#10764 STREETS OF DANGER & THE ROAD TO SAFETY

SAFETY INDUSTRIES, INC., 2002
GRADE LEVEL: 9-13+
15 MINUTES

DESCRIPTION

Targets the six most common causes of traffic accidents: failure to yield, speeding, distracted drivers, alcohol, road rage, and driving while sleepy. Gives statistics and preventive measures that can keep drivers safe.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Working with Others

- Standard: Displays effective interpersonal communication skills.
  - Benchmark: Demonstrates appropriate behaviors for relating well with others (e.g., empathy, caring, respect, helping, friendliness, politeness).
  - Benchmark: Knows strategies to effectively communicate in a variety of settings (e.g., selects appropriate strategy for audience and situation).
  - Benchmark: Uses nonverbal communication such as eye contact, body position, and gestures effectively.

Subject Area: Health

- Standard: Knows essential concepts and practices concerning injury prevention and safety.
  - Benchmark: Knows injury prevention strategies for community health (e.g., neighborhood safety, traffic safety, safe driving).

Subject Area: Self-Regulation

- Standard: Considers risks.
  - Benchmark: Knows potential safety hazards, and knows common strategies to avoid hazard or injury.
  - Benchmark: Knows emergency safety procedures before undertaking hazardous procedures.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To discuss the ways to prevent many tragedies from traffic collisions.
2. To demonstrate the main causes of road/highway injuries or deaths.
3. To interpret the statistical reasons for serious or fatal traffic collisions.

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4. To represent yourself as a responsible driver by driving safely and showing respect for other drivers.

BEFORE SHOWING

Fatalities: 2003

Out of the total 42,643 fatalities in 2003, there were:

1. 25,321 road departure fatalities (59%).
2. 9,213 intersection fatalities (21%).
3. 4,749 pedestrian fatalities (11%).

Perspective

1. Fatalities:
   a. One road departure fatality every 21 minutes.
   b. One intersection fatality every hour.
   c. One pedestrian fatality about every two hours.
2. Average Day
   a. One hundred seventeen (117) fatalities a day.
   b. Thirty percent of daily fatalities (35) are under the age of 25.
   c. Daily financial loss is $630 million.
3. Causes
   a. The most common type of accident each day is caused by failure to yield the right of way.
   b. Speeding is a major factor in most fatal accidents.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

In most developed countries, young (under 25 years old) male drivers have been shown to be by far the most likely to be involved in a traffic accident, and this has become an area of focus in recent times. Reasons suggested for this prevalence include inexperience combined with over-confidence, peer pressure, showing off, and even neurological development arguments. In addition, most serious accidents occur at night and when the car has multiple occupants. This has led to some discussion of the following traffic accident reduction proposals:

1. A “curfew” imposed on young drivers to prevent them from driving at night.
2. Requiring an experienced supervisor to chaperone the less experienced driver.
3. Forbidding the carrying of passengers.
4. Zero alcohol tolerance.
5. Compulsory advanced driving courses.
6. Requiring a sign placed on the back of the vehicle to notify other drivers of a less experienced individual in the driver’s seat.

Some countries or states have already implemented some of these traffic accident ideas, but so far no consensus to a total solution has been reached. It should be noted that this prevalence of young drivers to be involved in accidents has long been noted by insurance companies, and premiums reflect that fact.

Applications and Activities

Take a “true or false” quiz to see how much you know about accident statistics.

1. More fatal accidents involve young male drivers. (True.)

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There are several possible factors for this. It can be lack of experience, seeing the automobile as a competitive tool, or use of alcohol or drugs. But the fact remains that in the year 2000, almost 9,000 fatalities resulted from crashes involving drivers between 16 and 20 years old.

