

If you treat an individual as he is, he will stay as he is, but if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be, he will become what he ought to be and could be.

- Johann von Goethe

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Adult Traffic Safety Participant Workbook Product Code 10280106

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SECTION 1
PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

SECTION 2
Appendix

Introduction

What are the causes and costs of traffic accidents? How can the automobile bring so much freedom and sorrow into our society? Each year thousands of lives are permanently affected or lost due to drivers making improper decisions. Millions of dollars are spent on medical bills and damage repairs to automobiles. What dangerous habits would you be willing to give up to save a life or the suffering caused by a permanent disability?

Research has shown that ignorance of traffic laws accounts for only a small percentage of the traffic problems. In fact, only about 10 percent of all accidents can be attributed to the combination of driver ignorance and auto failure. All the rest of the traffic accidents are a result of improper decisions, uncontrolled emotions and the bad habits of drivers. For this reason, the NCTI Traffic Safety Program is designed to go beyond teaching basic traffic laws.

This course is not designed to be a form of punishment or to make you feel guilty for breaking traffic laws. Its purpose is to give you the opportunity to examine your own driving behavior and discover the factors that cause you to develop unsafe driving habits. Practical alternatives will be presented to assist you as you decide to improve your driving behavior.

You hold the key to the success of this program. No one can force you to learn. It is up to you to make the most of this day. When was the last time you closely examined your driving habits or made a personal commitment to positively alter your daily experience behind the wheel? Take the time to do some serious self-examination and decide to make a positive

change in at least one area of your driving behavior.

This class helps drivers examine the relationship that attitudes have on behavior and especially develops a personal awareness of the effect that emotional state has upon driving behavior. Traffic laws will, of course, be discussed and training films may be shown, but most of the time will be devoted to identifying emotional factors that alter safe driving behavior.

Agreements

- All participants must take part in the program, follow instructions, complete the course evaluations, and be actively involved. Anyone who disrupts the class will be asked to leave and forfeit any fees paid.
- Each participant has the right to his/her own opinions, and is free to say whatever he/she feels, as long as it doesn't infringe on the rights of other participants.
- 3. Participants will be respectful and supportive of each other at all times.
- 4. Each participant is responsible for his/her own learning.
- 5. It is okay to have a good time.
- 6. Participants must be on time. The time will be that of the clock in the classroom or as the facilitator indicates.
- 7. Breaks will be provided. The exact times will be determined by the facilitator.
- 8. There will be no smoking or eating in the classroom. A policy on beverages will be determined.
- Anyone coming to class under the influence of alcohol or drugs will forfeit his/her right to participate.
- 10. If a participant does not attend the entire class, he/she will receive no credit.
- 11. All cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices must remain in the off position for the duration of the class.

fully commit myself to do all assignments and projects as they are given and fully take part in all class discussions.

Objectives

- 1. To discover how prior and present attitudes affect driving behavior.
- 2. **To understand** how attitudes and emotions dictate whether the driver is in control while driving.
- 3. **To understand** driving techniques that help drivers avoid accidents and promote safer driving.
- 4. To understand the effects that drugs/alcohol have on driving ability.
- 5. **To develop** a renewed awareness of driving responsibilities.
- 6. **To decide** to make at least one positive change to alter my current driving behavior.





Your Personal Report

1. Use the following questions to examine your offense and discuss your feelings with the group.

What is your name and where are you from?	How many tickets have you received?
What are the events that led to your traffic citation?	Were you more upset that you had been caught or that you were breaking the law?
How did you feel when you were stopped and ticketed?	How do you feel about being here?
What was the worst part of the experience?	6. Have you noticed a change in your driving since your ticket? ☐ Yes ☐ No 7. Why-did-you choose to take this-class?
What were the circumstances of your traffic citation?	
 3. Were you aware that you were breaking the law? Yes No 4. How many tickets have you had before? 5. Was your violation the result of: a lack of driving skills or knowledge, or a negative attitude? 	8. If you could gain anything that you wanted from the time spent in this class, what would it be?



Values, Attitudes, Behaviors

1. On the grid below, rank all four characters in the story Alligator River from worst to least worst.

Rank	Why?
#1 Worst	
#2	
#3	
	August 1997
#4 Least Worst	

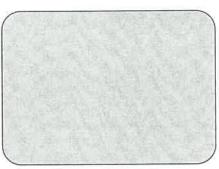


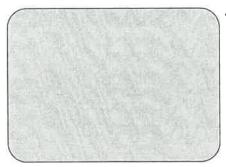


Values, Attitudes, Behaviors

2. What are values?

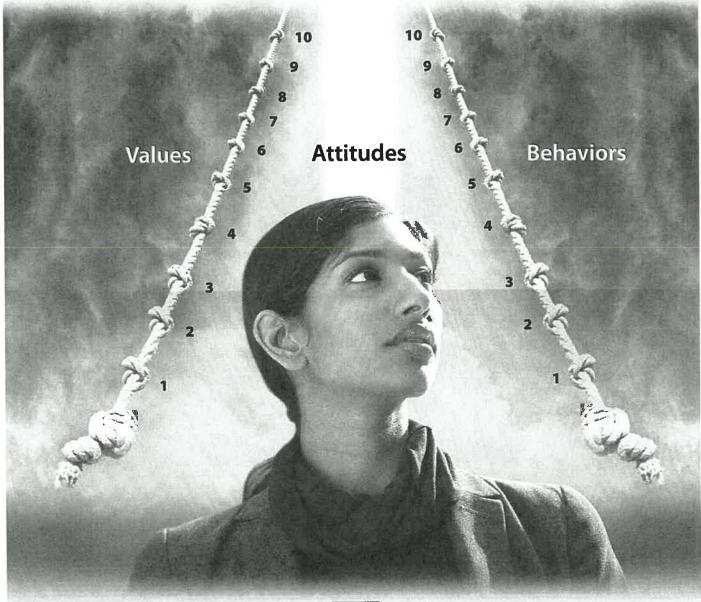






4. What are some negative things people believe in?

5. On the VALUE ROPE is a 1 to 10 scale. Think about and circle the number that shows if you believe in negative or positive values. For example, positive values would be 8, 9, or 10; negative values would be 1, 2, 3, or 4.





