

**AUSTRALASIAN ROAD SAFETY RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND POLICING
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TITLE: *keys2drive* – Find your own way to a safer driving culture

AUTHOR: Karen Smith

AFFILIATION: Australian Automobile Association

ABSTRACT:

keys2drive is a road safety program which encourages learner drivers to adopt aware, sustainable and healthy driving behaviour. *keys2drive* provides a different approach to learning to drive – a coaching method called ‘Find Your Own Way’ which aims to establish a safe driving culture.

keys2drive is a joint initiative of the Australian Automobile Association (AAA) and its member clubs, with the support of the driver training industry and funding from the Australian Government.

keys2drive provides learner drivers with a ‘free lesson’ which brings together the learner driver, the supervising driver (usually mum or dad) and a *keys2drive* accredited driving instructor.

Funded by the Australian Government, the ‘free lesson’ introduces the *keys2drive* coaching approach (Find Your Own Way), with examples of how the supervisor and learner driver can use this approach when learning to drive.

The national rollout of *keys2drive* commenced in the second half of 2009 in Tasmania and Victoria. 2010 has, to date, seen the program introduced in the other States.

This paper reviews the national rollout of *keys2drive* and its effect in creating a safe driving culture including the role of the driver training industry, community ownership, learner drivers and parents. We will also draw on a number of stories which demonstrate this culture.

PAPER:

This paper details how *keys2drive*, as a culture change program, can be implemented to move towards meeting the target of six months zero harm for P plate drivers.

The AAA believes that program intervention is required as the risk of death/serious injury jumps to 20 to 30 times as soon as a driver obtains their P plates. Research indicates that in order to get a reduction in road crashes and deaths, we need to assist learner drivers to change the way they think and behave so that they engage in less risky behaviours on the road.

keys2drive aims to bring a major shift in the way we approach teaching learner drivers. In essence, this shift is from one of control to one of empowerment.

In order to achieve behavioural change a basic understanding is required of key determinants of behaviour. Our actions are important causal elements of whether we live productive and healthy lives, however unfortunately we often fail – collectively

and individually – to behave in a way required to achieve the outcomes we would like.¹

The term 'wicked' is a phrase first proposed by H.W.J. Rittel and M.M. Webber in 1973, and has also been used by the Australian Government. It defines a growing range of complex policy areas, where it is very clear, that the government cannot deliver key policy outcomes to a disengaged and passive public. In areas including driving, the environment and health for example, to achieve significant progress in these areas active involvement and cooperation of citizens is required.²

The AAA believes that reducing the high death and accident rate in the first six months of P plates is a wicked problem. It is an issue that is highly resistant to resolution.³

There are a number of different theories and supporting evidence around the forces that influence behaviour at an individual, interpersonal and community level which we will not be addressing in this paper, however it is important to note the following:

- The traditional use of incentives, legislation and regulation, information and engagement approaches to affect behaviour is based on the 'rational choice' model of behaviour which discusses that individuals rationally respond to maximise their welfare. People assess the choices in terms of costs and benefits and select the choice that maximises their net benefits.⁴
- Human behaviour is very complex. For example, people continue to choose unhealthy lifestyles even though they know such lifestyles will cause them long-term harm. The model of rational choice does not take into account other influences on human behaviour, including peer pressure and family expectations, etc.
- Time also plays a part. It is hard for individuals to accurately estimate longer term future costs and benefits, especially if there are relatively high levels of uncertainty or missing information regarding the costs and benefits.⁵

Given the above, it is essential to recognise the 'cultural capital' factors when developing behavioural change policy and programs. 'Cultural capital' factors are our attitudes, values, aspirations and sense of self efficacy. They are important, as they have a guiding effect on the actions or behaviour that we choose in life. Cultural capital is developed by our interaction with the immediate environment and the wider society-wide influences acting upon us.

