

Paving the Way: Insights from Recent Driver's Education Study Uncovers Key Opportunities for Parents and New Drivers

A new Progressive Insurance survey reveals that young drivers felt more empowered when they spent more time practicing behind the wheel.

MAYFIELD VILLAGE, Ohio, Oct. 16, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- As part of its commitment to driving progress on the road, Progressive Insurance® surveyed 513 new drivers aged 18 to 25 who got their license in the last five years to understand what was most effective in preparing them for the road. The results suggest that the key to building driver confidence and competency is supervised practice time. Experts say that more hours practicing behind-the-wheel with either a professional instructor or a licensed adult is essential to improving safety rates for teen drivers.

[The survey](#) is being released in time for [National Teen Driver Safety Week this Oct. 19-25](#), which raises awareness of the driving dangers teens face. According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, traffic crashes are a leading cause of death for kids aged 15 to 18.

Could driver's ed play a bigger role in reducing that risk for young drivers?

[One study found](#) that regular, more frequent supervised driving practice hours reduced crashes among new teen drivers by 39%. Cathy Chase, President of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, says that the classroom instruction in driver's ed builds a strong foundation, and that coupled with increased supervised driving practice is a proven tactic for preparing young drivers. Her organization is encouraging states to adopt 70 practice hours as a standard to improve road safety.

In the Progressive survey, 86% of all respondents said supervised practice best prepared them for driving. Of those required to take driver's ed, only 11% spent more than 60 hours practicing with supervision — highlighting an opportunity in driver's education programs to prioritize more supervised practice.

For those who took driver's ed voluntarily because it isn't required where they live, 14% were supervised for more than 60 practice hours. This higher rate could be because those who took driver's ed voluntarily did so to be a safe driver (36%) and to feel comfortable driving (36%).

Key survey findings:

- 65% of respondents took driver's ed because their state required it.
- Drivers who obtained their license at 16 were more likely than drivers who obtained their license between 17 and 21 to spend 41-60 hours driving with supervision, which reflects current state graduated driver licensing (GDL) program requirements.
- A majority of drivers who took driver's ed felt prepared for the basic rules of the road (56%) and driver safety (50%), but 30% felt less prepared to drive on the highway, and 22% for avoiding accidents and understanding situational collision scenarios.

Lynn Rogers, President of the Driving School Association of the Americas, says, "A novice driver is always wired to think the technical maneuvers (like parallel parking and reversing) are the hard thing, but instructors say it's hazard detection. For instance, approaching intersections is the hardest because that's where the lack of skill shows itself." He notes that hazard detection and situational awareness are critical skills that develop with experience behind the wheel.

This National Teen Driver Safety Week, parents and new drivers have a powerful opportunity to work together. Focusing on supervised practice hours and critical skills like hazard detection, should help to foster a new generation of confident and well-prepared drivers.

Parents can learn more about how to make their teens safer on the road with tips from the [National Highway Traffic Safety](#)

[Administration.](#)

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