



Nebraska Teen Driving Experiences Survey Six-Year Trend Report

2014-2015 to 2019-2020 School Years

March 2020

NEBRASKA

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DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Public Health
Injury Prevention Program

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Executive Summary

The Nebraska Teen Driving Experiences Survey captures 17 risky driving behaviors. Figure 1 below shows the trends on these survey items for the 2014-2015 through 2019-2020 school years for six schools that have participated in the survey each year during this time period. All but two of the risky driving behaviors have decreased at least slightly from 2014-2015 through 2019-2020. Seven of the indicators have seen statistically significant decreases.

Figure 1a	Reported driving behaviors in the past month: STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS							Statistically Significant Change* ('14-'15 to '18-'19)
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020		
1. Rode in a vehicle without wearing a seat belt°	58.9%	57.5%	55.8%	49.4%	45.9%	49.1%	Yes	
2. Rode or drove in a vehicle without wearing a seat belt° (combines rode and drove without a seat belt)	60.4%	59.5%	57.7%	54.0%	49.1%	51.2%	Yes	
3. Drove a vehicle with passengers who did not wear a seat belt*	63.8%	55.8%	58.8%	59.0%	53.7%	51.9%	Yes	
4. Drove 10 miles per hour or more over the posted speed limit*	69.4%	63.2%	66.1%	57.3%	56.3%	54.3%	Yes	
5. Drove a vehicle with two or more other teenagers without anyone over the age of 21 in the vehicle#	79.9%	74.7%	75.4%	68.3%	69.7%	69.5%	Yes	
6. Rode in a vehicle with two or more other teenagers without anyone over the age of 21 in the vehicle°	69.6%	68.0%	71.7%	61.3%	56.0%	61.0%	Yes	
7. Put on make-up while driving^	14.7%	15.9%	16.2%	10.7%	7.9%	5.6%	Yes	

Figure 1b	Reported driving behaviors in the past month: NON-STAISTICALLY SIGNIFINANT IMPROVEMENTS AND NEGATIVE TRENDS							Statistically Significant Change* ('14-'15 to '18-'19)
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020		
8. Drove without wearing a seat belt*	35.4%	30.2%	34.7%	33.2%	24.2%	27.3%	No	
9. Street-raced*	24.7%	22.2%	24.9%	17.6%	16.5%	19.0%	No	
10. Drove after 12 AM (midnight) without anyone over the age of 21 in the vehicle [#]	63.5%	60.4%	61.7%	48.6%	49.1%	55.0%	No	
11. Drove a vehicle after drinking alcohol (even just one drink)*	9.5%	10.9%	10.4%	6.6%	5.7%	8.2%	No	
12. Rode in a vehicle with a driver who had been drinking alcohol ^o	19.5%	18.9%	17.6%	15.5%	15.5%	18.4%	No	
13. Ran a red light*	20.2%	17.7%	22.9%	17.6%	13.2%	16.5%	No	
14. Talked on a cell phone while driving*	77.4%	73.4%	76.4%	71.7%	70.5%	73.6%	No	
15. Texted (read or sent) while driving*	67.9%	59.6%	66.2%	65.6%	67.3%	64.8%	No	
16. Ate while driving*	78.5%	78.6%	76.6%	74.0%	67.3%	78.6%	No	
17. Almost fell asleep while driving*	11.8%	12.8%	16.3%	16.5%	15.4%	17.3%	No	

*p<.05

^oQuestion applied to all respondents.

*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

[#]Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP).

[^]Question applied only to female respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

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Introduction and Methodology

Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS) is a peer-to-peer traffic safety program for youth. The program has been in Nebraska High Schools since the 2013-2014 school year. Members of a TDS program at a school engage in many activities to promote safe driving. One of the activities that youth leaders in the program complete is administering the Nebraska Teen Driving Experiences Survey to their peers.

The Nebraska Teen Driving Experiences survey captures a broad array of behaviors and attitudes related to driving. The current survey instrument has now been implemented for six consecutive years. Over these six years, between 12 and 19 TDS schools have collected surveys. A total of six schools have collected surveys in all six years.

This report presents trends from the Nebraska Teen Driving Experiences Survey from those six schools that have collected surveys over the past six years. The schools are: Centura, Gering, Howells-Dodge, Lincoln Southwest, Malcolm, and Norfolk. Figure 2 below presents the high school enrollment at the listed schools.

Figure 2	High school enrollment (2018-2019)
Centura	173
Gering	559
Howells-Dodge	93
Lincoln Southwest	2,000
Malcolm	164
Norfolk	1,324
Total	4,313

Respondent Demographics

Figures 3 through 7 present respondent demographics of the survey respondents from the six schools.

Figure 3	Surveys collected by school					
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Centura	60	115	114	106	121	151
Gering	133	127	191	167	97	101
Howells-Dodge	50	47	48	65	57	80
Lincoln Southwest	353	338	254	186	174	108
Malcolm	139	159	121	122	83	101
Norfolk	244	222	252	182	272	196
Total	979	1,008	980	828	804	737

Figure 4	Age							
	13 & Under	14	15	16	17	18	19 & Over	Average
'14-'15 (n=979)	0.0%	14.0%	18.9%	36.7%	24.2%	6.1%	0.1%	15.9
'15-'16 (n=1,004)	0.0%	8.0%	26.4%	34.2%	23.9%	7.4%	0.2%	16.0
'16-'17 (n=976)	0.0%	7.3%	15.6%	32.5%	33.1%	11.2%	0.4%	16.3
'17-'18 (n=828)	0.0%	8.6%	25.7%	26.4%	26.7%	12.4%	0.1%	16.1
'18-'19 (n=804)	0.2%	12.1%	24.9%	27.5%	24.4%	10.4%	0.5%	16.0
'19-'20 (n=737)	0.1%	11.7%	25.6%	28.5%	24.7%	9.4%	0.0%	15.9