The extent that cultural capital affects behaviour depends on the strength of the attitudes, values, aspirations and sense of efficacy in relation to a goal, and the

¹ Knott, David, Muers, Stephen, Aldridge, Stephen, 2008. *Achieving Culture Change: A Policy Framework*, UK Cabinet Office, available at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/strategy/assets/culture_change_framework.pdf

² Australian Public Service Commission 2007, *Tackling Wicked Problems: a Public Policy Perspective*, available at <http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications07/wickedproblems.htm>

³ Australian Public Service Commission 2007, *Tackling Wicked Problems: a Public Policy Perspective*, available at <http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications07/wickedproblems.htm>

⁴ Knott, David; Muers, Stephen; Aldridge, Stephen (2008), *Achieving Culture Change: A Policy Framework*, UK Cabinet Office, available at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/strategy/assets/culture_change_framework.pdf

⁵ Australian Public Service Commission 2007, *Changing Behaviour: A Public Policy Perspective*, available at <http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications07/changingbehaviour.pdf>

influence of other drivers on behaviour including incentives, regulation and legislation as well as information and awareness we have about different choices of action.

There is also a feedback mechanism from behaviour into cultural capital. This is called a normalising process as we settle into new ways of acting and behaving. For example, we may feel uncomfortable about undertaking certain tasks in a new way, but after a while, these tasks become habit and the uncomfortable feeling dissipates.⁶

How does cultural change influence behaviour? It brings to attention the need to understand the social and cultural determinants of why individuals, demographic clusters or communities come to be acting or behaving the manner they are.

In the case of learner drivers and P plate drivers, we know that learner drivers are the safest drivers on the road, yet when they get their P plates the risk of death or serious injury jumps by 20 to 30 times. This is not just an isolated issue in Australia either. It is the same worldwide. So why do P plate drivers perceive they can't or don't want to undertake the desired behaviour?

The AAA does not purport that it has the whole answer to this issue. However, we believe that there is a need to create an alternative driving culture to the existing one, the program must have long term goals and should:

- Support people through the most immediate influences to them – parents, role models, etc;
- Support people through wider social influences - capacity building and collaboration with other organisations;
- Enable people through providing capacity and alternatives for different choices
- Encourage people through incentives, recognition of success or use of legislation and regulation⁷.

According to Knott et al. in *Achieving Culture Change: A Policy Framework*⁸, there are seven steps involved in achieving culture change:

1. Identifying whether culture change is relevant to the policy area;
2. Establishing objectives and assessing the rationale for intervention including any information on likely costs and benefits;
3. Identify and segment relevant population groups and set goals for each;
4. Assess drivers of attitudes and behaviour in the area;
5. Determine the suitability of different policy interventions including identifying efficacy of incentives, legislation, regulation and information approaches as well as interventions that address the development of attitudes, values and aspirations;
6. Roll out and implement preferred interventions; and

⁶ Knott, David; Muers, Stephen; Aldridge, Stephen, 2008. *Achieving Culture Change: A Policy Framework*, UK Cabinet Office, available at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/strategy/assets/culture_change_framework.pdf

⁷ Knott, David; Muers, Stephen; Aldridge, Stephen (2008), *Achieving Culture Change: A Policy Framework*, UK Cabinet Office, available at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/strategy/assets/culture_change_framework.pdf

⁸ Knott, David; Muers, Stephen; Aldridge, Stephen (2008), *Achieving Culture Change: A Policy Framework*, UK Cabinet Office, available at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/strategy/assets/culture_change_framework.pdf

7. Establish how to monitor effectiveness.

Is Culture Change Relevant to P Plate Driving?

To answer this question, we must assess the current state of our driver trainer system here in Australia.

As detailed in our paper submitted for the 2009 Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference, our current driver training system is the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) system.

The benefit of GDL is that it creates lower risk conditions for learner drivers⁹. In particular, the extension of the learner period delays the time at which unsupervised driving starts¹⁰.

However, the GDL system does not reduce post-license crash rates¹¹ or contribute much to driver road safety. In some cases it may even have a negative effect¹².

