

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY:
*EMPOWERING BEHAVIORS TO REACH OUR
SHARED VISION OF ZERO DEATHS AND
SERIOUS INJURIES*

FHWA/MT-19-007/8882-309-12

Final Report

prepared for the Departments of Transportation in

CALIFORNIA	IOWA	TEXAS
CONNECTICUT	LOUISIANA	UTAH
IDAHO	MISSISSIPPI	VERMONT
ILLINOIS	MONTANA	WASHINGTON
INDIANA	NEVADA	

in cooperation with

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

August 2019

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Proactive Traffic Safety: Empowering Behaviors to Reach Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries

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August 2019

TECHNICAL REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1. Report No. FHWA/MT-19-007/8882-309-12	2. Government Accession No.	3. Recipient's Catalog No.	
4. Title and Subtitle Proactive Traffic Safety: Empowering Behaviors to Reach Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries.		5. Report Date August 2019	
		6. Performing Organization Code	
7. Author(s) Kari Finley, Ph.D. (http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0887-4939), Jay Otto M.S. (http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0975-0249), Nicholas J. Ward, Ph.D. (http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2792-8082), and Jamie Arpin, B.S. (http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4287-5767)		8. Performing Organization Report No.	
9. Performing Organization Name and Address Center for Health and Safety Culture Western Transportation Institute, Montana State University P.O. Box 170548, Bozeman, MT 59717		10. Work Unit No.	
		11. Contract or Grant No. 8882-309-12	
12. Sponsoring Agency Name and Address Montana Department of Transportation- Research Programs http://dx.doi.org/10.13039/100009209 2701 Prospect Avenue, P.O. Box 201001 Helena, MT 59620-1001 Other sponsoring agencies: California DOT, Connecticut DOT, Idaho Transportation Department, Illinois DOT, Indiana DOT, Iowa DOT, Louisiana DOT and Development, Mississippi DOT, Nevada DOT, Texas DOT, Utah DOT, Vermont Agency of Transportation and Washington State DOT		13. Type of Report and Period Covered Final Report (May 2018 - May 2019)	
		14. Sponsoring Agency Code 5401	
15. Supplementary Notes Research conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the sponsoring states through pooled fund project TPF-5(309). DOI: https://doi.org/10.21949/1518307 This report can be found at: https://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/trafficsafety.shtml .			
16. Abstract Growing proactive traffic safety is a novel approach that strategically shifts our focus to the engagement of the larger majority of safe road users to influence the behaviors of the smaller group engaging in risky behaviors. Previous research sponsored by the Traffic Safety Culture Pooled Fund to understand traffic safety citizenship revealed a variety of opportunities to bolster proactive traffic safety to reduce traffic crashes and fatalities. However, in order for state highway safety agencies and stakeholders to embrace this strategic approach, information learned from research must be translated to practice. This final report provides the final drafts of four proactive traffic safety communication tools that can be used to communicate and integrate proactive traffic safety into existing traffic safety efforts. The communication tools include: a proactive traffic safety primer, PowerPoint presentation, conversation guide, and poster.			
17. Key Words Traffic safety citizenship, proactive traffic safety, traffic safety culture		18. Distribution Statement No restrictions.	
19. Security Classif. (of this report) Unclassified	20. Security Classif. (of this page) Unclassified	21. No. of Pages 27	22. Price

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Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Primer Content	2
3	Powerpoint Presentation	10
4	Conversation Guide	17
5	Posters.....	18
6	Conclusions.....	19

List of Figures

Figure 1. Pages 1-4 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer	2
Figure 2. Pages 5-8 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer	3
Figure 3. Pages 9-12 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer	4
Figure 4. Pages 13-16 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer	5
Figure 5. Pages 17-20 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer	6
Figure 6. Pages 21-24 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer	7
Figure 7. Pages 25-28 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer	8
Figure 8. Pages 29-31 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer	9
Figure 9. Slides 1-3 of the Presentation	10
Figure 10. Slides 4-6 of the Presentation	11
Figure 11. Slides 7-9 of the Presentation	12
Figure 12. Slides 10-12 of the Presentation	13
Figure 13. Slides 13-15 of the Presentation	14
Figure 14. Slides 16-18 of the Presentation	15
Figure 15. Slides 19-20 of the Presentation	16
Figure 16. Page 1-2 of the Conversation Guide.....	17
Figure 17. Proactive Traffic Safety Posters	18

1 INTRODUCTION

Growing proactive traffic safety is a novel approach that strategically shifts our focus to the engagement of the majority of safe road users to influence the behaviors of the smaller group engaging in risky behaviors. Previous research sponsored by the Traffic Safety Culture Pooled Fund to understand traffic safety citizenship revealed a variety of opportunities to bolster proactive traffic safety to ultimately reduce traffic crashes and fatalities. However, proactive traffic safety is a new approach to improving traffic safety and one that requires communication tools that make proactive traffic safety easy to understand and easy to integrate into existing traffic safety efforts. It is essential that information learned from research be translated into practice. It is at the practice level that true change and transformation can occur.

The Proactive Traffic Safety Project takes the information learned about traffic safety citizenship from research and provides practical and meaningful communication tools that can be implemented immediately to build the capacity of critical stakeholders regarding proactive traffic safety.

The final content of four communication tools are provided in this report:

- A primer, which introduces traffic safety professionals and stakeholders to the concept of proactive traffic safety
- A PowerPoint presentation, which traffic safety professionals and stakeholders can use to introduce proactive traffic safety to other professionals, stakeholders, and the community
- A conversation guide to facilitate efforts to engage others about proactive traffic safety as a strategy to improve traffic safety
- A poster for traffic safety professionals to disseminate information in a traffic safety poster session

2 PRIMER CONTENT

This section includes the proactive traffic safety primer. Figure 1 through Figure 8 show the text of the primer with final formatting.

