

UNDERSTANDING FACTORS AFFECTING DECISIONS TO DELAY DRIVER LICENSING

INTRODUCTION

Driver licensure represents an important milestone for young individuals; however, an increasing proportion of young adults obtain their first driver's license at age 18 or older. Given that GDL restrictions and requirements apply to drivers who begin the licensing process before age 18, individuals who obtain their first license at older ages may have limited exposure to safety-promoting measures, such as nighttime driving curfews, passenger restrictions, and limits on electronic device use. Licensure timing is influenced by a range of individual, household, policy, and environmental factors. Research is needed to better understand how these factors interact to shape decisions regarding when young people obtain their first driver's license.

PROJECT GOAL AND PLAN

This project will examine factors associated with the timing of initial driver licensure among young people. After a literature review and synthesis, state licensing data from geographically diverse states will be analyzed to characterize the age at which individuals obtain their first license permitting independent, unsupervised driving and to examine variation across policy environments. Next, a large-scale nationally representative survey of young people aged 16–25 will examine individual, family, social, environmental, and policy factors associated with decisions about when to obtain a license. In-depth interviews will provide additional insight into the circumstances, motivations, barriers, and decision-making processes underlying licensure timing. Findings will provide insight into factors underlying licensure timing and policy recommendations related to driver licensing and driver education.

Project Team

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