In Australia, much emphasis is placed on learner drivers gaining at least 120 hours of supervised experience.

The concept is based on Swedish research which demonstrated that a trebling of supervised experience (from 41 to 118 hours) led to a post-licence crash reduction in the first year of solo driving of just over 30%¹³.

However, an increase in supervised experience does not necessarily result in a reduced crash risk^{14 15 16 17 18}.

Training and testing in hazard perception for learner drivers is not of much benefit either¹⁹.

Immediately after passing their driving test we say to provisional drivers, 'You can now find your own way'. This is after years of them being told, 'Do it my way'. The change is huge and one most learners are poorly prepared for.

The change in the pre and post test situation is made worse by newly licensed drivers believing their ability to be greater than it actually is. Passing the driving test is seen as a validation of overall driving skill, even though the test does not assess

⁹ Foss R.D, 2007. Improving graduated driver licensing systems: A conceptual approach and its implications, *Journal of Safety Research*. 38, pp. 185–192

¹⁰ Preusser D.F., Tison J., 2007. GDL then and now, *Journal of Safety Research*. 38, pp.159–163

¹¹ Preusser D.F., Tison J., 2007. GDL then and now, *Journal of Safety Research*. 38, pp.159–163

¹² Christie, R., & Harrison, W., 2003. Driver Training and Education Programs of the Future. Report No 03/03, Royal Automobile Club of Victoria. Melbourne, p. 37

¹³ Gregersen N.P., Hans-Yngve Berg, Inger Engström, Sixten Nolén, Anders Nyberg, Per-Arne Rimmo, 2002. Sixteen years age limit for learner drivers in Sweden - an evaluation of safety effects. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*. 32, pp. 25–35

¹⁴ Simons-Morton B., 2007. Parent involvement in novice teen driving: Rationale, evidence of effects, and potential for enhancing graduated driver licensing effectiveness. *Journal of Safety Research*. 38, pp.193–202

¹⁵ Foss R.D, 2007. Improving graduated driver licensing systems: A conceptual approach and its implications, *Journal of Safety Research*. 38, pp. 185–192

¹⁶ Mayhew, D.R., 2003. The Learner's Permit. *Journal of Safety Research*. 34. p. 41

¹⁷ Ericsson, K. A., 2005. Recent advances in expertise research: A commentary on the contributions to the special issue. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 19, 233-241

¹⁸ Graham, R., and Appleton Gootman, J., 2008. Preventing teen motor crashes: contributions from the behavioural and social sciences and summary of the report of the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*. 35 (3S), pp. 253-255

¹⁹ Sagberg, F. & Bjørnskau, T., 2006. Hazard perception and driving experience among novice drivers. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*. 38, 407–414

safe solo driving behaviour. This false sense of confidence is associated with unrealistic optimism and increased crash risk^{20 21 22}.

Establishing Objectives and Assessing the Rationale for Intervention, Including Any Information on Likely Costs and Benefits

In July 2008, at the beginning of the *keys2drive* journey, the AAA defined the *keys2drive* behavioural outcomes as:

- Drive on a learners licence for as long as possible;
- Drive supervised even on P plates;
- Drive little by little, not lots immediately;
- Drive in less risky situations, and act to control or mitigate risky situations;
- Drive more safely;
- Drive experientially;
- Drive within their ability;
- Drive in a safer car.

AAA defined the overarching themes for the learning objectives as:

- Start early — given that young drivers are impressionable, there is an incentive to target the early driving period. This is a fundamental component of the *keys2drive*, which targets learner drivers before they go solo.
- Have the supervisors model behaviours – parents can be used to best effect when they model the desired, safe behaviours.
- Manage context and messages – our road safety framework will be used to manage the context and messages to shape desired behaviours.
- Use web media to communicate – in addition to the free lesson, there is exceptional potential for innovative use of the web to connect with young drivers.

