

Preliminary evaluation of the national learner driver initiative Keys2Drive

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Abstract

Keys2Drive is a federally funded initiative available to all learner drivers in Australia that provides a free professional driving lesson for learners accompanied by their main supervisory driver (often a parent). The program aims to enhance the supervised driving experience undertaken by learners to improve their safety in the high risk first six months of provisional driving. This research aimed to provide a preliminary process evaluation and outcome evaluation of Keys2Drive via analyses of (a) surveys distributed soon following participation in Keys2Drive; and (b) a recent survey of previous participants. A total of 9,011 learner driver and 1,245 supervisor post-participation surveys were analysed and 3,301 former learner driver and 1,245 former supervisor recent surveys. The process evaluation items showed very high rates of satisfaction with the Keys2Drive program, processes and instructors by both learners and supervisors. Post-participation surveys also showed significant improvements in understanding of the key learning concepts targeted by Keys2Drive by both groups. Comparison of recent survey responses by former learners to similar sample responses in other Australian studies suggested that Keys2Drive learners better structured and extended their learner licence period and were less likely to be involved in several risky driving behaviours (but not all) as a new provisional driver, and also had fewer crashes and offences. These results are promising but are based on samples of unknown representativeness and low response rates and without an appropriate control group; therefore a well controlled prospective study is recommended.