Values, Attitudes, Behaviors

6.	What is an attitude?
7.	How easily are attitudes changed?
	Give an example.
8.	What is behavior?
9.	On the BEHAVIOR ROPE on the preceding page, circle the number that describes the behavior that resulted in your traffic citation. Now draw a line between the number you circled on the VALUE ROPE and the number you circled on the BEHAVIOR ROPE. Is your line straight across or is it slanted?
10.	What does it mean if your line is slanted?
11.	What does it mean if your line is straight across?
12.	How would a person get his/her line straight across?
13.	What would you like to do to get your line straight across and put your life in order?



Responsible Driving

What is responsibility?		
How do people show responsibility in their live	es?	
	- Sullat are s	ome driving responsibilities?
What are excuses and why do people use them	4.VVIII.	
	\ c	
	e	
What are some of the positive and negative co	\$-	
POSITIVE (+)	NEGATIVE ()	
		6. Whose responsibility is it to make you obey laws?
How would your driving behavior change if you	u were responsible for showing others	how to drive safely?



Responsible Driving

. Are there some situations that justify brea	ıking a traffic law? Explain	
. What are some of the unwritten rules of the	ne road that you can follow to show your concern for	other drivers?
). What are some of the positive and negativ **POSITIVE (+)	e consequences of driving responsibly? NEGATIVE (—)	
. What steps will you take to become a more	responsible driver?	



Staying in control

. Tailgaters				
. Speeders				V
. Slow drivers in the fast lane				
. Being cut-off				
It is the difference between "being in co	ntrol" and "being out of co	ntrol"?		
the characteristics of each type of perso Person In Cont	n in the following column:		Person Out of Con	trol
the characteristics of each type of perso	n in the following column:		Person Out of Con	trol
the characteristics of each type of perso	n in the following column:		Person Out of Con	trol
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the characteristics of each type of perso	n in the following column:		Person Out of Con	trol

CROSSROADS • A-TRA PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

Staying in control

4. How would a person in control respond to the following traffic situations? a. Tailgaters b. Speeders c. Slow drivers in the fast lane d. Being cut-off 5. How do your answers in #4 compare with your answers in #1? 6. What makes you angry, upset or depressed? _____ 7. Can someone else, like another driver, "make" you angry, upset or depressed

8. How do you drive when you become angry, upset or depressed?



Staying in control

-		
Iff	someone saw you acting angry or depressed, would they be eeing the "real" you?	
- -	low could you benefit from being more in control of your driving behav	vior?
/	What specific areas of your driving life would you like to better control?	
The same of the sa	What steps can you take to better control the area of your driving life io	
THE PERSON NAMED IN COLUMN		

1	. Stress has become a common "buzz" word. What is stress?
2	. What happens to your body when you are exposed to stress?
3.	ls stress good or bad? Explain.
4.	What are some of the mental and physical consequences of too much stress?
5.	Why is driving in bumper-to-bumper traffic more stressful to some people than others?
6.	What controls the level of stress in each person?
7.	How can stress cause a person to develop drinking or drug problems?
3,	What are some things that cause you stress? List as many as possible.

Stress Test

Below are stressors (life events) in a person's life, listed in order of importance. Circle the score for the life events that you have experienced in the last year. Total the circled scores in column one. Total the circled scores in column two. Transfer the totals to the appropriate line on the POST-IT-NOTE. Add the two scores for your total.

#	Life Event	Score
1.	Death of a spouse	100
2.	Divorce	73
3.	Marital separation	
4.	Detention in jail or other institution	
5.	Death of a close family member	
6.	Major personal injury or illness	
7.	Marriage	50
8.	Fired from work	
9.	Marital reconciliation	
10		
11	. Change in health or behavior of family member	
12	Pregnancy	40
13	Sex difficulties	40
	. Gain of new family member through	
• •	birth, adoption, or marriage	39
15	. Major business readjustment	
16	. Change in financial state	38
17	. Death of close friend	37
	Change to a different line of work	
	. Change in number of arguments with partner	
	. Taking on a new mortgage	
21	. Foreclosure on a mortgage or loan	30
	Column 1 Subtote	

#	Life Event	Score
22.	Change in responsibilities	29
	Son/daughter leaves home	
24.	Trouble with in-laws	29
25.	Outstanding personal achievement	28
	Partner begins/stops work	
27.	Starting or finishing school	26
28.	Change in living conditions	25
29.	Revision of personal habits	24
30.	Trouble with boss	23
	Change in working hours or conditions	
32.	Change in residence	20
33.	Change in schools	20
34.	Change in recreational habits	19
35	. Change in church activities	19
	. Change in social activities	
	. Major purchase such as a new car	
38	. Change in sleeping habits	16
	. Change in number of family gatherings	
40	. Change in eating habits	15
41	. Vacation	13
	. Christmas or holiday observance	
43	. Minor violation of the law	<u>11</u>
	Column 2 Subtotal	

100 150 200 250 300 350 400 450 500 50 Column 1
Column 2
Total HIGH **MAXIMUM MODERATE** LOW

T.H. Holmes and R.H. Rahe. "The Social Readjustment Rating Scale." Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 1967. For more information, please visit www.DrRahe.com or email Richard@DrRahe.com.