Figure 5	Gender	
	Male	Female
'14-'15 (n=976)	44.2%	55.8%
'15-'16 (n=1,002)	48.8%	51.2%
'16-'17 (n=974)	47.7%	52.3%
'17-'18 (n=828)	45.3%	54.7%
'18-'19 (n=803)	40.7%	59.3%
'19-'20 (n=734)	42.6%	57.4%

Figure 6	Grade			
	9th	10th	11th	12th
'14-'15 (n=978)	17.9%	19.7%	42.9%	19.4%
'15-'16 (n=1,005)	13.0%	39.2%	29.6%	18.2%
'16-'17 (n=979)	12.8%	21.5%	43.5%	22.3%
'17-'18 (n=826)	17.6%	30.8%	27.2%	24.5%
'18-'19 (n=804)	22.8%	30.1%	23.4%	23.8%
'19-'20 (n=737)	21.7%	32.8%	24.3%	21.2%

Figure 7	License status					
	School Learner's Permit (LPE)	Learner's Permit (LPD)	School Permit (SCP)	Provisional Operator's Permit (POP)	Unrestricted Driver's License	None
'14-'15 (n=974)	2.9%	19.3%	4.8%	42.5%	8.9%	21.6%
'15-'16 (n=998)	2.8%	20.9%	6.5%	44.3%	7.5%	17.9%
'16-'17 (n=972)	2.4%	13.4%	5.9%	49.0%	13.2%	16.3%
'17-'18 (n=828)	3.3%	18.1%	9.1%	41.7%	13.8%	14.1%
'18-'19 (n=787)	4.3%	15.4%	12.5%	38.8%	11.7%	17.4%
'19-'20 (n=723)	3.6%	13.4%	13.1%	44.3%	9.3%	16.3%

Identification of Teen Driving Risks

Youth are asked to identify the top five factors that contribute to teenagers being killed or hurt in a crash in an open-ended survey item. Most youth correctly identify distractions (like texting on a cell phone) and drinking and driving. However, a fairly low percentage of youth are able to identify the remaining three risks to teen driving: seat belt use, speeding, and nighttime driving (Figure 8). Over the past six years, on average youth have correctly identified 2.4 out of the 5 teen driving risks each year (Figure 9).

Figure 8		Youth Identification of the Top Five Teen Driving Risks*				
	Distractions, like texting on a cell phone	Drinking and Driving	Speeding	Seat belt use	Nighttime driving	
'14-'15 (n=979)	98.4%	74.0%	28.5%	23.8%	15.1%	
'15-'16 (n=1,008)	98.4%	75.0%	25.6%	22.7%	16.2%	
'16-'17 (n=980)	97.8%	76.0%	23.1%	24.3%	16.6%	
'17-'18 (n=828)	95.4%	74.3%	28.1%	26.6%	16.7%	
'18-'19 (n=804)	94.8%	72.8%	28.5%	28.2%	19.7%	
'19-'20 (n=737)	94.0%	71.1%	29.3%	24.8%	19.4%	

*Percentage of survey respondents who were able to identify each risk as one of the five most common factors that contribute to teenagers being hurt or killed in a car crash.

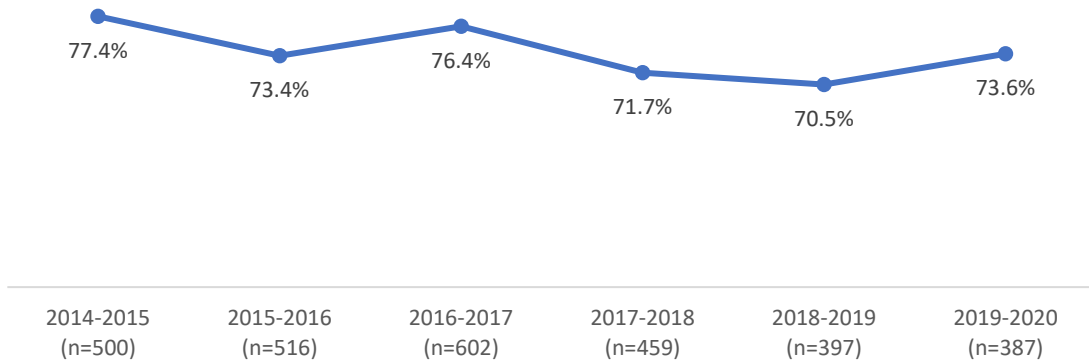
Figure 9		Number of Teen Driving Risks Identified*					
	None	1 of 5	2 of 5	3 of 5	4 of 5	5 of 5	Average
'14-'15 (n=979)	0.4%	11.1%	44.5%	36.4%	7.4%	0.2%	2.4
'15-'16 (n=1,008)	0.3%	10.9%	49.1%	31.0%	7.7%	1.0%	2.4
'16-'17 (n=980)	0.9%	10.2%	46.9%	34.7%	6.6%	0.6%	2.4
'17-'18 (n=828)	1.6%	12.1%	41.8%	33.6%	10.3%	0.7%	2.4
'18-'19 (n=804)	1.6%	10.7%	40.8%	36.9%	8.7%	1.2%	2.4
'19-'20 (n=737)	2.4%	13.4%	39.4%	33.1%	11.1%	0.5%	2.4

*Ability of respondents to identify any/all of the top five driving risks: drinking and driving; distractions, like texting on a cell phone; speeding; nighttime driving; and seat belt use.

