

Using the linked database to investigate night time crash rates for young drivers in Western Australia.

Adams, C.*, Stevenson, M, and Palamara, P.

Injury Research Centre, School of Population Health, University of Western Australia.

Teenage drivers represent 15% of licensed drivers, but are involved in 31% of serious crashes. Graduate driver training programmes have been shown to be successful in lowering the serious crash rate for probationary drivers, but such measures have not been widely accepted in Australia. The aim of this study was to examine crash rates per 100 000 population for 17-18 year old drivers and older drivers.

Method. The serious (fatal or requiring hospital treatment) crash rate was calculated per 1000 00 population for the period 1996 to 2000 using the database that links the police crash data and the motor vehicle licensing data in Western Australia. This unique database contains the characteristics of the participants, the vehicles involved and the circumstances.

Results: Male 17-18 year old drivers were twice as likely to have a serious daytime crash than 21-30 year old drivers and 2.8 times more likely to crash than 31-59 year old drivers. At night 17-18 year old drivers were twice as likely crash as 21-30 year old drivers, but 8.5 times more likely to crash than 31-59 year old drivers. Female 17-18 year old drivers were twice as likely to have a serious crash in the daytime than 21-30 or 31-59 year old drivers, and 9.0 times more likely to crash than 31-59 year old drivers at night.

Conclusion: These results will be presented as part of the recommendations for modification of the Graduated Driver Programme to allow novice drivers more opportunity for supervised driving during their first year.

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