Identify and Segment Relevant Population Groups and Set Goals for Each

By November 2008, AAA had further refined *keys2drive* to a program which in essence involves four key participants—the learner, the instructor, the supervisor and relevant government and non-government agencies:

- *Learners* have to learn essential safe solo driving behaviours before they go solo;
- *Supervisors* have to learn how to increase the length and frequency, and improve the width and depth of their learner's experience;

²⁰ De Joy, D.M. 1989. The optimism bias and traffic accident risk perception. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*. Vol. 21 No. 4, pp. 333–340.

²¹ Job, R.F.S., 1990. The application of learning theory to driving confidence: the effect of age and the impact of random breath testing, *Accident Analysis and Prevention*. Vol. 22 No. 2, pp. 97– 107

²² Drummond A.E., 2002. Professionalism in Driver Training Systems—Universal Principles, Local Solutions. IRTE conference paper. Goa, India

- *Driving instructors* have to learn how to teach solo driving behaviours that encourage long, wide and deep driving experiences and persuade supervisors to work with them; and
- *AAA, in partnership with the keys2drive funding body, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government,* have to collaborate and build capacity with relevant government and non-government agencies for long term program sustainability.

Further segmentation of each subgroup will occur over the next 12 months with the aim of developing more targeted campaigns for each group (eg: indigenous P plate drivers).

Assessing Demographic Profiles of *keys2drive* Participants

Learner drivers – Gen Y

The vast majority of learner and pre learner drivers are Generation Y (ie: they were born between 1982 and 2000, with the target audience being 16 to 19 year olds).

They are still at school or in their first year at University, they are technologically savvy, and are generally preoccupied by many social influences and activities – study, socialising, employment, sports and music.

The biggest factor determining the choice a Gen Y makes is the experiences of their core group of three to eight friends and, while they rarely embrace any specific brand loyalty, they do have loyalty to their friends and work hard to live up to what their peers expect of them. They are socially driven.

Traditional methods of communication style are structured; but Gen Yers want freedom. Rather than a focus on learning, they will be more concerned about the experience.

The tone and image of the campaign will be important given this marketing savvy group will see through anything less.

Supervising drivers – Baby Boomers / Gen X

The supervising drivers generally fall into Generation X or Baby Boomers.

Baby Boomers were raised on a diet of passive mass media (TV) advertising, with messages that largely presented factual, rational arguments. A key sociological marker of Baby Boomers was their collective questioning of authority and tradition – which naturally extends to their relationship with brands. This is particularly evident when examining the age groups 50 to 59 and 60 to 69 and their relationship to brand loyalty.

Similarly, Generation X was also raised on a diet of passive mass media (TV) and advertising – and did not encounter interactive media until their adulthood. While for the most part they have readily absorbed new and emerging media into their lives, they are not true 'digital natives'.

Driving Instructors

The typical ages of driving instructors are either Generation X or Baby Boomers.

Many driving instructors have been in the industry for many years.

The driving instructor industry in Australia is a cottage industry, with many driving instructors coming into the industry after they retire. There are a variety of driving school business models from sole traders, small/medium sized businesses to large drive schools (100-plus instructors), with many who have been teaching driving in a certain manner their whole careers.

There is a sub-group of driving instructors that disagrees with the log book approach that many state government departments have introduced. Parents (supervising drivers) are now much more involved in coaching learner drivers to complete the required logbook driving hours (varying from 25 to 120 hours). A number of driving instructors have indicated that they have to work even harder now to 'undo all the mistakes' that supervising drivers teach learner drivers.

At the commencement of the *keys2drive* program, market research was undertaken to gain further insights into two of the relevant population groups, learner and supervising drivers. Some of the outcomes of this research follow:

Learner drivers:

They want to drive. Gaining a driver's licence is a 'rite of passage'.

Getting a licence is one of the defining events of their lives, but for most it is a means to an end – they need mobility and will do it in the easiest possible way.

They believe they are indestructible, so the danger of first 'going solo' tends to be completely overshadowed by the lure of newfound freedom and independence.