Cell Phone Use (Talking and Texting) While Driving

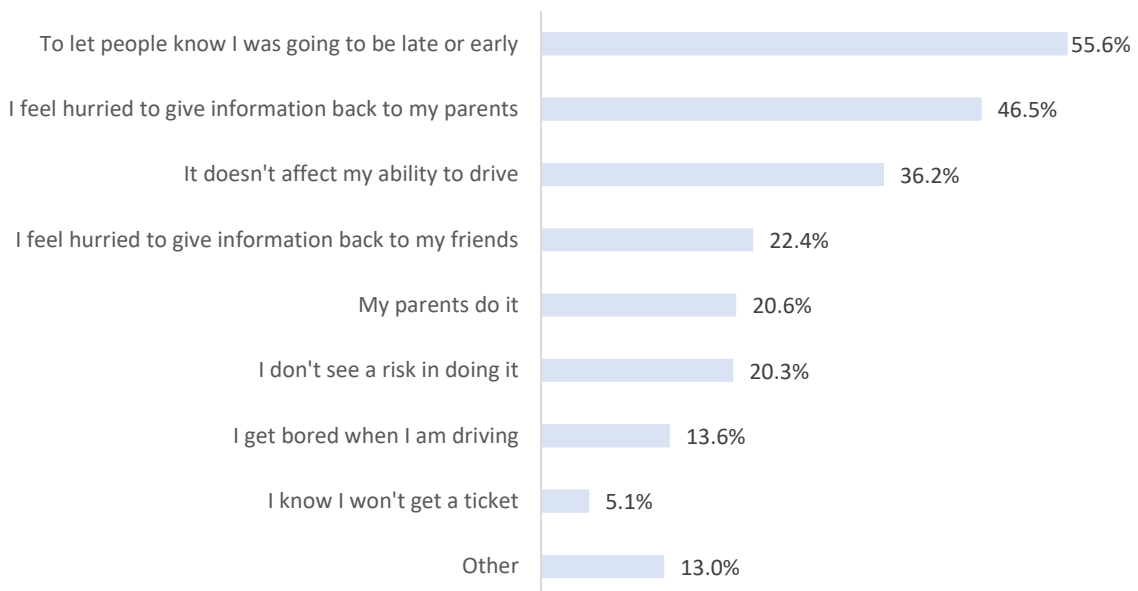
A strong majority of respondents (73.6%) reported talking on a cell phone while driving in the past month. There has been little change (a slight decrease) in this behavior since 2014-2015 (Figure 10). The reported rates of texting while driving in the past month have also been little changed (with a slight decrease) throughout the six years of the survey, with 64.8% of respondents reporting doing so in 2019-2020 (Figure 12). The top two reasons for both talking and texting while driving are “to let people know I was going to be late or early” and “I feel hurried to give information back to my parents” (Figures 11 and 13).

Figure 10. Talked on a cell phone while driving in the past month*



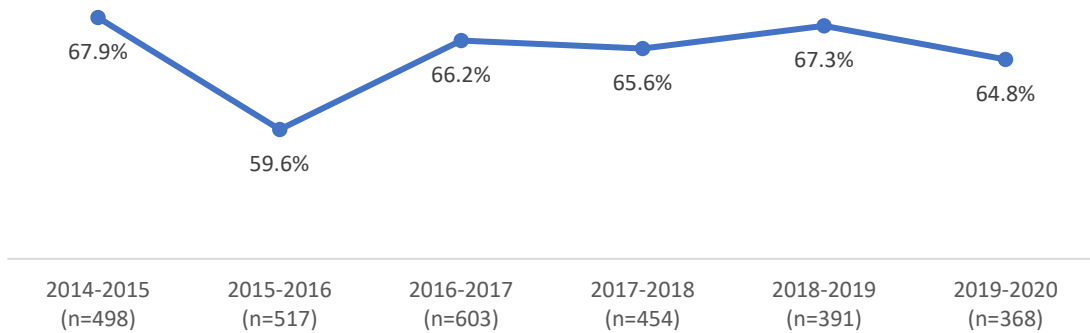
*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Figure 11. Reasons for talking on a cell while driving* ('14-'15 to '19-'20 combined) (n=2,099)



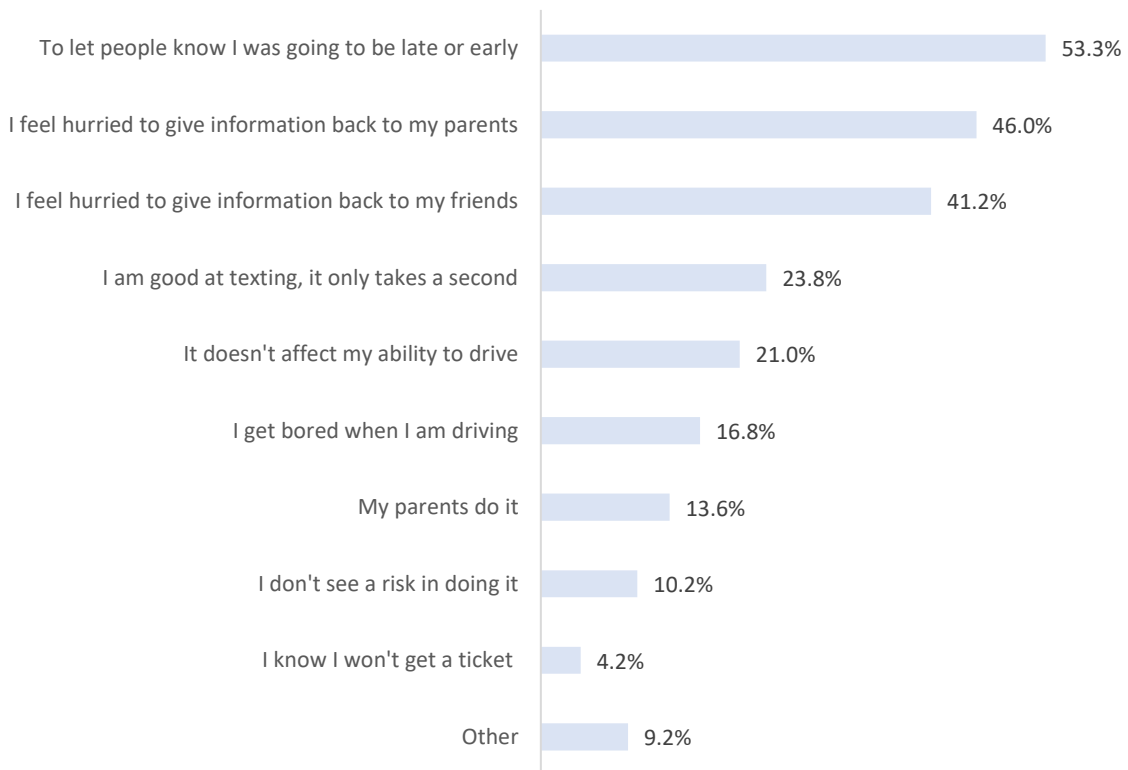
*Among respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License who reported the behavior in the past month.