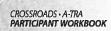
Take the following test. Determine how often the statement applies to you. Use $\,$

Coping With Stress

	Scoring Guide	
1	Almost Always	
2	Often	
3	Sometimes	
4	Rarely	
5	Never	

	Likelihood of develo	ping stress-related problems
60	ALWAYS	
50	FREQUENTLY	
40	OFTEN	
30	SOMETIMES	
20	NEVER	

the scoring guide on the left to rate each item:
1. I eat at least one hot, balanced meal a day.
2. I get seven to eight hours of sleep each night.
3. I give and receive affection regularly.
4. I have at least one relative nearby on whom I can trust and rely on.
5. I exercise to the point of perspiration at least twice a week.
6. I smoke less than half a pack of cigarettes a day. (If you do not smoke, give yourself 1 point.)
7. I take fewer than five alcoholic drinks a week. (If you do not drink, give yourself 1 point.)
8. I am the appropriate weight for my height.
9. My family has enough money to meet our basic needs.
10. I get strength from my spiritual beliefs.
11. I regularly attend club or group activities.
12. I have a variety of friends and acquaintances.
13. I have one or more good friends to talk about personal matters.
14. I am in good health.
15. I am able to talk openly about my feelings when angry or upset.
16. I have regular conversations with the people I live with about chores, money, and other similar daily-living issues.
17. I do something for fun at least once a week.
18. I am able to organize my time effectively.
19. I drink less than three cups of coffee, tea or caffeinated beverages a day. (If you do not drink any of these, give yourself 1 point.)
20. I take quiet time for myself during the day.
Total Points
Pick at least one high score item above that you will work on to help you take more control of your life. What will you do?
Those conductor your race. What will you do:
This test was developed by Lyle H. Miller and Alma Dell Smith
from the Boston University Medical Center.



Relaxation

1.	What are some POSITIVE ways people relieve tension and stress?
2.	What are some NEGATIVE ways people relieve tension and stress?
3.	Many people use drugs and alcohol to relax. Why is that unwise?
4.	What kind of environment can you create that would help you to relax?
5.	Below are two effective ways to relax. What are some other positive techniques that you will begin using to reduce stress and tension in your life?
vo	UR BASIC RELAXATION BREATH
Pla thr exp mo too Re it a nir thi do ba	ce your hands just under your ribs with your fingertips touching. Bend over from the waist. Inhale ough your nose and send all the air to your fingertips. Feel them separate as your diaphragm bands. Then feel your ribs separate and sense your chest expanding. Hold your breath for a sement. Then relax your breath. As you exhale through your nose, feel your fingertips come gether as your diaphragm flattens. Sense your ribs coming together and feel your chest lower. See this same breathing sequence until it becomes natural, comfortable, and easy. And then try gain standing straight and tall. This is your basic relaxation breath. The breath that is the beging of being. By using your basic relaxation breath and variations built upon it, you can do many longs. You can be fully and completely what you are. You can clear yourself of worry, fear, and lubt. You can control many of the automatic functions of your body. You can restore the energy lance within your body. You can revitalize yourself when you feel drained. You can loosen any or tof you that feels tight. Very easily and very simply.
CL	EARING YOURSELF
ab jus Fir	down on your back. Uncross your legs. Let your hands rest at your sides, palms up. Think out something that is bothering you. Let it develop into a worry or a fear. Place your hands t below your ribs and just above your waist. Breathe your basic relaxation breath. St inhale to a silent count of five. Hold for a silent count of five before you exhale. Exhale for your breath and be shown in a count of five before you inhale again. Think only of your breath and
Se an yo 7,7	e rhythmic counting cycle of your breathing. In all other thoughts away and sense the relaxation flowing through you. Sense the worry In doubt and tension leaving you. Repeat your inhale, and repeat your hold, and repeat In exhale, and repeat your hold, to the count of 6,6,6,6. Repeat it all again to the count of In the count of the count of 8,8,8,8. Now explore yourself and become aware of how In the count of 8,8,8,8. Now explore yourself and become aware of how In the count of 8,8,8,8. Now explore yourself and become aware of how
Co	nsider this: the more slowly you breathe, the more relaxed you become. The more rapidly u breathe, the more tense you become. When you breath through your nose, you breathe ore slowly because the filters in your nose slow down each inhalation and exhalation,

allowing your basic relaxation breath to clear your mind.



Speeding

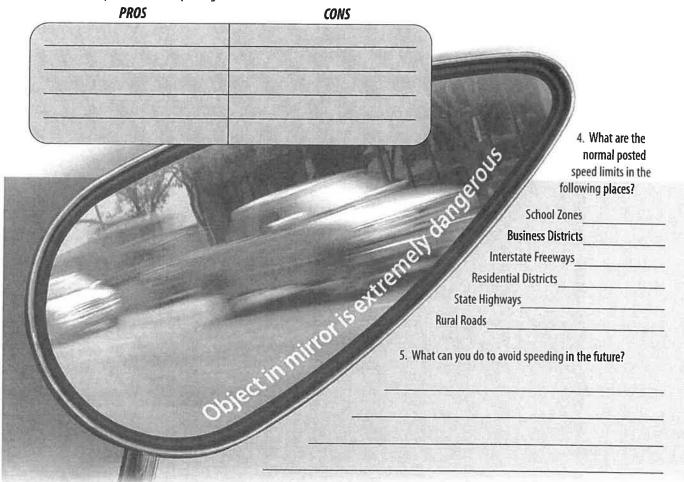
1.	What excuses do people give for speeding?	