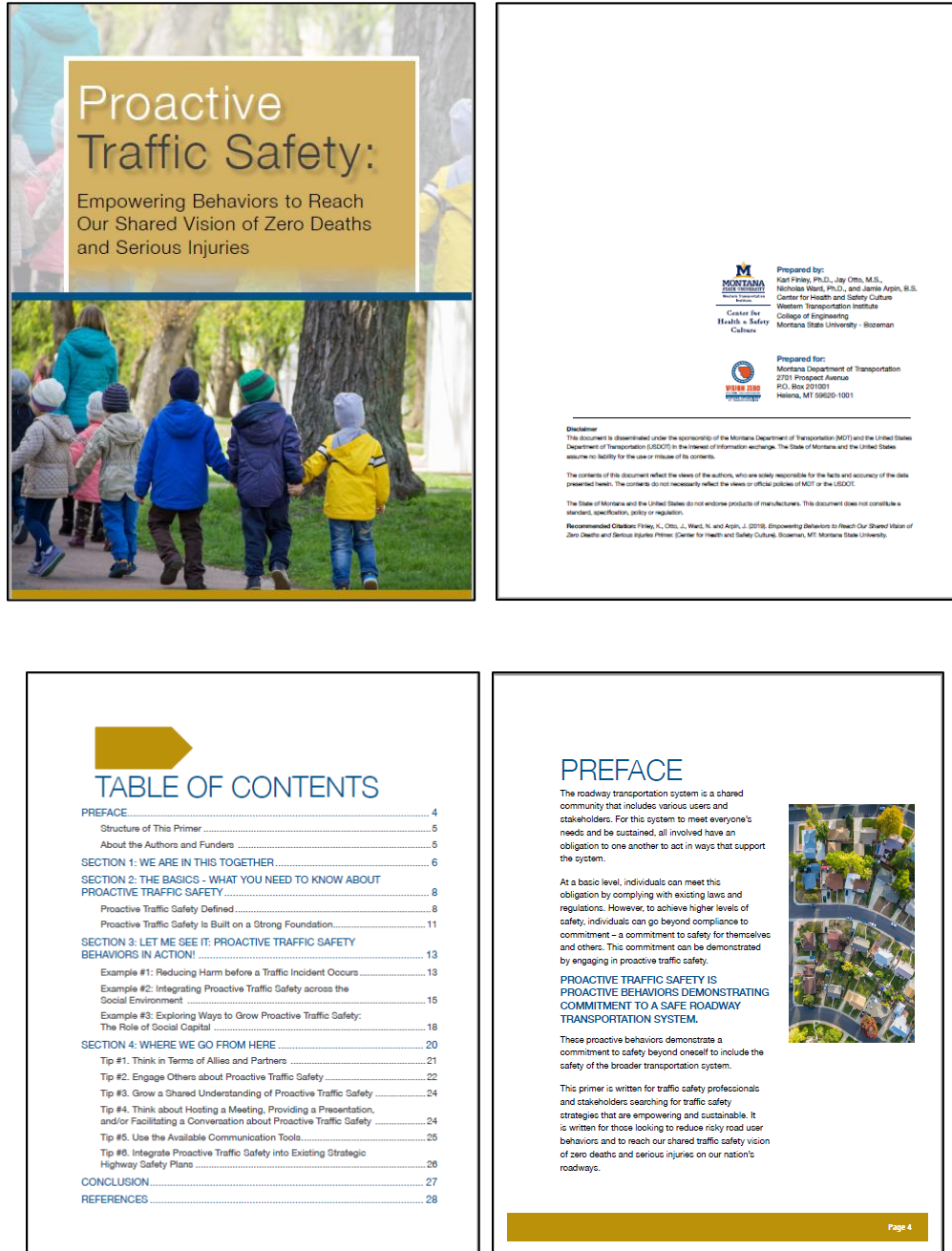


Figure 1. Pages 1-4 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

STRUCTURE OF THIS PRIMER

This primer is organized into four main sections. Each section covers information that builds the capacity of traffic safety professionals and stakeholders to understand what proactive traffic safety is, its role in improving traffic safety, and how to grow proactive traffic safety.

The first section highlights the shared problems faced in traffic safety and introduces proactive traffic safety to address these common challenges.

The second section introduces proactive traffic safety by defining it and explaining why growing it can help us achieve our collective traffic safety goal of zero deaths on our nation's roadways. This section also establishes where the concept originated and highlights a research study that examines proactive traffic safety behaviors in traffic safety.

The third section includes examples of how proactive traffic safety is being integrated into existing traffic safety efforts. These examples show proactive traffic safety in action. The last section includes tips and tools to help traffic safety professionals grow proactive traffic safety.


ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND FUNDERS

The Center for Health and Safety Culture (CHSC) at Montana State University is the primary author and thought leader on the topic of proactive traffic safety. The need for this primer was identified by the Traffic Safety Culture Transportation Pooled Fund (TSC-TPF) participants including traffic safety leaders and stakeholders from fourteen states across the U.S. The Traffic Safety Culture Transportation Pooled Fund is managed by the Montana Department of Transportation.

Page 5

SECTION 1: WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

In 2017, 37,133 people died in motor vehicle crashes in the United States.¹ The people who lost their lives were someone's parent, sibling, coworker, spouse, friend, or child. The loss of even one person on our roadways is unacceptable. The only acceptable traffic safety goal is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries to zero. While significant improvements in traffic safety have been made using strategies from engineering, education, and enforcement, our shared vision of zero deaths and serious injuries on our nation's roadways is not fully realized. There is more work to be done to improve traffic safety.



A significant factor contributing to motor vehicle crashes is driver behavior.² To improve traffic safety, we must focus on strategies that influence risky driver behaviors. Risky driver behaviors include deliberate behaviors (i.e., behaviors that we choose to commit) like speeding, texting while driving, driving impaired, or not wearing a seat belt. These deliberate risky behaviors can be changed. Motor vehicle crashes and serious injuries are preventable, and our efforts must focus on changing behavior. Specifically, we must focus on creating conditions that increase safer deliberate behaviors.

Page 6

THE GOOD NEWS is that the majority of road users already engage in safe behaviors: most people (90%) wear a seat belt,³ most people do not drive within two hours of drinking alcohol (92%) or using cannabis (95%),⁴ and most people (81%) do not speed (in excess of 10 mph over the posted speed).⁵ A positive traffic safety culture already exists. Yet, not wearing a seat belt, impaired driving, and speeding are leading risky behaviors associated with fatal and serious injury crashes – even though it is a small portion of the population that engages in these behaviors.

The question that we must ask is: How do we leverage the large group of people already engaging in safe road user behaviors to influence the smaller group engaging in risky road user behaviors?