Figure 12. Texted (read or sent) while driving in the past month*



*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Figure 13. Reasons for texting (reading or sending) while driving* ('14-'15 to '19-'20 combined) (n=1,821)

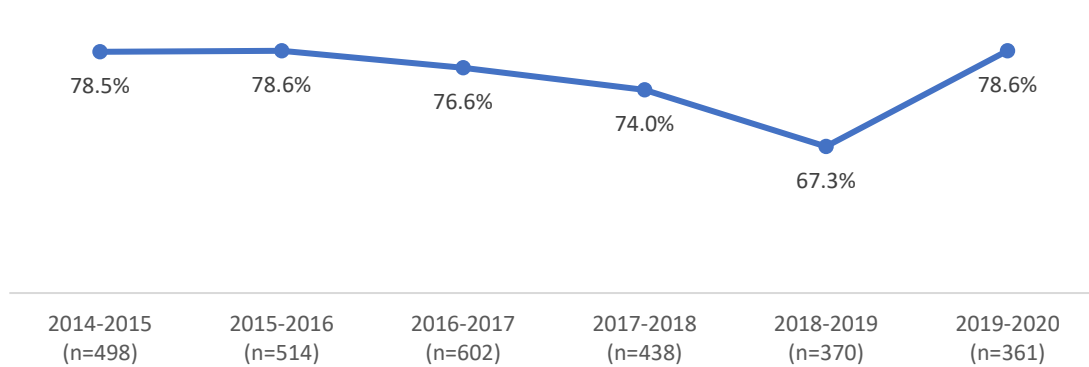


*Among respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License who reported the behavior in the past month.

Distracted Driving (excluding cell phones)

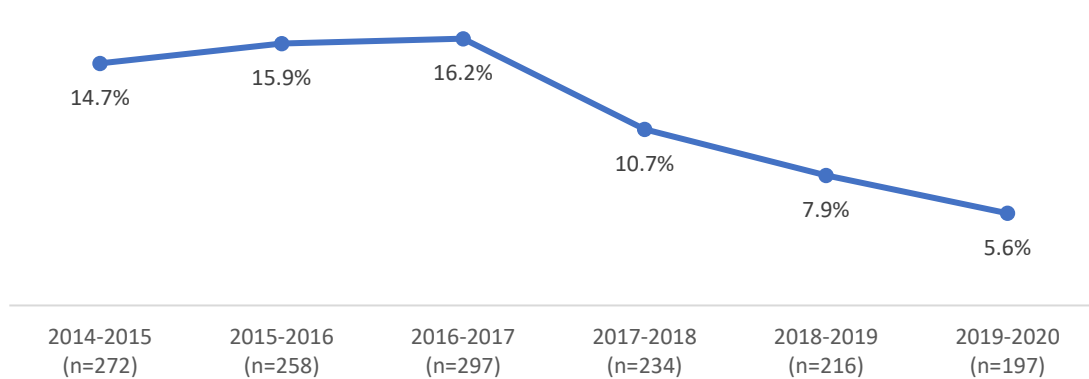
Three survey items track distracted driving behaviors other than cell phone use (Figures 14 through 16). Reports of putting on makeup while driving among female drivers has shown a strong downward trend over the past four years (Figure 15). Reported rates of eating while driving and riding in a vehicle with two or more teenagers without anyone over the age of 21 in the vehicle both increased from last year's survey.

Figure 14. Ate while driving in the past month*



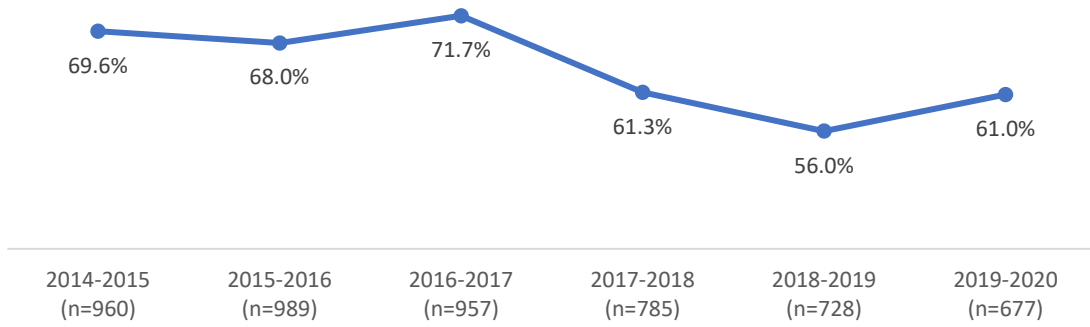
*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Figure 15. Put on make-up while driving in the past month*



*Question applied only to female respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Figure 16. Rode in a vehicle with two or more other teenagers without anyone over the age of 21 in the vehicle in the past month*