2. The chart below shows how much time you save on a ten-mile trip at various increments over the speed limit. The first column on the left shows how much time it takes to go ten miles at the posted speed limit. For example, if the speed limit were 30 m.p.h., you would save three minutes by going 35 m.p.h. for ten miles.

How much time do you save by going 65 m.p.h. instead of 55 m.p.h. for ten miles?

TEN MI	+5 mph		peed limit			
		The state of the s	+10 mph	+15 mph	+20 mph	+25mph
30 min. total time	20 mph speed limit	6 min.	10 min.	13 min.	15 min.	17 min.
24 min. total time	25 mph speed limit	4 min.	7 min.	9 min.	11 min.	12 min.
20 min. total time	30 mph speed limit	3 min.	5 min.	7 min.	8 min.	9 min.
17 min. total time	35 mph speed limit	2 min.	4 min.	5 min.	6 min.	7 min.
15 min. total time	40 mph speed limit	2 min.	3 min.	4 min.	5 min.	5.5 min.
13 min. total time	45 mph speed limit	1 min.	2 min.	3 min.	3.5 min.	4.5 min.
12 min. total time	50 mph speed limit	1 min.	2 min.	2.5 min.	3.5 min.	4 min.
11 min. total time	55 mph speed limit	1 min.	1.5 min.	2.5 min.	3 min.	3.5 min.

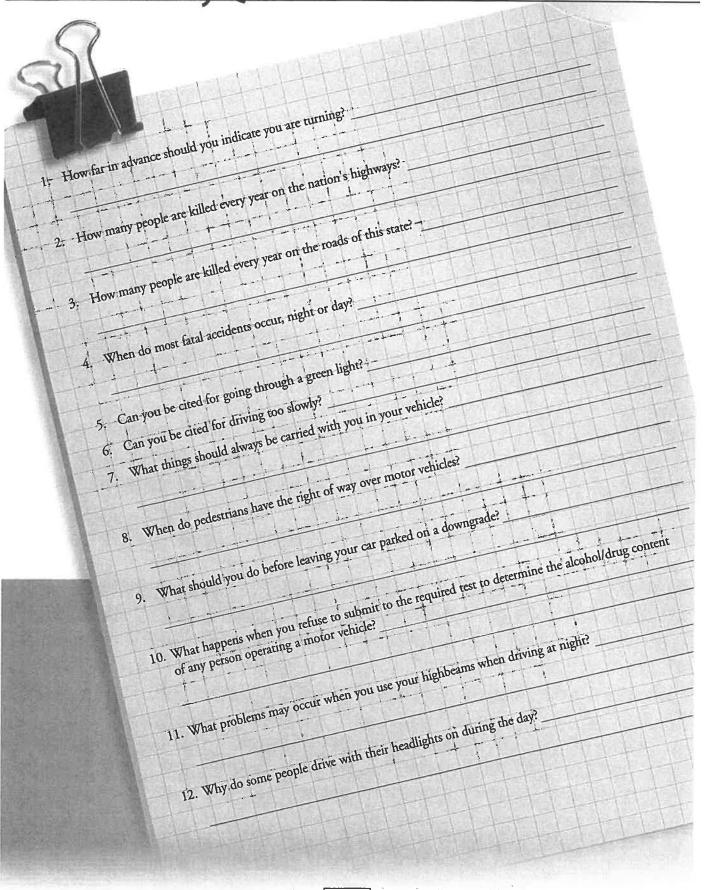
3. What are the pros and cons of speeding?

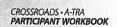




Seat Belts

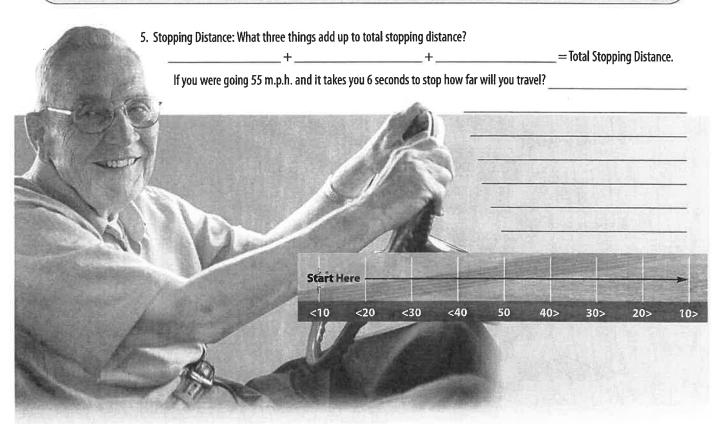
1. Wha	t are your feeling	s about wearing sea	t belts?			
				pelt law?		
3. Wha	t are the argume	nts for and against so	eat belts?	AGAINST		
	O True O False O True O False O True O False O True O False	70% of passengers If you are thrown to Many people are in For small children, holding them in an Of those killed in a	njured due to being trap _l sufficient crash protecti	iver does. lent, you are more likely to be kille ped in a car by a seat belt. ion can be provided by	d.	
at 5	5 m.p.h. How mu	be subjected to a for ch force is exerted b	rce of 20 times its weigly a two-ton car?	ht when hitting a solid object How much would if it were not strapped down?		
,6. Wha	at is the law in th	is state regarding chi	ild passenger restraints	s/car seats?		1
	at will it take for y seat belts on a re	ou to make a comm gular basis?	itment to			100

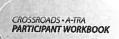




Driving Tips

1. What is meant by driving defensively? 2. What are some points to remember when passing or being passed? 3. What are three important safety tips to remember when backing up? 4. What would you do if: a. The acceleration pedal got stuck? ______ h. The wheels go off the pavement? _____ b. Steering becomes impossible? i. The car is submerged in water? c. The brakes fail? j. You were in a sudden dust storm? d. A tire blows out? k. You saw a car coming head-on towards you? e. The headlights fail? 1. You see or come upon an accident? f. The car begins to skid? m. You start to go to sleep behind the wheel? g. The car begins to hydroplane? n. You were in a sudden snow storm?





