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Gender Differences in Perceptions and Self-Reported Driving Behaviors Among Teenagers. (Poster)

Gavin C. Barr Jr. MD

Lehigh Valley Health Network, Gavin.Barr_jr@lvhn.org

Kathleen E. Kane MD Lehigh Valley Health Network, kathleen_e.kane@lvhn.org

Robert D. Barraco MD

Lehigh Valley Health Network, robert_d.barraco@lvhn.org

Timarie Rayburg DO Lehigh Valley Health Network

Lauren Dugan DO *Lehigh Valley Health Network*

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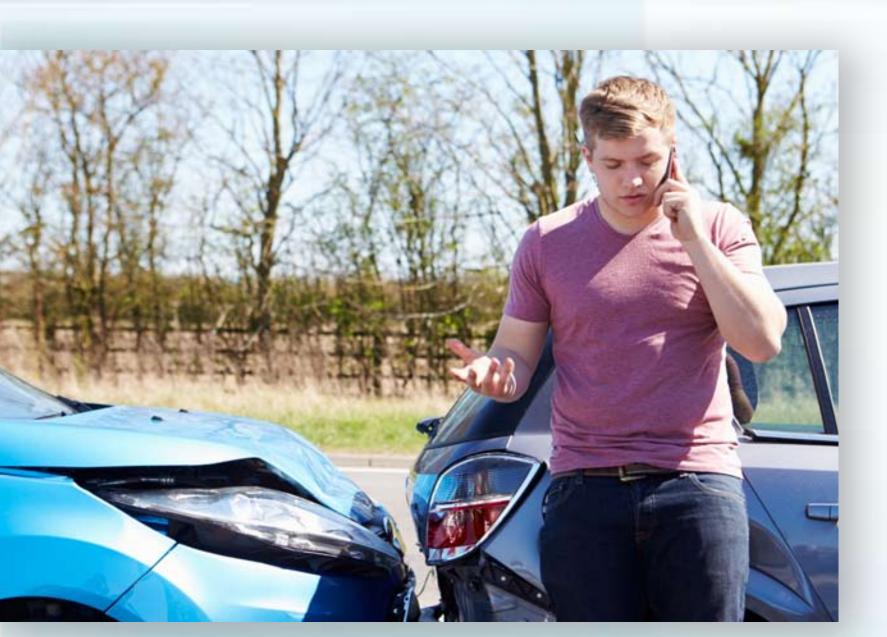
Authors	
Gavin C. Barr Jr. MD; I	Kathleen E. Kane MD; Robert D. Barraco MD; Timarie Rayburg DO; Lauren Dugan DO; IPH; Marna R. Greenberg DO, MPH, FACEP; Valerie Rupp RN, BSN; Kimberly Hamilton D

Gender Differences in Perceptions and Self-reported Driving Behaviors among Teenagers

Gavin C. Barr, Jr., MD, Kathleen E. Kane, MD, Robert D. Barraco, MD, Timarie Rayburg, DO, Lauren Dugan, DO, Chadd K. Kraus, DO, Marna Rayl Greenberg, DO, MPH,
Valerie A. Rupp, RN, MSN, CRNP, Kimberly M. Hamilton, BA, Bryan G. Kane, MD
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Introduction:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that motor vehicle crashes (MVCs) are the leading cause of injury and



death among U.S. teenagers, and disproportionately affect males. Many of these crashes are preventable. Among preventable causes of MVCs involving

teenage drivers, distracted-driving continues to be a serious public health problem.

Study Objectives:

To determine gender differences in teenage drivers' self-perceptions of safe driving behaviors, and self-reported risk behaviors and distractions while driving.