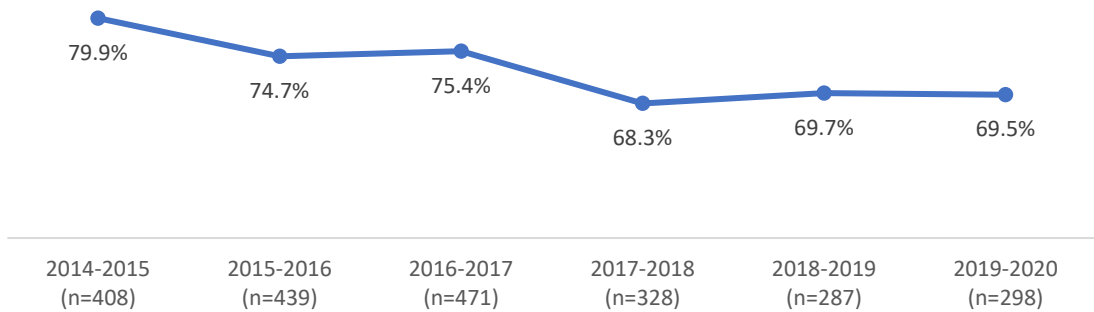


*Question applied to all respondents.

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Provisions

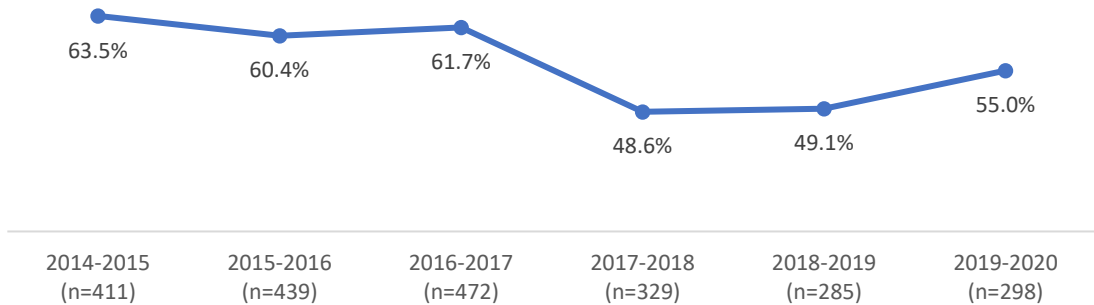
Among youth with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP), there have been noteworthy decreases in the two key behaviors that are prohibited by law: driving a vehicle with two or more other teenagers without anyone over the age of 21 in the vehicle and driving after midnight without anyone over the age of 21 in the vehicle. However, the latter saw a considerable increase from last year's survey (Figures 17 and 18).

Figure 17. Drove a vehicle with two or more other teenagers without anyone over the age of 21 in the vehicle in the past month*



*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP).

Figure 18. Drove after 12 AM (midnight) without anyone over the age of 21 in the vehicle in the past month*

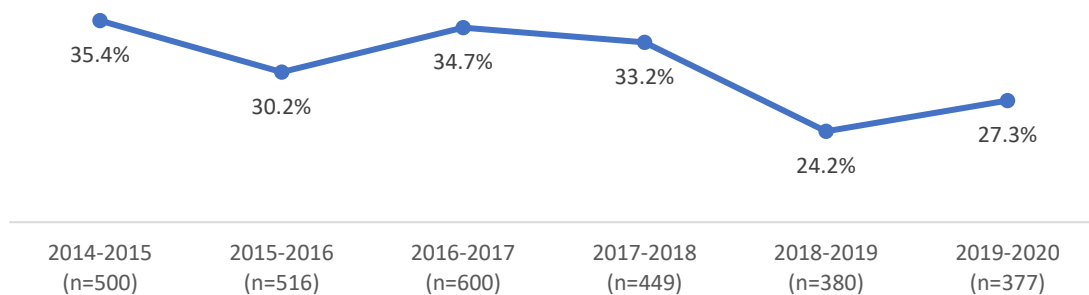


*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP).

Seat Belt Use

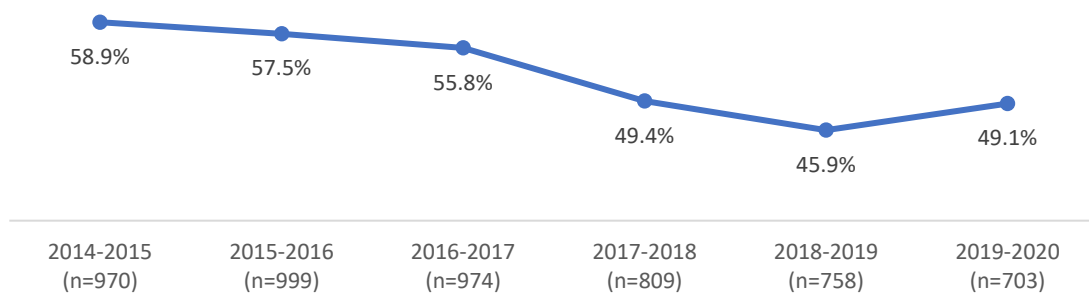
The percentage of youth reporting driving and/or riding in a vehicle without a seat belt has decreased substantially from 2014-2015 to 2019-2020 (Figures 19 through 21), though half (51.2%) of the respondents reported riding or driving in a vehicle in the past month without wearing a seatbelt (Figure 21). The top two reasons for not wearing a seat belt were “it was a short drive” and “I simply forgot”. Each of these reasons was reported by over half of those respondents who reported not wearing a seat belt in the past month (Figure 22). Additionally, there has been a strong decrease in the percentage of youth reporting that they drove with passengers who did not wear a seat belt in the past month (Figure 23).