ONE WAY TO LEVERAGE THE POSITIVE ROAD SAFETY CULTURE THAT ALREADY EXISTS TO IMPACT THE SMALL GROUP OF ROAD USERS ENGAGING IN RISKY BEHAVIORS IS TO GROW PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY.⁶



Page 7

SECTION 2: THE BASICS - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY DEFINED

The roadway transportation system is a shared community that consists of various users including drivers, motorcyclists, passengers, cyclists, pedestrians, and others. This system is designed, maintained, and managed by various stakeholders including departments of transportation, transportation engineers, maintenance districts, city and county and tribal road departments, elected officials, policy makers, law enforcement officers, traffic safety leaders, Toward Zero Deaths coordinators, and others. Each of us is a member of the roadway transportation community because we depend on this shared system to connect us with people, places, goods, and services. For this system to meet everyone's needs and be sustained, we have an obligation to one another to act in ways that support the system.

At a basic level, individuals can meet this obligation by complying with existing laws and regulations. However, mere compliance with existing laws and regulations fails to address the myriad of situations that occur that are potentially unsafe but are not explicitly deemed unlawful. Furthermore, compliance means we accept the status quo (i.e., that over 37,000 people are killed every year) because it is the consequence of current laws.

TO ACHIEVE HIGHER LEVELS OF SAFETY, INDIVIDUALS NEED TO GO BEYOND COMPLIANCE TO COMMITMENT – A COMMITMENT TO SAFETY FOR THEMSELVES AND OTHERS.

Keep in mind what the word "safety" means: "the state of being safe; freedom from the occurrence or risk of injury, danger, or loss" and "the action of keeping safe."⁷ Thus, a commitment to safety means committing to avoiding risk as well as committing to taking actions to keep safe. Committing to avoiding risk might look like choosing not to engage in potentially risky behaviors (like talking on a cell phone – including hands free)

Page 8

Figure 2. Pages 5-8 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

even though such behaviors are not explicitly in violation of current law. Furthermore, committing to take actions to keep safe might include advocating for new laws or policies that promote safety or engaging with others to make the transportation system safer.

This commitment to safety can be demonstrated by engaging in proactive traffic safety. **Proactive traffic safety is proactive behaviors demonstrating commitment to a safe roadway transportation system.** These proactive behaviors demonstrate a commitment to safety beyond oneself to include the safety of the broader transportation system. The word "proactive" is defined as "acting in anticipation of future problems, needs, or changes" and "serving to prepare for, intervene in, or control an expected occurrence or situation, especially a negative or difficult one."¹⁶ Being proactive goes beyond mere compliance with laws or regulations to act in anticipation of potential risks. Laws are often reactive – they are established as a consequence of negative outcomes. Being proactive means not waiting for a law but rather choosing to act in safe ways before being mandated to do so.

It is important to note that proactive traffic safety includes behaviors that result in the transportation system being safe. In other words, these behaviors extend beyond one's own safety to include the safety of others. When one is merely compliant with laws and regulations, one is rarely compelled to act

We will not achieve our goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on our nation's roadways by merely being compliant. We must grow proactive traffic safety to achieve and maintain our Towards Zero Deaths goals.

Page 9

in ways that protect others. But, when one is committed to safety, one acts in ways that both increase one's own safety as well as increase the safety of others.

Examples of Proactive Traffic Safety Behaviors

- Supporting existing traffic safety efforts
- Staying informed of safety-related issues
- Planning a safe way to get home before drinking alcohol
- Speaking up about other people's unsafe behaviors like not wearing a seat belt or driving distracted
- Establishing family rules like always wearing a seat belt, never texting while driving, or never riding with someone who has been drinking alcohol
- Establishing a workplace policy like always wearing a seat belt in a company vehicle

One can see that these examples go well beyond mere compliance with existing laws and regulations and demonstrate a commitment to a safer transportation system.

Outcomes of Growing Proactive Traffic Safety

- Creates a shared commitment to safety
- Encourages proactive behaviors that support safety efforts
- Encourages proactive behaviors that extend beyond one's own safety to support the safety of others
- Expands the focus of safety efforts to include the large group of safe road users as a way to influence the small group engaging in risky behaviors
- Enhances existing Strategic Highway Safety Planning efforts

Page 10

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY IS BUILT ON A STRONG FOUNDATION

While the concept and application of proactive traffic safety is relatively new in traffic safety, its origin is well established in the research. Proactive traffic safety builds on the concept of safety citizenship behavior which was first introduced by Hoffmann, Morgeson, and Gerras in 2003. Since its inception, the benefits of bolstering safety citizenship behaviors in workplace settings has been studied.^{18,17} However, there is an even greater research foundation from which safety citizenship originated called organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior was introduced in the 1980s¹⁴ and has an extensive body of scientific literature exploring these behaviors in different contexts.^{15,16,17}

The research on proactive traffic safety is growing. For example, Wisbart, Rowland, and Sombray¹⁸ explored safety citizenship behavior as a way to improve work-related driving. Otto, Finley, and Ward¹⁹ studied specific safety citizenship behaviors like asking someone to wear a seat belt and asking a driver to refrain from reading or texting on a cell phone while driving. Others have studied bystander intervention specific to traffic safety-related issues including workplace traffic safety¹⁸ and drinking and driving.²⁰ The available research suggests growing these protective beliefs and proactive behaviors can yield positive results.

Growing proactive traffic safety is an opportunity for traffic safety professionals and stakeholders to create lasting and sustainable improvements in traffic safety.

Page 11

In 2016, adults age 18 and older from the United States completed a survey about proactive traffic safety. This study, sponsored by the Traffic Safety Culture Transportation Pooled Fund (managed by the Montana Department of Transportation), explored two proactive traffic safety behaviors: asking someone to wear a seat belt and asking a driver to refrain from reading or texting on a cell phone while driving.⁴ The study found:

- There are opportunities to intervene.** About half of the people who responded to the survey indicated they had been in a situation in the past 12 months when someone was not wearing a seat belt or was reading or texting while driving. This represents a significant number of opportunities where an individual could intervene to improve traffic safety. Of those who indicated they were in a situation to intervene, more than half did.
- Social distance influences intervening behavior.** People were more likely to intervene with others who were socially closer to them (e.g., family and friends) than with those more socially distant (e.g., acquaintances or strangers). Perhaps, if more people choose to intervene even with strangers, then the prevalence of risky behavior could be reduced.
- Most people have favorable attitudes and beliefs about intervening.** For example, people have very positive attitudes about getting other people to make safe choices (i.e. intervening). They also have a sense of approval to intervene, sense of support to intervene, and beliefs that they should intervene.
- The perception of whether most people intervene is the greatest predictor of intervening behavior.** Essentially, if we think other people intervene in similar situations, this makes us more likely to intervene ourselves.
- A person's sense of comfort and confidence to intervene matters.** If a person feels comfortable and confident to speak up, they are more likely to actually do it.
- Most people have favorable attitudes about strategies involving policy or rules to increase seat belt use or decrease reading or texting on a cell phone while driving.** Not only are people supportive of speaking up, they are also supportive of policies and rules to address those risky behaviors.