Driving Hazards

. What is a driving hazard?	
What is the difference between internal and externa	al driving hazards?
3. List five possible external driving haz	ards. 4. List five internal driving hazards.
S	5. What are the things you need to be aware of so that you can identify driving hazards?
	6. How can identifying driving hazards improve your driving and protect others?



Substance Questionnaire

Based on your own knowledge, decide if the following statements are TRUE or FALSE.

 Eating food or drinking milk before drinking an alcoholic beverage slows down the absorption of alcohol into the body. True False 	 4. More than 40% of all traffic deaths are alcohol-related. True False 5. A person cannot become a problem 	15. There is approximately the same amount of alcohol in a can of beer as there is in a shot of whiskey. True False
2. Alcohol is classified as a stimulant.True	drinker by drinking beer. True False 6. It takes about one hour to oxidize the alcohol from one beer.	 16. You can be convicted of a drinking driver offense while under the influence of a prescription drug. True False
A Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) of .10 percent is the legal definition of alcohol intoxication in this state with regard to driving.	7. One out of every ten people who drink becomes an alcoholic.	17. Alcohol can cause cancer to the liver, mouth and stomach.True False
○ True ○ False	True	18. Refusal of a driver to submit to a chemical test as requested by a police officer can result in a penalty by law.True False
	from green. O True O False 9. Drinking hot coffee or taking a cold	19. Alcohol is absorbed into the body without being digested.True False
	shower can be an effective way of sobering up. True False	20. Some nations with high alcohol consumption rates have low drinking driver rates.True
	10. Two drinks can seriously affect your reaction time and judgment.	21. Alcohol causes less light to reach the retina, making it harder to see at night.True False
	○ True ○ False 11. Marijuana interferes with driving judgment and reaction time.	22. Alcohol slows the eye's ability to respond to light and dark, making it take seven seconds instead of one second to recover from glaring headlights.
TURE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PR	O True O False	○ True ○ False
	12. About 10% of the alcohol in the blood stream is eliminated through the urine, sweat and breath; about 90% is eliminated	23. Alcohol causes enlargement of the heart which can lead to heart failure. O True O False
	through oxidation in the liver. True False 13. BAC is related to the person's height.	24. The last area of the brain to be affected by alcohol is the learning center, which controls the processes of thinking, reasoning,
	O True O False	caring and judgment. O True O False
	14. Death may result from an overdose of alcohol. ○ True ○ False	25. Drinking alcohol with carbonated mixers slows down the absorption of alcohol. True False



<u> Drinking & Driving</u>

1. What are some of the positive and negative things people gain from alcohol use?

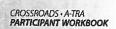
POSITIVE (+) NEGATIVE (-)

- 2. How do the two sides weigh out?
- 3. What are some additional problems in this country that alcohol contributes to?
- 4. Why do people drink and drive?
- 5. The chart below shows approximately what your blood alcohol count would be for your weight for the various number of drinks consumed in one hour.

MUMBER OF BRIDE

What is the BAC of a person of 160 lbs. after consuming five drinks in one hour?

	NUMBER OF DRINKS								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
100 lbs.	.04	.08	11	.15	.19	.23	.26	.30	.34
120 lbs.	.03	.06	.09	.13	.16	.19	,22	.25	.28
140 lbs.	.03	.05	.08	.11	.13	.16	.19	.21	.24
160 lbs.	.02	.05	.07	.09	.12	.14	.16	.19	.21
180 lbs.	.02	.04	.06	.08	.10	.13	.15	.17	.19
200 lbs.	.02	.04	.06	.07	.09	.11	13	.15	.17
220 lbs.	.02	.03	.05	.07	.09	.10	.12	.14	.15
240 lbs.	.02	.03	.05	.06	.08	.09	.11	.13	.14
	SOI Be Ca		10000	IBLY INTOXI g May Be In			INTOXI Do Not		