Figure 19. Drove without wearing a seat belt in the past month*



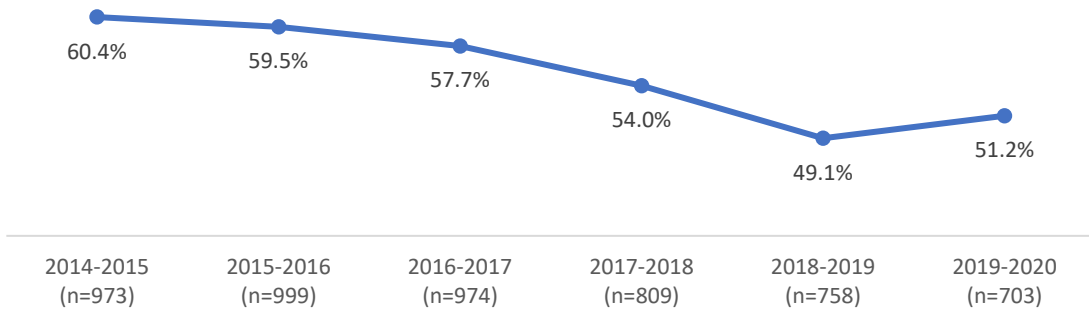
*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Figure 20. Rode in a vehicle without wearing a seat belt in the past month*



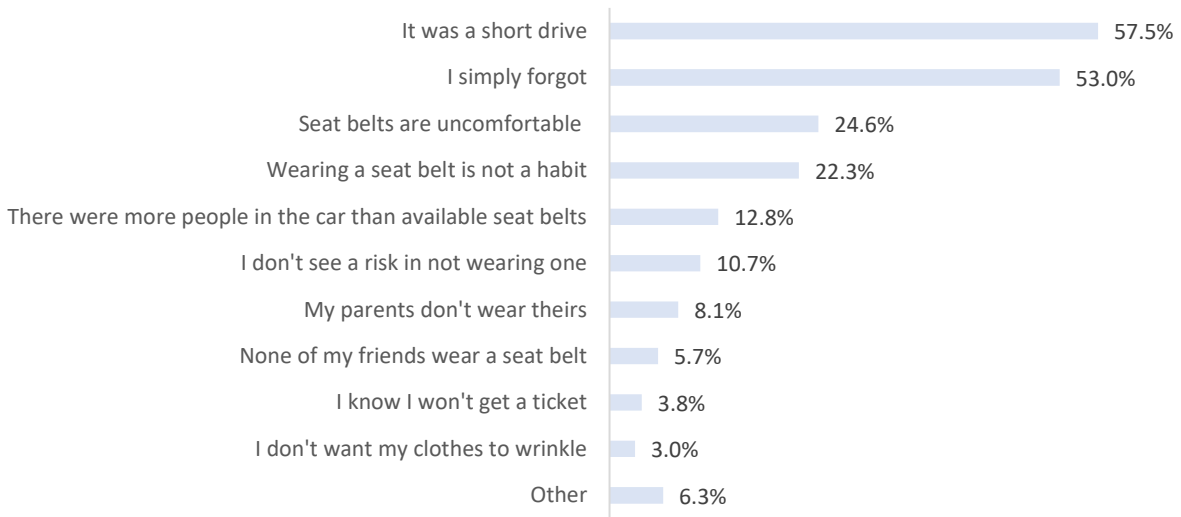
*Question applied to all respondents.

Figure 21. Rode or drove in a vehicle without wearing a seat belt in the past month*



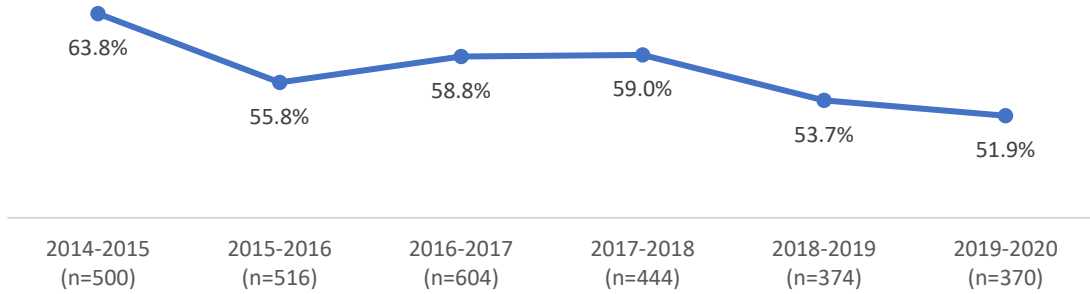
*Question applied to all respondents.

Figure 22. Reasons for not wearing a seat belt* ('14-'15 to '19-'20 combined) (n=2,798)



*Among those who reported the behavior in the past month.

Figure 23. Drove a vehicle with passengers who did not wear a seat belt in the past month*

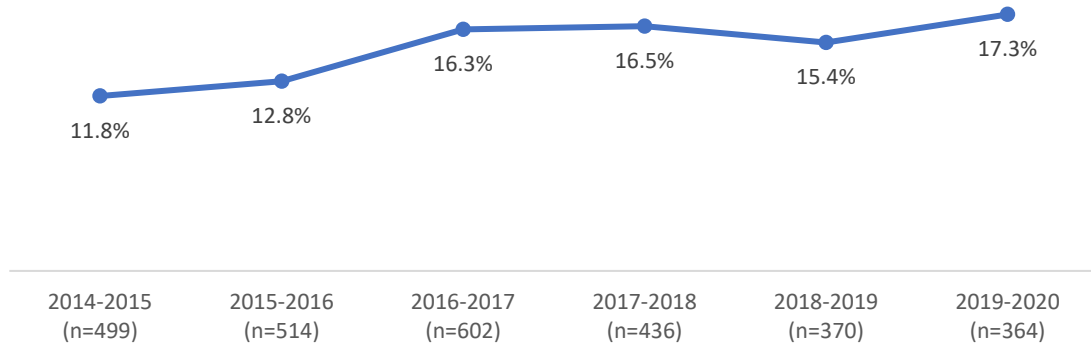


*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Night-time and Drowsy Driving

The percentage of youth who reported almost falling asleep while driving in the past month has increased from 2014-2015 to 2019-2020 (Figure 24). This indicator has the most negative trend of all 17 behaviors captured in the survey.