For more detailed information about this study and specific recommendations for growing the intervening behaviors examined visit:
<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/trafficsafety-citizenship.shtml>

Page 12

Figure 3. Pages 9-12 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

SECTION 3: LET ME SEE IT: PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY BEHAVIORS IN ACTION!

This section highlights specific examples of growing proactive traffic safety. These examples demonstrate how traffic safety professionals and stakeholders have bolstered proactive traffic safety within their existing efforts to address risky behaviors like driving after drinking alcohol and not wearing a seat belt.

EXAMPLE #1: REDUCING HARM BEFORE A TRAFFIC INCIDENT OCCURS

Impaired driving is a common high-risk behavior focus area for traffic safety professionals across the country. Alcohol is involved in approximately 1 in 3 traffic fatalities in the United States.²¹ Alcohol-related crashes cost approximately \$44 billion every year.²²

The "Courageous Voices Project"²³ illustrates how specific beliefs were targeted to bolster bystander engagement and reduce driving after drinking alcohol. Bystander engagement - when a person decides to act to prevent harm or reduce risk potentially caused by someone else - is an example of proactive traffic safety.

The Center for Health and Safety Culture conducted formative research to understand people's beliefs about driving after drinking and intervening as a bystander to try and prevent someone who has had too much to drink and intends to drive. We learned that people overwhelmingly disapproved of driving after drinking, thought it was dangerous, and agreed that people should not do it. They also supported law enforcement efforts to enforce impaired driving laws. These results clearly



established a strong, positive culture that could be leveraged to address the issue.

People also thought that it was a good idea to prevent others who had had too much to drink from driving and that people should try and intervene. However, they were not sure if other people felt the same way, and many said they were not comfortable or confident in actually doing it.

Based on this information, the Center created universal media that focused on growing three core beliefs:

- Most adults do not drink and drive.
- Most adults support strong enforcement of DUI laws.
- Most adults would try to prevent someone from drinking and driving.

In addition, media showed people intervening with someone else. The stories portrayed in the media were meant to be very simple and showed people doing things like asking someone to stay or asking someone if they could get them a ride. These media sought to "teach" people what bystander intervention could look like as a way to bolster people's comfort and confidence.

Universal media messages were implemented in three pilot communities in Idaho for a little over twelve months (a short time for a media campaign). The theme of the media campaign was "Courageous voices create safe roads."²⁴

Reflection Questions

How could you expand your efforts to reduce impaired driving by also increasing bystander engagement?

In what ways could you promote planning safe rides to get home?

What proactive safety behaviors could be developed among alcohol retailers to reduce impaired driving?

What role do traffic safety leaders play in promoting such efforts?

Follow-up surveys revealed that the universal media campaign changed (statistically significantly) many of the targeted beliefs in the three communities where the media messages were placed. There were no statistically significant changes in these beliefs in the communities without the universal media messages (the control communities).²⁵

This example illustrates how traffic safety professionals used universal media messages to grow proactive traffic safety and leverage the shared beliefs (i.e., protective safety culture) that already existed to prevent driving after drinking alcohol. This is an example of proactive traffic safety in action.

EXAMPLE #2: INTEGRATING PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY ACROSS THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Observational studies show that approximately 90 percent of people in the United States wear their seat belts, leaving a relatively small group of people (10 percent) who do not.²⁶ A leading risk factor for death and serious injury is not wearing a seat belt. While various traffic safety strategies have successfully increased seat belt use, the question remains: How can traffic safety professionals and stakeholders influence the small group most resistant to adopting this protective behavior?

The Utah Highway Safety Office recognized that while various efforts have been successful at achieving higher seat belt use rates in Utah's more urban areas, these efforts have not been as effective in rural counties. Data revealed significant disparities between urban and rural rates of seat belt use among roadway users in Utah.²⁴



To increase rural seat belt use, the Utah Department of Public Safety partnered with the Center and initiated a multi-year pilot project called "Together for Life" to increase seat belt use in seven rural, pilot counties. Survey data were collected in Utah about seat belt use, bystander engagement, and the values, beliefs, and norms people in Utah had about seat belt use. Using this information, proactive traffic safety behaviors appropriate for families, school leaders, key leaders, workplaces, and law enforcement officers to increase seat belt use were identified.

Shifting the focus from promoting individual seat belt use to promoting proactive traffic safety empowers others, is sustainable, and promotes a shared commitment to safety.

Table 1. Proactive Traffic Safety Behaviors Across the Social Environment

Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a seat belt • Remind others to wear a seat belt
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify school district policies and norms about seat belt use. • Establish policies about always wearing a seat belt • Encourage others to always wear a seat belt
Key Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak up and encourage others to always wear a seat belt
Workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify workplace norms about seat belt use • Establish policies about always wearing a seat belt • Implement driver agreements
Law Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify norms about seat belt use • Establish policies about officers always wearing a seat belt • Speak up in the community about the importance of seat belt use

Figure 4. Pages 13-16 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

The Center created tools to bolster proactive traffic safety across the communities and worked with local public health coordinators to promote these protective beliefs and proactive behaviors. Table 1 shows key proactive traffic safety behaviors across the social environment to increase seat belt use.

There have been significant improvements in Utah's rural seat belt use since implementing the "Together for Life Project." In 2015, House Bill 79 made Utah's seat belt law a primary enforcement law where a person could be pulled over for not wearing a seat belt, and in 2017, the primary seat belt law was made permanent. Seat belt use across the state has increased since (from about 83% in 2014 to 89% in 2017).¹⁵ Based on observational studies, seat belt use in the seven pilot communities has grown significantly from about 68 percent in 2012-13 to 85 percent in 2017-18. This level of growth was significantly higher than among rural counties not in the pilot project.¹⁶

Reflection Questions

- How could you expand your efforts to increase seat belt use by integrating proactive traffic safety among families, school leaders, key leaders, workplaces, and law enforcement officers?
- What specific proactive traffic safety behaviors could be promoted among families, school leaders, key leaders, workplaces, and law enforcement officers?
- What role do traffic safety leaders play in promoting such efforts?

