety and engage in safe driving behaviour**

Driving a car has been identified as the most convenient, efficient, accessible and freeing mode of transportation by the majority of youth in this project. Strategies that target young people's wallets either by gaining or losing money or driving privileges can be effective way to increase their care for road safety and engagement in safe driving behaviour.

*Strategies to implement this recommendation:*

- Provide information and resources that educate young people on the financial costs of risky driving behaviour and getting into a crash.
- Reward youth for safe driving or engaging in activities that promote safe driving with incentives such as extra credits, entry into a prize draw, gift cards and lower insurance premiums for completing driver safety courses or workshops.
- Pay youth for their expertise in developing and implementing road safety programming and messaging through honoraria, gift cards or other payment.

**Further resources**

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- [Youth Community Needs Assessment Manual](#)
- [Youth for Road Safety \(YOURS\) Academy](#)

To access all the tipsheets in this series, visit [parachute.ca/ntdsw](http://parachute.ca/ntdsw)

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