Supervising drivers:

Many are daunted by the task of sitting alongside their learner and providing them with the right guidance.

They want their learner to have mobility and freedom – but only if they do it the right way and safely.

They have a vested interest in ensuring their learner not only joins the program but is successful in it.

Some are ambivalent about or unaware of specific risks associated with novice driving.

Determine Suitability of Different Policy Interventions

Flowing from this breakdown of the learners and supervising drivers, it is important to identify the efficacy of incentives, legislation, regulation and information approaches as well as interventions that address the development of attitudes, values and aspirations.

Based on the above, the AAA has developed five general intervention opportunities for *keys2drive*:

Intervention 1

- The learner can begin to learn the road rules and how they apply, read traffic and notice more of what the supervisor does and says.
- The supervisor is introduced to key safe behaviours and encouraged to model those behaviours (eg: obey road rules, look up, hang back, mirror/signal/head-check, stay calm and question themselves).

Intervention 2

- The learner is helped to develop basic skills and build foundation for safe behaviours.
- The supervisor can check the accuracy of their own understanding. Sees how to coach, manage in-car experience and gain confidence.
- Instructors help to facilitate the above.

Intervention 3

- The learner automates basic skills and can begin to develop safe behaviours.
- The supervisor is up-skilled if they missed intervention 1 and 2, and helped to guide practice and coach in safe behaviours, and provide diverse experiences.
- Instructors help to facilitate the above.

Intervention 4

- The learner is helped to prepare for licence assessment and their perception of their ability is calibrated.
- The supervisor coaches as required, sustains calibration, and assists in diverse experiences.
- Instructors help to facilitate the above.

Intervention 5

- The learner gets advice on how to control and mitigate their own risk factors.
- The supervisor gets advice on how to control and mitigate learner's risk factors.
- Instructors encourage post 'P' lessons.

Further targeted interventions will be developed over time based on evidence gathered regarding the above. .

Roll out and implementation of preferred interventions

The AAA envisages that the *keys2drive* free lesson is the beginning of a much broader driver intervention program where there are multiple touch points throughout the learner driver continuum and ongoing support and coaching from accredited driving instructors.

Much of the *keys2drive* free lesson and initial training of driving instructors has been based around the *keys2drive* road map concept which takes our user groups on a journey.

By **March 2009** the road map concept had evolved to the point where it could be utilised:

- As the scaffold for the free lesson;
- As the narrative for the lesson participants (the learner driver and their supervisor);
- To provide memory cues, motivation to proceed, and the basic information to do so for the learner driver and their supervisor;
- As the framework for the provision of supporting content on the website.

The road map forms the basis of the lesson plan for the free lesson, and was designed to cater equally well for all of the five beginner driver contexts (pre learner, just got my Ls, had my Ls for a while, about to go for my Ps, just got my Ps).

The road map not only forms the basis for how the free lesson will be given to the learner driver and their supervisor, but is integral in the development of the current website learning space and content for all three user groups.

The development of the *keys2drive* learning has now reached the point where *keys2drive* can provide a range of learning experiences the AAA believe over time will produce significantly lower risk driving behaviours.

The program has now been launched in all States and Territories with the exception of Northern Territory, which will come online after the Federal Election. The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government attended and launched Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and ACT. Minister Albanese was unable to attend South Australia and Queensland launches. However, a local Federal Member launched the program in these states.

Establish how to monitor effectiveness

The AAA is currently looking to commission an independent evaluation that will provide a comparison of the original program's proposed activities and deliverables and the current situation.

It is envisaged this will involve the review and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative information, including existing *keys2drive* plans, reports and datasets; and consultation with a range of key stakeholders.

The success of *keys2drive* will be judged on its ability to lift instructional standards as well as to change the current culture of learner drivers. Passing a test does not guarantee that you are a safe driver. *Keys2drive* offers the ability to empower young people by encouraging them to have learner driver experiences that are long, wide and deep. These experiences coupled with a change in learner driving culture will help to ensure a safer driving future for the next generation of young Australians