Page 17


EXAMPLE #3: EXPLORING WAYS TO GROW PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

As champions of traffic safety, we can see the benefits of growing proactive traffic safety. Having more people committed to safety and taking proactive steps to reduce risky driving behaviors among themselves and others can lead to fewer fatal and serious injury crashes.

SO, WHAT CONDITIONS OR FACTORS MAY LEAD PEOPLE TO ENGAGE IN MORE PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY BEHAVIORS? ONE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION IS TO GROW SOCIAL CAPITAL.

Social capital has been defined as resources that are available through the relationships we have with others and through the networks that are created via those relationships.¹⁷ Leveraging one's connections to others, resources that may otherwise be unavailable are accessible and can be used.^{18,19} Research shows that increasing social capital positively influences traffic safety.^{20, 21, 22}

In one study to better understand the role of social capital to influence engagement in proactive traffic safety, Finley, Otto, and Ward²³ explored intervening with strangers engaging in potentially risky behaviors like not wearing a seat belt and texting while driving. Social capital was measured with two questions about trust: "Please indicate your level of agreement



Page 18

with the following statements: "Most people are honest" and "Generally speaking, would you say that people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?"²⁴ As in previous studies, trust was used as an indicator of social capital.^{25, 26, 27}

Results showed that a person's intention to intervene was strongly correlated with actually intervening. A person's sense of comfort and confidence in intervening with a stranger was the most important predictor of intention to intervene.²⁸ While social capital did not directly predict intention to intervene, it was predictive of the belief that people are expected to intervene to protect others and the belief that others would be more likely to intervene as well. Both of these beliefs were important in growing a person's intention to intervene.²⁹ Like previous research suggesting a reciprocal relationship between social capital and proactive behaviors,³⁰ the researchers in this study suggested that social capital could facilitate proactive traffic safety, and likewise, it was possible that proactive traffic safety could also grow social capital.³¹

Reflection Questions

- How could you leverage existing social capital in your community to promote proactive traffic safety?
- What existing traffic safety strategies could grow social capital?

Page 19

SECTION 4: WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

Traffic safety professionals and stakeholders have significantly improved traffic safety in the United States. Engineering, education, emergency medical services, and enforcement have been essential to this success. However, in pursuit of our Towards Zero Deaths goals, new approaches may be required.

Proactive traffic safety is a new opportunity to improve traffic safety. It's an approach that leverages our existing positive traffic safety culture and, once established, is likely to be sustained.

Action is needed to move this approach forward. Tips to help traffic safety professionals grow proactive traffic safety are provided along with a variety of communication tools like:



- Proactive Traffic Safety PowerPoint Presentation that traffic safety professionals and stakeholders can use to introduce proactive traffic safety to others
- Conversation Guide to support efforts to engage others about proactive traffic safety
- Proactive Traffic Safety Poster that can be used in meetings and at conferences

Page 20

Figure 5. Pages 17-20 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

TIP #1. THINK IN TERMS OF ALLIES AND PARTNERS

Growing proactive traffic safety requires both allies and partners. Allies are those that can champion your effort and connect you to other social networks and connections that are needed to grow proactive traffic safety.

CONSIDER:


- Who are my allies in promoting traffic safety?
- Who can help me introduce a new idea to other key stakeholders?

Partners are those that will participate and help you to move proactive traffic safety forward. Partners are those that will take action. Start to identify partners by considering who is within your circle of influence. Identify the people with whom you have a relationship, with whom you can easily collaborate, and with whom you can directly influence. Partnering with those within your circle of influence first can build momentum. Growing proactive traffic safety can begin at the grass roots level and doesn't require high-level leadership to buy in initially.

CONSIDER:

- With whom can I partner?
- Who has a direct stake in growing proactive traffic safety?

In this process, it is important to think outside of your normal partners. Explore potential new partnerships within a variety of disciplines (i.e., public health professionals, healthcare professionals, prevention specialists, etc.).



Page 21

TIP #2. ENGAGE OTHERS ABOUT PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

Start talking about proactive traffic safety.

Talking with others about proactive traffic safety:

- creates shared understanding about what proactive traffic safety is,
- fosters meaningful dialogue about how proactive traffic safety can improve existing efforts,
- encourages collaboration, and
- mobilizes buy in and support.

When others hear you talking about proactive traffic safety, see your excitement, and see how proactive traffic safety can improve health and safety, they will be more willing to engage with you.

When engaging others about proactive traffic safety, tailor the conversation to ensure it is relevant to the audience. Prior to engaging in a conversation, ask questions like:

- What is important to this person/group?
- How does proactive traffic safety align with their goals and priorities?

Seek to create a collaborative environment by asking open-ended questions to invite and encourage dialogue. Consider asking a question like:

- What else do you think about that?

Listen actively and seek to understand the other person's point of view. Reflect on what you hear the other person saying using a statement like:

- Let me see if I understand what you are saying... (repeating back what you heard).

Page 22


Allow time for the other person to add more details or correct a misunderstanding. The goal of listening actively is to understand the other person's thoughts, feelings, and point of view.

Don't be discouraged if you encounter some resistance. **RESISTANCE IS NORMAL, ESPECIALLY WHEN INTRODUCING SOMETHING NEW OR DIFFERENT.** Sometimes resistance is obvious, but sometimes it is subtle. Hearing a response like "Yes, but..." can be an indication of resistance.

Instead of meeting resistance directly by trying to make a case for your point of view (which can cause more resistance in the other person), view resistance as an opportunity to continue the conversation. Your response to resistance will have a large impact on the outcome of the conversation.

One way to respond to resistance is to acknowledge the person's thoughts, feelings, or perspective.¹⁶ Instead of trying to convince the person of your point of view, acknowledge their point of view.¹⁶ Acknowledging the other person's point of view can encourage the person to continue to explore ideas rather than feeling the need to defend their position and take a side opposite of your position.¹⁶

It may take time for others to understand what proactive traffic safety is and how it can be integrated into existing efforts. It may take more than one conversation. Engagement should be viewed as an ongoing process.



Page 23

TIP #3. GROW A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

Growing proactive traffic safety requires a clear understanding of what proactive traffic safety is. Seek to grow shared understanding and common language about proactive traffic safety by engaging with other traffic safety professionals, coworkers, leaders, and stakeholders.

Establishing a shared understanding about proactive traffic safety can foster engagement and align efforts to grow proactive traffic safety within existing strategies moving forward.

TIP #4. THINK ABOUT HOSTING A MEETING, PROVIDING A PRESENTATION, AND/OR FACILITATING A CONVERSATION ABOUT PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

A meeting or presentation can help familiarize stakeholders with the concept of proactive traffic safety. You can bolster excitement and facilitate a constructive conversation with important stakeholders and partners.

