

Parent Willingness to Complete Parent-Teen Homework Assignments in Driver Education: Promising Results from the Montana KEYS Pilot Study

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Abstract

This pilot study assessed family support for integrating parent-teen homework assignments into the Montana driver education curriculum. Homework assignments were tested within four driver education classes across the state. After completing each homework assignment, parents completed a one-page evaluation form. Of the 75 families (81%) who agreed to participate, 90% or more of parents reported “medium” or “high” willingness to complete all activities across the five homework assignments. The overwhelming majority of qualitative feedback was positive; the minimal negative feedback related mostly to parents’ limited time. Exposure to the tenets of goal-oriented persuasion and parent motivation in education that were incorporated into homework assignments was highly predictive of parent willingness. These findings are promising, but the next step would be to conduct an efficacy trial in a broader audience to determine whether completion of parent-teen homework assignments is related to short-term and prospective outcomes related to safe teen driving.

Table 1. Completion Rates for all Activities within Parent-Teen Homework Assignments

Schools	Assignment #1		Assignment #2		Assignment #3		Assignment #4		Assignment #5	
	Rate	%	Rate	%	Rate	%	Rate	%	Rate	%
School A	9/13	68	9/13	68	10/13	77	11/13	85	13/13	100
School B	18/19	95	18/19	95	19/19	100	18/19	95	0/19	0
School C	26/27	96	22/27	81	22/27	81	26/27	96	23/27	85
School D	15/16	94	11/16	69	12/16	75	8/16	50	7/16	44
Total	68/75	88	60/75	78	63/75	83	63/75	82	43/75	57

Note: Schools B and C used a different recruitment strategy than did Schools A and D; School B did not obtain family evaluation forms for Assignment #5

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Parent Willingness to Complete Activities within Parent-Teen Homework Assignments

Topics and Activities for the Five Parent-Teen Homework Assignments	N	Parent Willingness					
		Low		Medium		High	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1. Safety Precautions & Safety Equipment							
1.1 Vehicle-Related Activity: Vehicle Tasks	71	3	4.3	29	40.9	39	54.9
1.2 Vehicle-Related Activity: Vehicle Adjustments	72	2	2.8	38	45.9	37	51.4
1.3 Vehicle-Related Activity: Vehicle Controls	71	1	1.4	26	36.6	44	62.0
1.4 Family Exercise: Rapid Fire Commands	71	3	4.2	31	43.7	37	52.1
2. Traffic Laws & Courteous Driving							
2.1 Family Exercise: Do You Know Your Signs?	68	2	2.9	22	32.4	44	64.7
2.2 Driving Activity: Signs	62	2	3.2	19	30.7	41	66.1
2.3 Family Discussion: Traffic Laws	65	1	1.5	21	32.3	43	66.2
2.4 Family Discussion: Courteous Driving	67	0	0.0	22	32.8	45	67.2
2.5 Driving Activity: Driver Communication	64	1	1.6	21	32.8	42	65.6
3. Vision, Balance, & Judgment							
3.1 Family Discussion: Vision, Balance, & Judgment.	71	4	5.6	19	26.8	48	67.6
3.2 Family Exercise: Driving Pictures	70	5	7.1	29	41.4	36	51.4
3.3 Driving Activity: Curves, Hillcrests, & Intersections	70	2	2.9	23	32.9	45	64.3
3.4 Driving Activity: Speed Control & Lane Position	64	3	4.7	19	29.7	42	65.6
4. Adverse Driving Conditions							
4.1 Family Discussion: Adverse Driving Conditions	63	1	1.6	12	19.1	50	79.4
4.2 Family Exercise: Driving Pictures	63	2	3.2	19	30.2	42	66.7
4.3 Driving Activity: Driving Conditions	63	2	3.2	18	28.6	48	68.3
5. Continued Safe Driving & Supervised Practice							
5.1 Family Discussion: Unsafe Driving	46	2	4.4	11	23.9	33	71.7
5.2 Family Exercise: Agreement for Safe Driving	47	2	4.3	18	38.3	27	57.5
5.3 Family Exercise: Keep Track of Driver Progress	44	4	9.1	14	31.8	26	59.1
5.4 Family Exercise: Schedule for Supervised Driving	43	3	7.0	17	39.5	23	53.5

Table 3. Regression Results for Predicting Parent Willingness to Complete Homework Assignments from Goal-Oriented Persuasion (GOP) and Parent Motivation in Education (PME)

Parent-Teen Homework Assignments	Models ¹							
	GOP		PME		Combined		Added Value	
	N	R-square	N	R-square	N	R-square	Over GOP	Over PME
1. Safety Precautions & Safety Equipment	63	.45***	58	.43***	55	.55***	.10	.12
2. Traffic Laws & Courteous Driving	59	.47***	58	.48***	57	.60***	.13	.12
3. Vision, Balance, & Judgment	62	.54***	59	.63***	62	.69***	.15	.06
4. Adverse Driving Conditions	61	.37**	59	.46***	58	.55***	.08	.09
5. Continued Safe Driving & Supervised Practice	41	.58***	41	.41**	41	.65**	.07	.24

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001; ¹ all models control for school