

# Alive at 25: Analysis for ND Teens



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Teen drivers are a focus in state traffic safety program efforts due to their relatively high crash risk. The National Safety Council *Alive at 25* course has been used by several states in their efforts to promote teen driver safety.

Among the states, North Dakota ranks among the highest in share of licensed drivers in the young driver group. These drivers are also more likely to be drivers in fatal crashes than teens in most other states making them a focus in traffic safety efforts (Federal Highway Administration 2010) .

The National Safety Council (NSC) developed the *Alive at 25* driver education program in an effort to reduce risky behavior by teen drivers (NSC 2010). The *Alive at 25* course is used by several states alone or in conjunction with graduated license and violator programs. The goal here is to provide local program assessment for *Alive at 25* in its efficacy for improving teen driver performance in safety outcomes.

## RESULTS

The local program assessment for *Alive at 25* included 192 cases. The effects of *Alive at 25* participation on teen driver safety outcomes was measured by crash and citation involvement. Estimates show teens in the study group who had not completed *Alive at 25* were 3.72 times more likely to be involved in a subsequent crash than teens who had completed the course. None of the control variables, such as age, gender, or location were found to be significant factors in predicting the crash safety outcome. Results should be used with caution since there are only 19 cases where teen crash involvement was reported. In addition, crash events are random in nature and often with other external contributing variables such as weather and other driver actions (Masten 2004).

Unlike the crash outcome, the citation outcome is significantly related to driver and location factors. Males are 2.2 times more likely to have a citation on their driving records during the 6-month observation interval. Teens in the West and urban areas have roughly twice the probability of receiving a driving citation, compared to teens in the East and rural areas, respectively. Completing *Alive at 25* is not a significant factor in likelihood a teen will receive a future traffic citation for a traffic offense.

## CONCLUSION

Teen driver safety is a priority area for the NDDOT TSO in programming annual activities. In recent years, the National Safety Council *Alive at 25* training has been supported as an asset in this area. The goal here was to use existing data sources to assess the efficacy of the *Alive at 25* program in improving teen driver safety. Logit modeling, used to analyze a convenience sample of 260 teen driver records, shows the training has a positive effect in reduced crash involvement for teens that completed the course. The *Alive at 25* training had no significant effect on likelihood a teen would be ticketed for a moving violation. Findings are not generalizable to the state's teen population due to the sample available for the study. In addition, the limited number of crash events does limit model robustness. Results do, however, provide evidence that the program improves teen driver skills with regard to crash avoidance. These results may be made more robust by future analysis that includes a larger sample of teen driver records and a safety outcome collection period that is expanded from six months to 1-to-2 years.

Table 1. *Alive at 25* Safety Outcome Model Variables

| Variable Name                | Definition   |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Independent Variables</b> |  |
| Gender                       | Female (0) or male (1)   |
| Region                       | West (0) or East (1) as defined in Figure 1  |
| Geography                    | Rural (0) or urban (1) as defined in Figure 1  |
| <i>Alive at 25</i>           | Completed <i>Alive at 25</i> after June 30, 2009 (0) or Completed <i>Alive at 25</i> in 2008 (1) |
| New Driver                   | In first six months of licensure on January 1, 2009 (1) or licensed six months or more (0)       |
| Age 17                       | Drive age January 1, 2009 is 17 years (1) or 16 years (0)  |
| <b>Dependent Variables</b>   |  |
| Crash                        | One or More Crashes (1) or No Crashes (0)  |
| Citation                     | One or More Moving Violation Citations (1) or No Citations (0)                                   |

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