Suggestions to Facilitate a Constructive Conversation

- Establish a common purpose and ground rules for a constructive working group.
- Encourage everyone to share their ideas and participate in the discussion.
- Value diverse ideas.
- Listen actively. Seek to understand what is being said and to make connections.
- Ensure there is enough time for engagement.

Page 24

Figure 6. Pages 21-24 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

TIP #5. USE THE AVAILABLE COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Communication tools have been created to accompany this Primer to help grow proactive traffic safety with coworkers, leaders, and stakeholders. These tools include:

- **Proactive Traffic Safety PowerPoint Presentation** – This presentation is designed to help traffic safety professionals and stakeholders introduce proactive traffic safety to other professionals, stakeholders, and the community. It can be adapted to include state and local information.
- **Conversation Guide** – The Conversation Guide is designed to support traffic safety professionals' efforts to engage their staff and coworkers about proactive traffic safety. It can be shared electronically with others and printed as needed.
- **Proactive Traffic Safety Poster** – This poster is designed to capture the essence of proactive traffic safety in a single poster. It can be used at meetings, conferences, or simply mounted and used as an ongoing reminder.



Page 25

TIP #6. INTEGRATE PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY INTO EXISTING STRATEGIC HIGHWAY SAFETY PLANS

Depending on your state's process, how you integrate proactive traffic safety into your Strategic Highway Safety Plan might look differently. Here are some ideas:

- Add a chapter on proactive traffic safety into your Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Develop principles of communication with proactive traffic safety in mind and add communication guidance as part of the plan.
- Identify strategies within the Strategic Highway Safety Plan that address high-risk behaviors and consider augmenting these strategies with proactive traffic safety. While it can be tempting to select several high-risk behaviors, start small and build momentum.

Questions that focus collective action and create forward movement can be helpful to support the process of narrowing initial efforts to integrate proactive traffic safety.

QUESTIONS TO FOCUS COLLECTIVE ATTENTION?

- What opportunities are the data revealing to integrate proactive traffic safety on this issue?
- What do we still need to learn about this issue?
- How would proactive traffic safety enhance our current efforts on this issue?

QUESTIONS TO CREATE FORWARD MOVEMENT?

- What is possible here to integrate proactive traffic safety?
- What will it take to integrate proactive traffic safety behaviors to create change on this issue?
- What requires our immediate attention going forward?

Page 26

CONCLUSION

Given the only acceptable traffic safety goal is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries to zero, traffic safety professionals and stakeholders must continue to evolve and seek innovative ways to reduce risky driver behaviors and increase safer behaviors. GROWING PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY CULTIVATES A TRAFFIC SAFETY CULTURE WHERE PEOPLE COMMIT TO A SAFER TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM. Growing these proactive behaviors is a new opportunity to strategically address risky traffic behaviors and ultimately achieve and sustain our Towards Zero Deaths goals.

This primer introduces proactive traffic safety as proactive behaviors demonstrating commitment to a safe roadway transportation system. Proactive traffic safety leverages the large group of people engaging in safe road user behaviors to influence the smaller group of people engaging in risky road user behaviors.⁹ Proactive traffic safety creates lasting and sustainable improvements in traffic safety by instilling a sense of responsibility in everyone for the safety of others and the transportation system as a whole. Growing proactive traffic safety behaviors is an important component of a comprehensive Toward Zero Deaths strategy.



Page 27

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Figure 7. Pages 25-28 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

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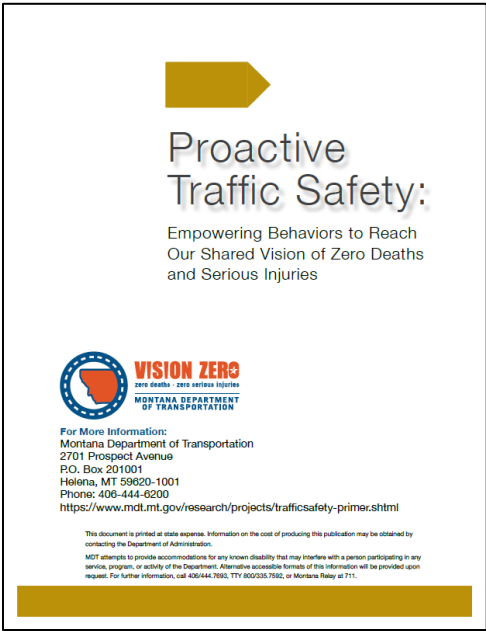
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Proactive Traffic Safety:
Empowering Behaviors to Reach
Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths
and Serious Injuries

VISION ZERO
zero deaths • zero serious injuries
MONTANA DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION

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Figure 8. Pages 29-31 of the Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

3 POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

This section includes the final content of the PowerPoint presentation. Figure 9 through Figure 15 show the final style and content of the slides.