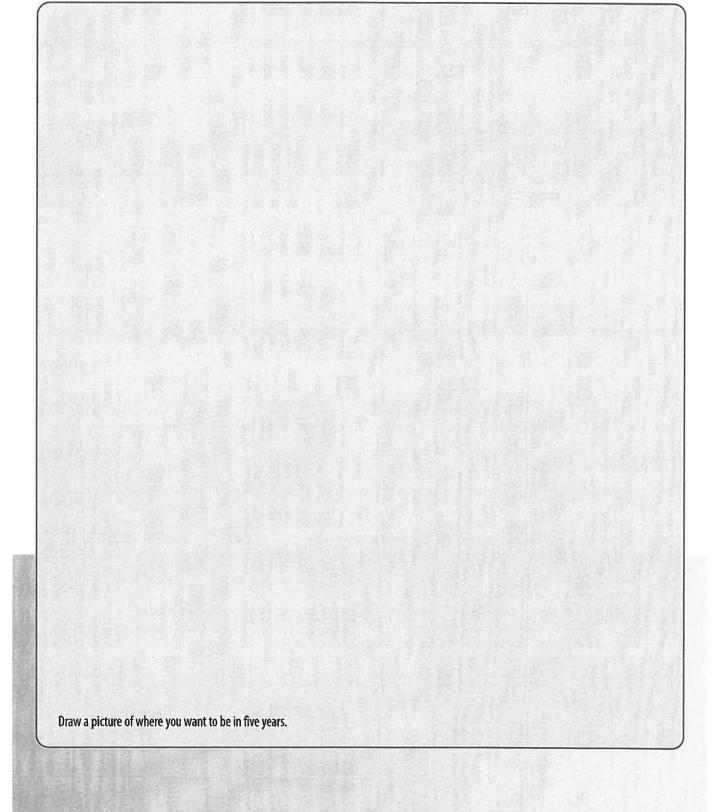
Drinking & Driving

6.	What is the legal BAC level in this state to be considered a drinking driver?
7.	What is the legal penalty for driving under the influence of alcohol?
8.	What are the characteristics of someone who is intoxicated?
9.	What can a person do to avoid mixing drinking with driving?
40	
10.	If you do drink and drive, what is one thing you will do to change that behavior?



Victimization

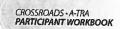
1.	What is a victim?
2.	Is there always a victim when someone violates a traffic law? O Yes O No
3.	Can society be a victim when a traffic violation occurs?
4.	Is it possible for members of a traffic violator's family to be a victim of the traffic violation? Yes No Why or why not?
5.	Is it possible to break a traffic law without someone or something being victimized? Yes No Why or why not?
6.	Who is the victim(s) of your traffic violation?
7.	List three effects your traffic violation had on the victim(s) you identified in question 6.
8.	What are the steps a person must take to make amends to the victim(s) of their traffic violation(s)?
	Have you made amends to the victim(s) of your traffic violation(s)? O Yes O No What will you do to ensure that you break no traffic laws in the future to eliminate victimizing someone or something?





Goals

ne bes	t way to do the things that will help y	ou impro	ove is to set goals and accomplish them.		
. Wh	at is a goal?				
Wh			ong-range goals?		
. Give	e at least three examples of short-rang	ge goals	and at least three examples of long-range	goals.	
	Short-Range				Long-Range
Disc	cuss the importance of the following s	teps of g	goal-setting:		
Star	te the goal in specific terms.	<u></u> :	What might get in your way?	g. —	Break the goal into small steps that can be done one at a time.
Wri	ite the goal down.	- e.	Set time limits and deadlines to do it.		
		- j0		_ n. _	How will you reward yourself?
. Dec	cide why you want to do it.	- f.	Who will you share it with who can help you?	i.	Visualize obtaining the goal.
				- -	



Goals

5.	How can this process of setting goals be important to you?
6.	Have you ever had difficulties setting and obtaining goals?
	If so, what steps from question #4 did you fail to do?
7.	What is the hardest thing for you to do when you are setting goals?
8.	How will you overcome these concerns and accomplish your goals?
	Pick a driving improvement goal you would like to accomplish in a week. a. My goal is:
	b. The person who will help me is:
793	c. My plan of action is:
	Step 1
	Step 2
	Step 3
	Step 4



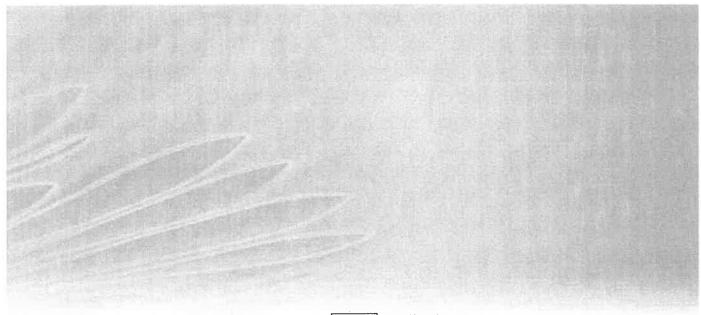
Goals

When completed I will reward myself by:	
What benefits will you receive from reaching your goal?	
How can you use goal setting to eliminate negative beha	avior?
ven when positive changes have been made, we can all ld habits when we feel stressed. In the future, what situ night occur that could cause you to drive dangerously ag a.	uations
b	b
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CROSSROADS • A-TRA

Who's Got The Best Excuse?

Scenario 1

Jake and Amanda are in their car on their way to work. They're running a little bit late and Jake is traveling five miles above the speed limit. Amanda has a major work presentation to do and is nagging Jake to go a little faster. George and Herman are traveling in a furniture delivery van in the lane to the left of Amanda and Jake. They are running late for their first delivery of the day and are traveling about seven miles over the speed limit. The guys on the loading dock were slower than usual. George tells Herman, the driver of the delivery van, to pull into the right hand lane because they need to make a right hand turn at the next intersection. Herman replies that he can't be sure there's no one in his blind spot and the inset mirror on the truck is still broken so he can't use it either. George continues to fuss at Herman. He says he's looked out the window and it's clear. Herman reluctantly changes lanes and proceeds to bump into Jake and Amanda's car.

- What are the likely excuses each person in the scenario will use to deflect responsibility?
- Could some of the excuses be used for the actions of others in the scenario?
- Who do you believe bears the greatest responsibility for this event?