Figure 24. Almost fell asleep while driving in the past month*

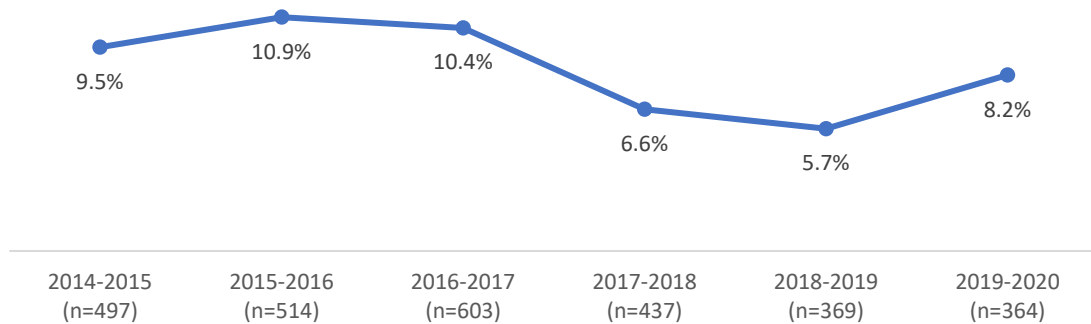


*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Alcohol Impaired Driving

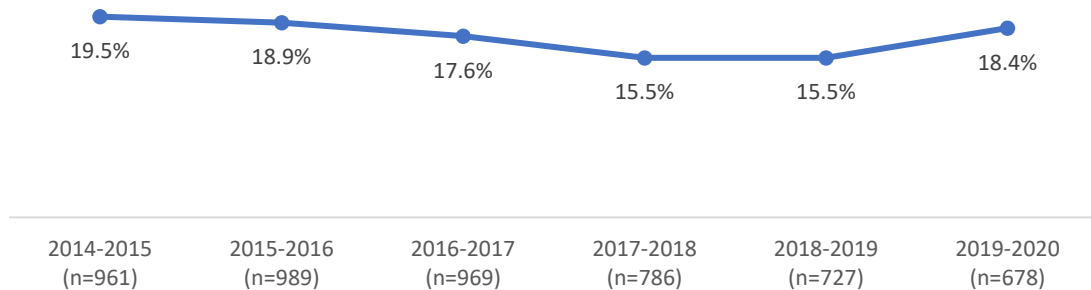
In 2019-2020, reports of alcohol-impaired driving in the past month increased notably from the low points of the previous two years to 8.2% (Figure 25). There has been little change overall in the percentage of youth who reported riding in a vehicle with a driver who had been drinking alcohol since 2014-2015, with 18.4% reporting this in 2019-2020 (Figure 26).

Figure 25. Drove a vehicle after drinking alcohol (even just one drink) in the past month*



*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Figure 26. Rode in a vehicle with a driver who had been drinking alcohol in the past month*

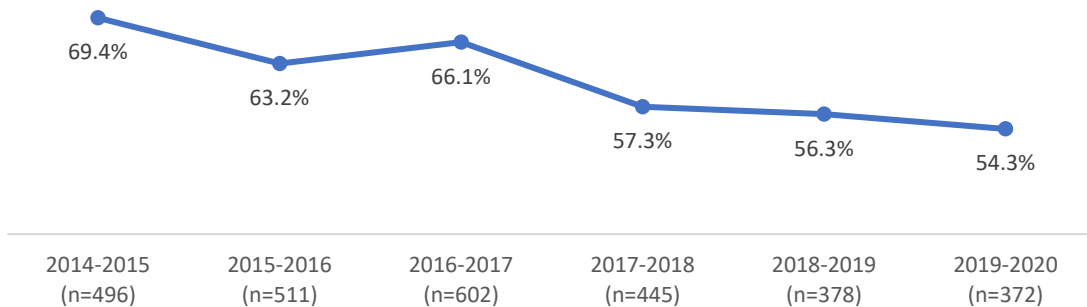


*Question applied to all respondents.

Reckless Driving

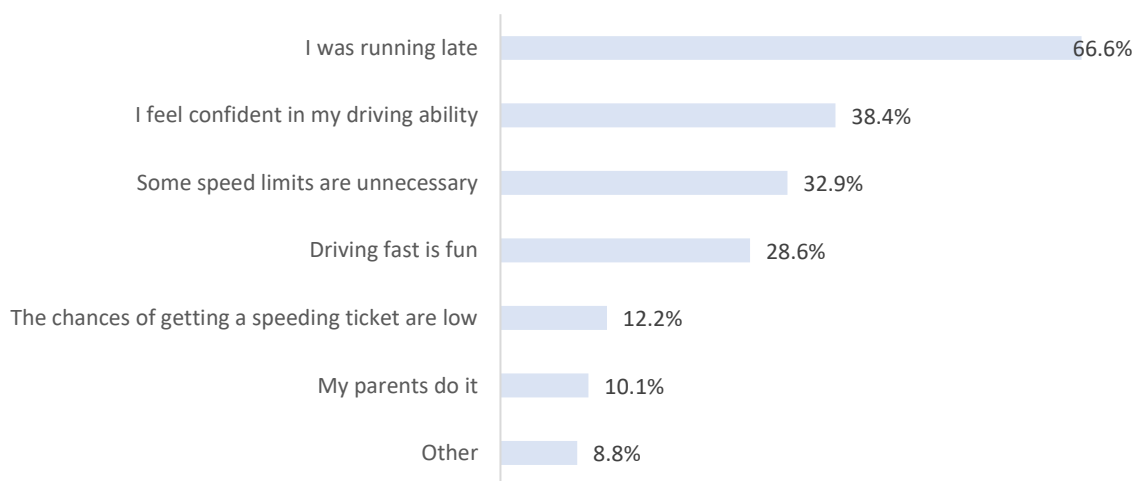
There has been a substantial decline in past-month speeding from 2014-2015 to 2019-2020, though over half (54.3%) of respondents reported speeding in this year's survey (Figure 27). Two-thirds (66.6%) of those who reported speeding gave "I was running late" as a reason (Figure 28). Since 2014-2015, there have been overall decreases in reported street-racing and running a red light in the past month, although there was a slight uptick on both of these behaviors over the past year (Figures 29 and 30).