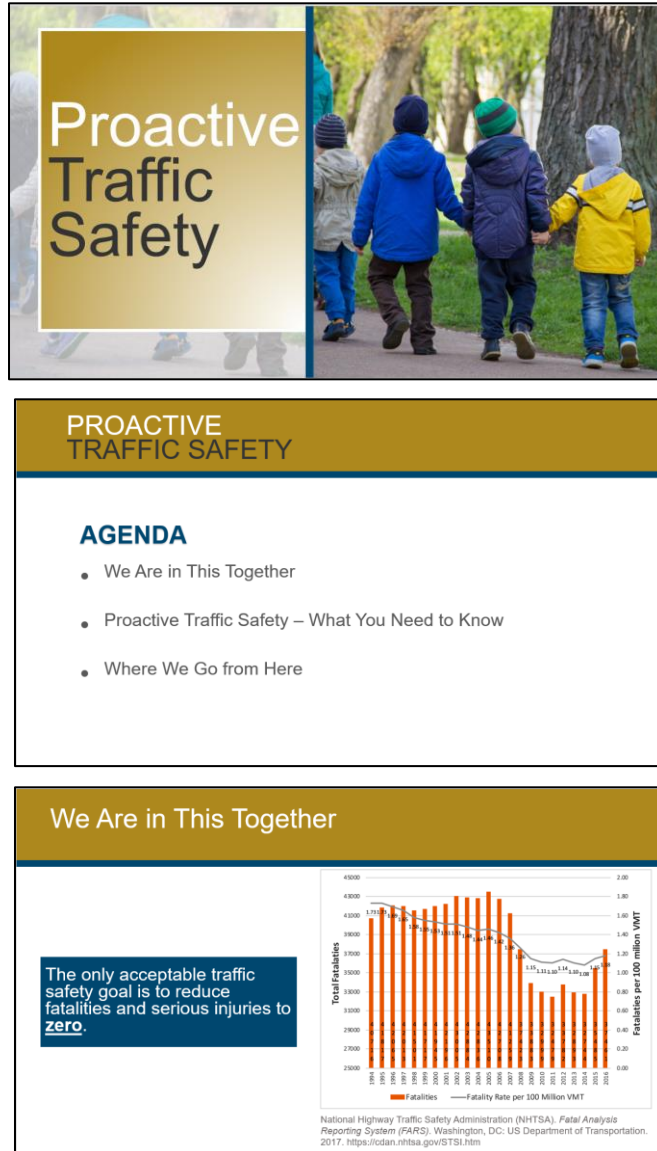



Figure 9. Slides 1-3 of the Presentation

We Are in This Together

- Driver behavior is a significant factor contributing to motor vehicle crashes.¹
- To improve traffic safety, we must focus on strategies that influence risky driver behaviors.
- Risky driver behaviors include deliberate behaviors like
 - speeding,
 - texting while driving,
 - impaired driving, and
 - not wearing a seat belt.



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We Are in This Together

The majority of road users already engage in safe behaviors.

- Most people (90%) wear a seat belt.¹
- Most people (92%) do not drive within two hours of drinking alcohol.²
- Most people (95%) do not drive within two hours of using cannabis.²
- Most people (81%) do not speed (in excess of 10 mph over the posted speed).³

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We Are in This Together

QUESTION

- How do we leverage the large group of people already engaging in safe road user behaviors to influence the smaller group engaging in risky road user behaviors?

ANSWER

- Proactive Traffic Safety




Figure 10. Slides 4-6 of the Presentation

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

- The roadway transportation system is a shared community.
- Each of us is a member of the community because we depend on this shared system to connect us with people, places, goods, and services.
- For this system to meet everyone's needs and be sustained, we have an obligation to one another to act in ways that support the system.
- **Compliance... AND SOMETHING MORE!**

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

COMMITMENT

- To achieve higher levels of safety, individuals need to go beyond compliance to commitment – a commitment to safety for themselves and others.
- A commitment to safety means committing to avoiding risk as well as committing to taking actions to keep safe.



PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY IS...

- Proactive behaviors demonstrating commitment to a safe roadway transportation system.
- “Proactive”
 - “acting in anticipation of future problems, needs, or changes”¹
 - “serving to prepare for, intervene in, or control an expected occurrence or situation, especially a negative or difficult one”²

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Figure 11. Slides 7-9 of the Presentation



Figure 12. Slides 10-12 of the Presentation

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

Growing proactive traffic safety is an opportunity for traffic safety professionals and stakeholders to create lasting and sustainable improvements in traffic safety behaviors.



PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – Where We Go from Here

- Proactive traffic safety is a new opportunity to improve traffic safety.
- It's an approach that leverages our existing positive traffic safety culture and, once established, is likely to be sustained.
- Action is needed to move this approach forward.
 - Tools
 - Tips
 - Reflection Questions

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – Where We Go from Here

TOOLS

- A Proactive Traffic Safety Primer
- A Proactive Traffic Safety PowerPoint Presentation
- A Conversation Guide
- A Proactive Traffic Safety Poster



Figure 13. Slides 13-15 of the Presentation

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – Where We Go from Here

TIPS

- Tip #1. Think in Terms of Allies and Partners
- Tip #2. Engage Others about Proactive Traffic Safety
- Tip #3. Grow a Shared Understanding of Proactive Traffic Safety
- Tip #4. Think about Hosting a Meeting, Providing a Presentation, and/or Facilitating a Conversation about Proactive Traffic Safety
- Tip #5. Use the Available Communication Tools
- Tip #6. Integrate Proactive Traffic Safety into Existing Strategic Highway Safety Plans

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – Where We Go from Here

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How could growing proactive traffic safety help you achieve your desired traffic safety outcomes?
- What are the opportunities for applying proactive traffic safety to your current efforts right now?

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

CONCLUSION

- Traffic safety professionals and stakeholders must continue to evolve and seek innovative ways to reduce risky driver behaviors and increase safer behaviors.
- Growing proactive traffic safety cultivates a traffic safety culture where people commit to a safer transportation system.
- Growing proactive traffic safety behaviors is a new opportunity to strategically address risky traffic behaviors and ultimately achieve and sustain our Towards Zero Deaths goals.

Figure 14. Slides 16-18 of the Presentation

PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

RESEARCH SPONSOR  TRANSPORTATION POOLED FUND PROGRAM

Traffic Safety Culture Pooled Fund
 The transportation Pooled Fund (TPF) Program allows federal, state, and local agencies and other organizations to combine resources to support transportation research studies.

Current participating States: CA, CT, ID, IL, IN, IA, LA, MS, MT, NV, TX, UT, VT, and WA.

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PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

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Figure 15. Slides 19-20 of the Presentation

4 CONVERSATION GUIDE

This section includes the content of the final conversation guide. The purpose of the guide is to promote dialogue to foster shared understanding and actions to grow proactive traffic safety. Figure 16 shows the content and layout of the conversation guide.