Scenario 2

Robert, Jack and Julie, three friends, are traveling down a farm to market road going about 20 miles over the speed limit. In fact, they're pacing and racing a train traveling on the track that runs parallel to the road. Robert dares Jack to race ahead and beat the train to the crossing. Robert replies that he knows he can beat the train because he's done it before so what's to prove? Jack and Julie call Robert a chicken — cluck, cluck, cluck. Robert takes the dare. The train engineer, Clancy, notices the car pacing his train

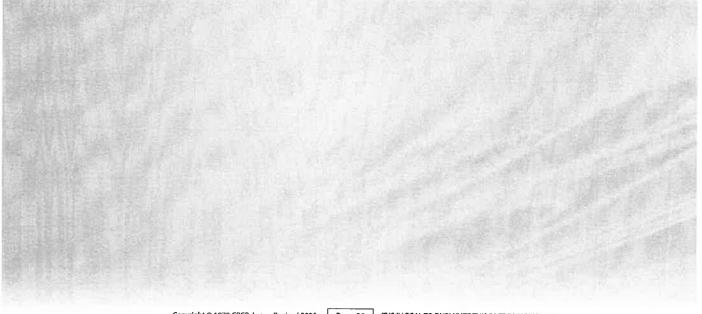
and notices it speed ahead. He knows that the next crossing has no gate or flashing lights, but he continues along without changing his train speed. Robert beats the train to the crossing and waits until the last minute to speed through the crossing to add some excitement to the adventure. The train clips the back bumper of Robert's car.

- What are the likely excuses each person in the scenario will use to deflect responsibility?
- Could some of the excuses be used for the actions of others in the scenario?
- Who do you believe bears the greatest responsibility for this event?

Scenario 3

A farmer is traveling down a county road on his combine. There's plenty of easement area on the sides of the road, but the travel's better on the pavement. Several cars are backed up behind the combine. Two men in the truck right behind the combine have begun to honk their horn and make obscene gestures with their middle fingers. Although he has a rear view mirror and is aware of the vehicle back up (at least 7 cars and trucks), the farmer stays on the pavement. A car, two vehicles behind the truck, pulls out to pass the vehicles and the combine. The road is clearly marked as a no passing zone. Another vehicle is driving in the opposite lane, and to avoid a head-on collision, the car that pulled out to pass tries to pull back into the proper lane. There's not quite enough clearance for the maneuver and the car clips the car directly ahead. The clipped car rear ends the car ahead of it; that car rear ends the truck ahead of it, and the truck rear ends the combine.

 What are the likely excuses each person in the scenario will use to deflect responsibility?





Who's Got The Best Excuse? continued

- Could some of the excuses be used for the actions of others in the scenario?
- Who do you believe bears the greatest responsibility for this event?

Scenario 4

While driving down the interstate, Bill observes a car to his right getting ready to access and enter the freeway. Bill is not speeding and is in the right hand lane. The car attempting to enter the freeway has a yield sign, but the driver is in an argument with a fellow car occupant. Bill notices the driver isn't being observant, but does not speed up, slow down or change lanes. He has the right of way. The other car sideswipes Bill's car.

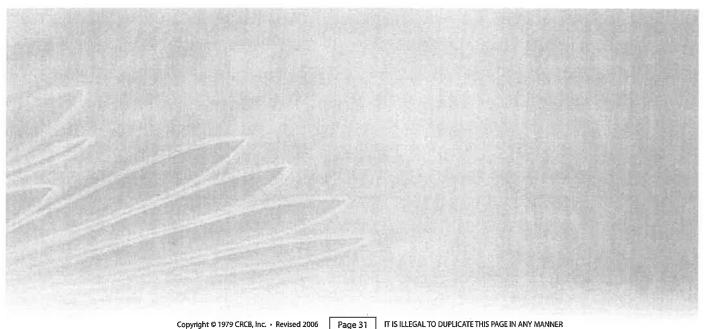
- What are the likely excuses each person in the scenario will use to deflect responsibility?
- Could some of the excuses be used for the actions of others in the scenario?
- Who do you believe bears the greatest responsibility for this event?

Scenario 5

Jim and Joanna are driving from their home to a dinner for his parents. Joanna doesn't really want to attend the dinner and is not paying much attention to her driving because she's telling Jim what a waste of time the dinner is going to be. Their fifteen-year-old twin daughters are in the back seat arguing over which CD to play. Jim momentarily ignores Joanna and turns to shout at his daughters to agree with each other or else. A state trooper pulls her over for speeding. When asked to provide her license, registration and proof of insurance, she can only produce her license. They are traveling in Jim's work car, and he never bothered to

put the registration or proof of insurance cards in his wallet or the car glove box.

- What are the likely excuses each person in the scenario will use to deflect responsibility?
- Could some of the excuses be used for the actions of others in the scenario?
- Who do you believe bears the greatest responsibility for this event?



CROSSROADS • A-TRA

Good Choice, Bad Choice

SCENARIO 1

You are late for work. Your alarm didn't go off. You were low on gasoline and had to stop and put a few dollars worth in the gas tank. Traffic is horrible. You're moving about 3 miles per hour when you're moving. You know your boss will be fuming when you walk in the office door. Traffic smoothes out for five miles and suddenly comes to a complete halt. A big rig up ahead has lost its load of roofing materials. You are in the right hand lane. You're not near an exit, but the median curb separating you from the feeder street is something your truck can easily navigate.

What are the clues that you are becoming out of control?

What kinds of feelings and thoughts are going through your mind?

When you respond, what are your possibilities? Identify at least four possibilities for each category.

GOOD CHOICES (In Control)	BAD CHOICES (Out of Control)
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SCENARIO 2

You've had a really bad day at work. The boss was all over you about something that was neither you fault or responsibility. Your spouse called, and he/she has been involved in a fender bender. The other driver has no insurance. The police have been called. However, your three-year-old son suffered a broken arm due to the fender bender because he wasn't in the back seat with his child restraint properly attached. Your spouse has been ticketed for not having your child properly restrained. The uninsured driver was ticketed for running a stop sign. Your spouse is upset and hysterical demanding that you come to the hospital emergency room ten minutes ago!!! You hurriedly tell your boss that you have to go to the hospital emergency room. Your boss is not the least bit sympathetic. He tells you to do what you have to do but also tells you that he'd better see improvement in your work quality. You run to your car and find that a city vehicle has blocked you into your parking space. The city is doing work on a busted water main.