2. The most common type of crash involves collisions between motor vehicles. (True.)
   This is due in part to higher speeds, fatigued drivers, and poor roads.
3. The second most common type of crash is caused from hitting fixed objects. (True.)
   Hitting fixed objects, like trees, fences, poles, guardrails, or running into a ditch can have deadly consequences even at slower speeds.
4. Most accidents occur at night and on weekends. (False.)
   Actually, most accidents occur during rush hour, especially in the afternoon and within 25 miles from home. However, death rates are highest in fact (almost three times higher) in late evening and early morning hours on weekends. Speed and alcohol are the leading factors. Statistics are even higher during summer months and holidays.
5. More accidents occur in bad weather. (False.)
   Bad weather is a factor in many accidents, but the fact is most of them occur on dry pavement in good weather.
6. Most pedestrian accidents occur at night because of poor visibility. (False.)
   Over 4,700 pedestrians were killed in the year 2000, and over half of them during the afternoon and early evening, targeting the very young and elderly.
7. Small cars as a group have higher death and injury rates than larger cars. (True.)
   Smaller cars are more economical, but not as safe as larger cars. Heavier cars have more sheet metal, stronger doorposts, heavier engines, and sturdier bumpers, which do a better job of shielding car occupants during impact. Cars with a lower center of gravity and wider wheelbase make vehicles more stable and reduce the chances of rolling in a collision. Of course, improved car design will make all cars safer and reduce the number of fatalities.
8. Death rates are high for motorcycle accidents than automobile accidents. (True.)
   Death rates are six to seven times higher for motorcyclists in crashes than for automobiles. Obviously, the rider has less protection than a person in a car.
9. Driving near large trucks is perfectly safe. (False.)
   In fact, truck drivers have very little visibility and it's important that drivers don't drive in a truck's blind spot, or "no-zones." When you're in these no-zones, be aware that the driver can't see you. So pick a spot and pass the truck safely or fall behind and use the four-second rule while you're behind a truck.
10. Seatbelt and other new laws save lives. (Absolutely True.)
    In the last few years, laws have been passed to make seatbelts, child restraints, airbags, and motorcycle and bike helmets mandatory, no doubt saving lives. In the case of seatbelts alone, 72 percent of belted passengers involved in fatal crashes last year survived. The numbers are not so good for unrestrained drivers--only 43 percent survived. So buckle up.

RELATED RESOURCES

Captioned Media Program

- *Driver's Education: Part 9—Collision Prevention* #10458
- *Driver's Education: Part 10—Road Rage* #10446
- *Driver's Education: Part 14—Keeping You and Your Passengers Safe* #10450
- *Trauma Prevention* #8929

To view more titles in the *Driver's Education* series and other related media, please connect to our Web site at http://www.cfv.org/browsetitles.asp?sn=98.

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World Wide Web

The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **INTERNATIONAL INJURY & FATALITY STATISTICS**

  http://www.safecarguide.com/exp/statistics/statistics.htm
  This section summarizes the available worldwide statistics on injury to humans caused by motor vehicles. World Health reports provided useful aggregate totals for various regions, and individual nation reports supplied country-specific data.

- **AUTO STATISTICS**

  http://www.auto-accident-resource.com/statistics.html
  There were over 6 million reported automobile accidents in 2002 in the United States. Learn other statistics concerning accidents, fatalities, and injuries.

- **DRIVER FATIGUE**

  http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety/fatigue/
  Driver fatigue can severely impair judgment and can affect anyone. It is particularly dangerous because one of the symptoms is decreased ability to judge our own level of tiredness. See the list of symptoms.

- **DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR ILLEGAL DRUGS**

  http://oas.samhsa.gov/DWI.htm
  Based on SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health in 2002 and 2003, about 94 percent of persons aged 21 or older were classified as drivers. Among adult drivers aged 21 or older, 71 percent reported using alcohol during the 12 months prior to survey, and 12.6 percent reported having used an illicit drug during the past year.

- **DRINKING AND DRIVING**

  http://www2.potsdam.edu/hansondj/DrinkingAndDriving.html
  Driving while either intoxicated or drunk is dangerous, and drivers with high blood alcohol content (BAC) are at increased risk of car accidents, highway injuries, and vehicular deaths.

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