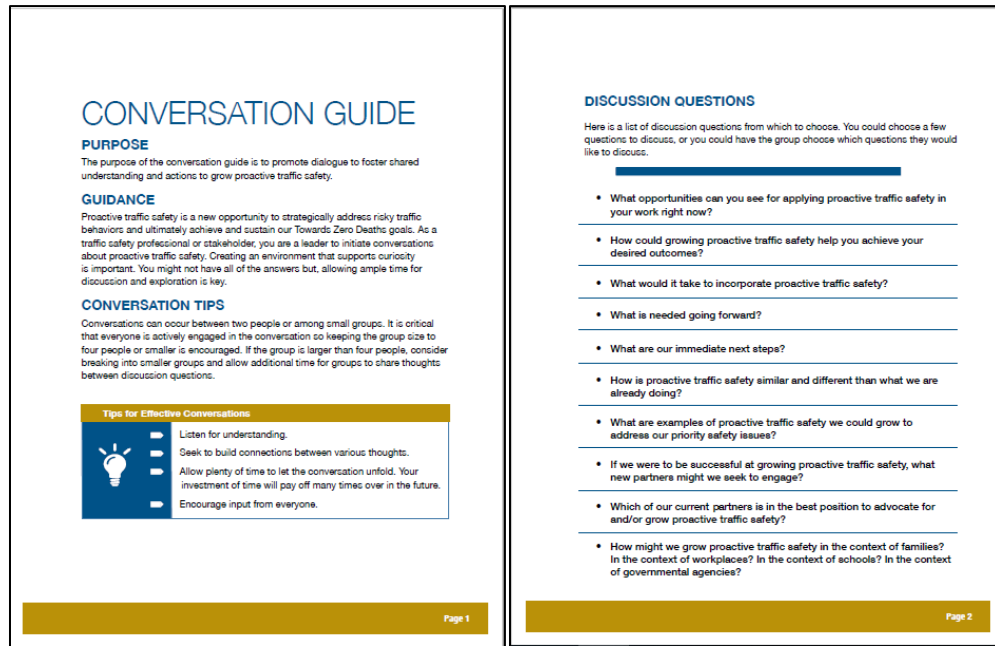


Figure 16. Page 1-2 of the Conversation Guide

5 POSTERS

This section includes the content of the final poster. The purpose of the poster is to disseminate information in a traffic safety poster session. There are two versions of the poster (one poster includes background images and one poster has no background images). Figure 17 show the final style and content of the posters.



Proactive Traffic Safety: Empowering Behaviors to Reach Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries

INTRODUCTION

The only acceptable traffic safety goal is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries to zero. While significant improvements in traffic safety have been made, our shared vision of zero deaths and serious injuries on our nation's roadways is not fully realized. There is more work to be done.

A significant factor contributing to motor vehicle crashes is driver behavior. Risky driver behaviors include deliberate behaviors (i.e., behaviors that we choose to control) like speeding, texting while driving, driving impaired, or not wearing a seat belt. These deliberate risky behaviors can be changed. Motor vehicle crashes and serious injuries are preventable, and our efforts must focus on changing behavior. Specifically, we must focus on creating conditions that increase safer deliberate behaviors.

The good news is that the majority of road users already engage in safe behaviors: most people wear a seat belt, most people do not drink within two hours of drinking alcohol or using cannabis, and most people do not speed (in excess of 10 mph over the posted speed).

A positive traffic safety culture already exists. Yet, not wearing a seat belt, impaired driving, and speeding are leading risky behaviors associated with fatal and serious injury crashes – even though it is a small portion of the population that engages in these behaviors.

The question that we must ask is: How do we leverage the large group of people already engaging in safe road user behaviors to influence the smaller group of population that engages in these behaviors?

One way to leverage the positive road safety culture that already exists to impact the small group of road users engaging in risky behaviors is to grow proactive traffic safety.

WHAT IS PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY?

The roadway transportation system is a shared community that includes various users and stakeholders. For this system to meet everyone's needs and be sustained, all involved have an obligation to one another to act in ways that support the system.

At a basic level, individuals can meet this obligation by complying with existing laws and regulations. However, mere compliance with existing laws and regulations fails to address the myriad of situations that occur that are potentially unsafe but are not explicitly deemed unlawful. Furthermore, compliance means we accept the status quo (i.e., that over 37,000 people are killed every year) because it is the consequence of current laws.

To achieve higher levels of safety, individuals need to go beyond compliance to commitment – a commitment to safety for themselves and others. A commitment to safety means committing to avoiding risk as well as committing to taking actions to keep safe.

This commitment can be demonstrated by engaging in proactive traffic safety.

Proactive traffic safety is proactive behaviors demonstrating commitment to a safe roadway transportation system.

These proactive behaviors demonstrate a commitment to safety beyond oneself to include the safety of the broader transportation system.

EXAMPLES OF PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY INCLUDE...

- Supporting existing traffic safety efforts
- Staying informed of safety-related issues
- Planning a safe way to get home before drinking alcohol
- Speaking up about other people's unsafe behaviors like not wearing a seat belt or driving distracted
- Establishing family rules like always wearing a seat belt, never texting while driving, or never riding with someone who has been drinking alcohol
- Establishing a workplace policy like always wearing a seat belt in a company vehicle

WHY SHOULD WE GROW PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY?

Growing proactive traffic safety:

- Creates a shared commitment to safety
- Encourages proactive behaviors that support safety efforts
- Encourages proactive behaviors that extend beyond one's own safety to support the safety of others
- Expands the focus of safety efforts to include the large group of safe road users as a way to influence the small group engaging in risky behaviors
- Enhances existing Strategic Highway Safety Planning efforts

IMPLEMENTATION

Proactive traffic safety is a new opportunity to improve traffic safety. A primer is available to help traffic safety professionals grow proactive traffic safety (at the below URL). Additional tips to grow proactive traffic safety include:

Tip #1. Think in Terms of Allies and Partners
Consider:

- Who are my allies in promoting traffic safety?
- Who can help me introduce a new idea to other key stakeholders?
- With whom can I partner?
- Who has a direct stake in growing proactive traffic safety?

Tip #2. Engage Others about Proactive Traffic Safety

Tip #3. Grow a Shared Understanding of Proactive Traffic Safety

Tip #4. Think about Hosting a Meeting, Providing a Presentation, and/or Facilitating a Conversation about Proactive Traffic Safety

Tip #5. Use the Available Communication Tools

- Proactive Traffic Safety Primer
- Proactive Traffic Safety PowerPoint Presentation
- Conversation Guide

Tip #6. Integrate Proactive Traffic Safety into Existing Strategic Highway Safety Plans

Depending on your state's process, how you integrate proactive traffic safety into your Strategic Highway Safety Plan might look differently. Here are some ideas:

- Add a chapter on proactive traffic safety into your Strategic Highway Safety Plan.
- Develop principles of communication with proactive traffic safety in mind and add communication guidance as part of the plan.
- Identify strategies within the Strategic Highway Safety Plan that address high risk behaviors and consider augmenting these strategies with proactive traffic safety.

CONTACT INFORMATION
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 Project URL: <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/traffic-safety-co-books-ahw/>




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Figure 17. Proactive Traffic Safety Posters

6 CONCLUSIONS

Proactive traffic safety is a new approach to improve traffic safety and one that requires communication tools that make the concept easy to understand and easy to integrate into existing traffic safety efforts. This Task 3 Report includes final drafts of four communication tools: a primer, a PowerPoint presentation, a conversation guide, and a poster.

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