Figure 27. Drove 10 miles per hour or more over the posted speed limit in the past month*



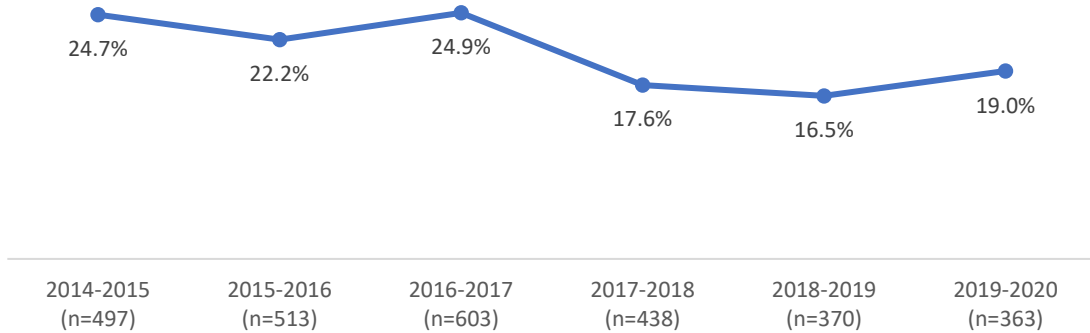
*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Figure 28. Reasons for driving 10 miles per hour or more over the posted speed limit* (n=1,702) ('14-'15 to '19-'20 combined)



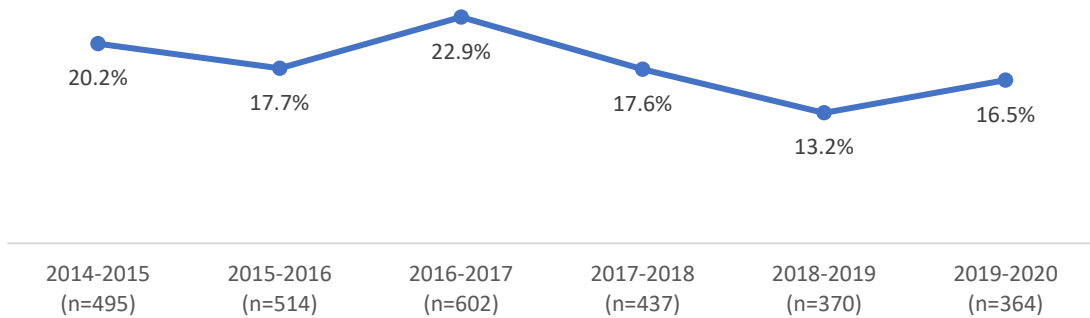
*Among respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License who reported the behavior in the past month.

Figure 29. Street-raced in the past month*



*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Figure 30. Ran a red light in the past month*



*Question applied only to respondents with a Provisional Operator's Permit (POP) or Unrestricted Driver's License.

Conclusion

Overall, the six-year trends of the Nebraska Teen Driving Experiences Survey are positive. Of the 17 risky behaviors captured by the survey, seven showed statistically significant improvements in this year's administration compared to six years ago. However, this year's results did not quite continue the positive momentum seen last year, when there were ten statistically significant improvements from the first year of the survey. Although just seven of the 17 driving behaviors show statistically significant improvements, an additional eight still show non-statistically significant improvements (some quite noteworthy). Of the remaining two behaviors, one has shown basically no change since the first year of the survey and the other (almost falling asleep while driving) has a notably negative trend.

One of the more positive changes seen over the past six years is the improvement in seat belt use. In 2014-2015, 60.4% of respondents reported that they rode and/or drove a vehicle without wearing a seat belt. This decreased significantly to 51.2% in 2019-2020. Nevertheless, it is still a concern that half of the teen respondents to the survey went unbelted at least once in the past month.

There have also been statistically significant declines in speeding 10 miles per hour or more over the posted speed limit and street racing. But again, over half (54.3%) of respondents still reported speeding in 2019-2020.

The past few years have seen substantial decreases in the percentage of female drivers reporting putting on make-up while driving: this behavior peaked in 2016-2017 with a rate of 16.2%. Since then, that rate has been cut by nearly two-thirds and was at 5.6% in 2019-2020.

The percentage of youth violating the GDL provisions of driving with two or more teen passengers without anyone over 21 has declined significantly over the past six years. Nevertheless, in this most recent survey administration, 69.5% of those with a provisional operator's permit reported driving with two more teen passengers without anyone over 21 in the vehicle. Additionally, over half (55.0%) reported driving after midnight without anyone over 21 in the vehicle in the past month.

Despite the significant declines, these behaviors still continue to be reported at rather alarming rates. In addition, another concern includes the fact that there has continually been a relatively low rate of youth identifying seat belt use, speeding, and nighttime driving as risky teen driving behaviors that contribute to teenagers being hurt or killed in a car crash. Although the vast majority of youth are able to correctly identify distractions (such as texting or other distractions) as one of the leading factors contributing to teenagers being hurt or killed in a car crash, nevertheless 64.8% still reported texting while driving in the past month. Overall, the areas of improvement show positive signs, despite the fact that risky driving behaviors continue to be prevalent. Teens in the Driver Seat is known to be evidence-based, therefore it can be reasonably expected to see sustained positive trends in these survey results as the program continues to be implemented in high schools throughout the state.