



AAA PUBLIC AFFAIRS

AAA and its affiliated clubs in the United States and Canada are committed to promoting safe and efficient mobility, and to improving safety for all of those who use the transportation system. AAA clubs carry out this commitment in communities across the nation. At the national level, AAA continually monitors and responds to federal and state legislative and regulatory measures that affect the traveling public. AAA focuses special attention on the three highest risk groups – children, teens, and seniors.

Child Safety

Vehicle Safety

Motor vehicle crashes are the number-one killer of children over the age of three. In 2005, motor vehicle crashes accounted for nearly 2,000 deaths and 234,000 injuries of children age 14 and under. AAA has a long-term commitment to reducing injuries and deaths through its Seated, Safe & Secure campaign initiated in 2002. Through the initiative, AAA has worked to close loopholes in child restraint laws across the nation and educate the public about proper use of child restraints.

School and Pedestrian Safety

For more than 75 years, AAA has sponsored the School Safety Patrol™ Program, which instills students with a sense of responsibility and leadership as they protect classmates going to and from school.

The AAA School Safety Patrol program involves more than 500,000 safety patrol members working in more than 50,000 schools nationally, providing training and materials to support the program. Annually, AAA awards a *School Safety Patrol Lifesaving Medal* to exemplary students who risked their lives in the line of duty to save a fellow student. This program was awarded the *Presidential Citation for Private Sector Initiatives* in 1985.

AAA's *School's Open, Drive Carefully* public awareness campaign reminds motorists to watch out for students walking to or from school or waiting for buses. AAA distributes millions of posters, teacher guides and storybooks to U.S. and Canadian schools. The materials are designed to teach students important traffic safety principles while increasing their knowledge of reading, arithmetic and science. AAA also trains and certifies instructors in the proper use and installation of child safety seats.

Teen Driver Safety

AAA has a long-standing commitment to teen driver safety. Though teens are only 7 percent of the licensed driver population, they represent almost 14 percent



of crashes. Teen drivers are the most dangerous drivers on the road, putting themselves and the others they share the road with at high risk of injury or death.

AAA pioneered the concept of driver education in 1935. Today, the tradition lives on in two widely used texts: *Responsible Driving* and *How to Drive*. In 1997, AAA released a valuable resource for parents of new teen drivers called *Teaching Your Teens to Drive: A Partnership for Survival*.

In 1997, AAA launched an aggressive campaign to reduce teen crash deaths and injuries, pledging to:

- Raise the public's awareness of the severity of the teen crash-problem;
- Establish Graduated Driver Licensing(GDL) systems in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. to give teens more time to develop safe driving practices; and
- Improve the quality of driver education.

In 2005, AAA achieved its goal of passing GDL laws in all 50 states. In just eight years, AAA clubs led the effort on GDL across the nation and brought the number of states with GDL systems from 8 to 50. Data show these laws work – reducing crashes, and saving lives.

Senior Driver Safety

By 2030, one in five Americans will be 65 years of age or older and the majority will be licensed to drive. Recognizing the changing demographics, AAA launched the *Lifelong Safe Mobility* initiative to help seniors drive as long as safely possible.

In 2005, AAA released an unprecedented computer-based screening tool that allows seniors to measure the functional abilities related to safe driving—in the privacy of their own home. *AAA Roadwise Review: A Tool to Help Seniors Drive Safely Longer* is a scientifically validated program that informs users of potential problems in their “driving health,” but can also instill confidence in those without a reduction in abilities.

In 2007, AAA will launch a new educational program, CarFit. Designed by the American Society on Aging, in collaboration with AAA, AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association, CarFit helps mature drivers assess how well they and their cars “fit” together, and what actions they might be able to take to improve the fit. CarFit also provides older participants with community-specific resources to help them drive for as long as safely possible.

AAA is also committed to promoting viable transportation options for seniors when driving is no longer safe or practical. Backed by research conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, in partnership with the Beverly Foundation,



AAA clubs across the country are seeking to improve the availability of community-based transportation programs to keep seniors mobile.

Maintaining Safe & Efficient Mobility in the 21st Century

AAA was among the prominent interest groups in 1956 that built support for creating the Interstate highway system, and we maintain a constant commitment to ensuring adequate funding for a safe and reliable transportation network. Our challenge for the 21st Century is to develop a new transportation vision and funding sources that will meet the nation's future transportation needs. AAA will play an active role in the debate on the future of our transportation system to ensure that the interests of motorists – those who pay for and benefit from the system – are protected.

Publications

AAA produces hundreds of informative publications for travelers, such as the *Gas Watcher's Guide*, which shows motorists how to save fuel while driving safely and protecting the environment. AAA also produces *Your Driving Costs*, which shows the annual costs of operating a motor vehicle, and *Preventing Road Rage*, anger management tips for drivers.

Traffic safety publications are available on topics ranging from bicycle safety to mature drivers. Titles include: *AAA Digest of Motor Laws*, *Preschool Children in Traffic*, *The Disabled Driver's Mobility Guide*, and *Straight Talk for Mature Drivers*.

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