Methods:

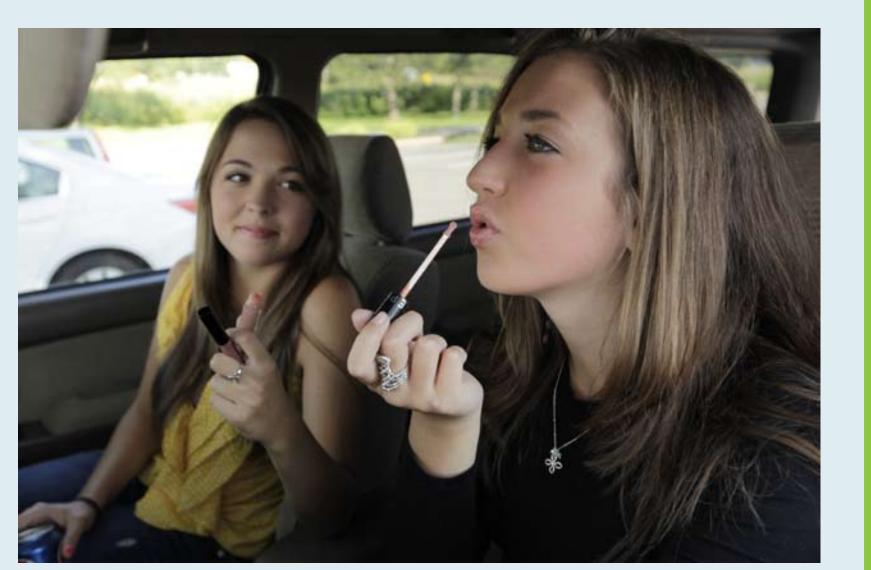
We prospectively surveyed a cohort of teenage drivers in three school districts (four high schools, total) in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Gender comparisons were made between self-reported perceptions and self-reported driving behaviors.

Examples of Distracted Driving & No Seatbelt















Results:

Seven-hundred-forty-three teenage drivers completed surveys. Males (52%) and females (48%) were equally distributed; 32% of males reported that they were extremely safe drivers, while only 18% of females reported that they were extremely safe drivers (p<0.001). Significantly more females (91%) compared to males (77%) reported always wearing their seatbelts (p<0.001). Female drivers were more likely than male drivers to self-report that they always make their passengers wear a seat belt (76% vs. 63%, p<0.001). A higher proportion of males (68%) reported using their cell phones while driving compared to females (56%) (p=0.004) and 42% of males reported texting while driving compared to 34% of females (p=0.037).

		All Schools			
	1	2	3	4	Combined
Gender					
Male	132 (53)	94 (48)	75 (54)	91 (53)	392 (52)
Female	117 (47)	100 (52)	65 (46)	82 (47)	364(48)
Age (years)	16.8+/-16.77	16.8+/-16.79	16.7+/-16.74	16.8+/-16.75	16.8+/-16.76
Hours Driven/Week	10+/-15.79	12.1+/-15.99	9.1+/-8.78	7.9+/-10.16	9.9+/-13.59
Miles Driven/Week	84.8+/-86.87	88.7+/-138.46	88.7+/-129.4	71.3+/-87.94	86.9+/-102.93

Table 2. Teenagers' Perception of Driver Safety							
	Gender	Extremely Unsafe N (%)	Unsafe N (%)	Extremely Safe N (%)	Safe N (%)	Total	
How safe of a driver are you? (Frequency Not Reported = 13)	Males	5 (1.29)	23 (5.94)	236 (60.98)	123 (31.78)	387 (52.09)	
	Females	3 (0.84)	18 (5.06)	271 (76.12)	64 (17.98)	356 (47.91)	
	TOTAL	8 (1.08)	41 (5.52)	507 (68.24)	187 (25.17)	743 (100.00)	

Table 3. Teenagers' Perception of Driver Safety						
	Gender	Always N (%)	Usually N (%)	Sometimes N (%)	Never N (%)	Total
How often do you wear your seatbelt? (Frequency Not Reported = 5)	Males	299 (76.67)	54 (13.85)	25 (6.41)	12 (3.08)	390 (51.93)
	Females	328 (90.86)	19 (5.26)	10 (2.77)	4 (1.11)	361 (48.07)
	TOTAL	627 (83.49)	73 (9.72)	35 (4.66)	16 (2.13)	751 (100.00)

Conclusion:

Teenage male drivers perceive themselves to be safe drivers, but report engaging in more risky behaviors compared to females. These results suggest that there is an opportunity for gender specific educational and injury prevention programs for teen drivers. Additionally, the injury prevention efforts could be aimed at both teenagers' perceptions of their driving behaviors and at reducing risky driving behaviors.

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