What are the clues that you are becoming out of control?

What kinds of feelings and thoughts are going through your mind?

When you respond, what are your possibilities? Identify at least four possibilities for each category.

GOOD CHOICES (In Control)	BAD CHOICES (Out of Control)
	,



Good Choice, Bad Choice continued

SCENARIO 3

You and your girlfriend/boyfriend are out on a date. Some fools pull up next to you at a stop light and begin shouting at you. You roll your window down to hear them. They inform you that you drive a really sissy car. They call you and all of your living, blood relatives multiple bad names and laugh while they're doing it. Your girlfriend/boyfriend shouts back at them using equally inappropriate language. When the light changes, they zip ahead of you and thwart your efforts to pass them. They're crawling along the street at 10 miles per hour. Your girlfriend/boyfriend lowers her window and begins making obscene gestures at the guys and shouting profanities at them.

What are the clues that you are becoming out of control?

What kinds of feelings and thoughts are going through your mind?

When you respond, what are your possibilities? Identify at least four possibilities for each category.

GOOD CHOICES (In Control)	BAD CHOICES (Out of Control)

SCENARIO 4

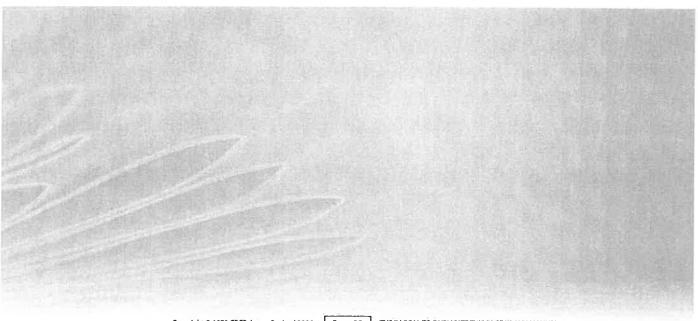
You are on your way to a family reunion. It's in a town that you're unfamiliar with. You're driving along and fail to stop for a traffic light. You are busy looking for street signs to ensure that you're going to arrive at the intended destination. Your spouse is sniping at you for not being able to find the reunion location. Your two teenage kids are in the back seat arguing with each other. They have commented at regular intervals during the one hour drive to the town of the reunion that they really don't want to attend a reunion. They have better things to do. You look in the rear view mirror and see the flashing red light of the local yokel's police car. The cop is motioning you to pull over. Now you're going to really be late.

What are the clues that you are becoming out of control?

What kinds of feelings and thoughts are going through your mind?

When you respond, what are your possibilities? Identify at least four possibilities for each category.

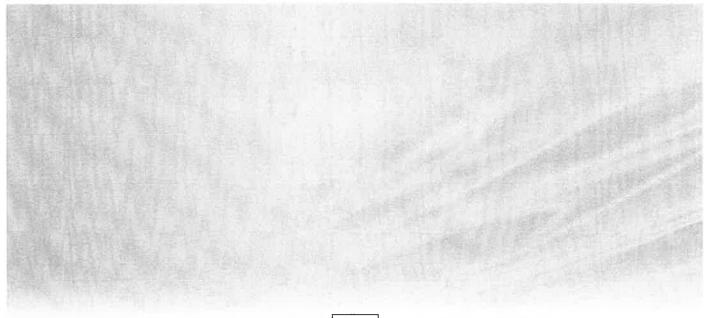
GOOD CHOICES (In Control)	BAD CHOICES (Out of Control)



Safety Cushion

Having a safety cushion is the single most important item in defensive driving. By allowing more space between vehicles, you can stop in an emergency situation before hitting something. The most effective way to be sure you have enough "cushion" is to follow the simple, but effective, two second rule. The two second rule is very easy to follow. Pick out an object such as a tree, pole, another car or anything where you can easily tell when the vehicle you are following passes this point. As that vehicle passes the point, start counting; one thousand one, one thousand two. If you are following the two second rule, your vehicle should not pass the point before the count one thousand two. If it does, back off a little more. It is good to check your position in relation to the vehicles you are following periodically. Obviously, this will be very difficult to accomplish and maintain in heavy traffic. Generally when you open up a safety cushion in heavy traffic, someone will fill the gap. Don't become upset and excited. Just back off and re-establish the safety cushion. The few seconds this may cost you in your trip will be far better than the possibility of becoming involved in a collision by being over zealous. As your speed increases, it will be necessary to open the gap to maybe three or four seconds, depending on conditions. Last but not least, don't allow yourself to get "boxed in." By getting "boxed in," you lose the ability to maneuver in case of an emergency. This is generally something you need to be more concerned with on a multi-lane roadway.

(From the State of Arizona Supreme Court Defensive Driving Program Workbook)



CROSSROADS · A-TRA APPENDIX

Traffic Safety Jeopardy

TRAFFIC SAFETY JEOPARDY GAME

- 1. When can you pass a school bus with its red lights flashing?
 - a. On a highway with two or more lanes in each direction, and you are going in the opposite direction.
 - b. On a highway with two or more lanes in each direction, and you are going in the same direction.
 - c. On a highway with two or more lanes in each direction, and it's safe to pass.
 - d. You must always stop for a school bus if its lights are flashing regardless of the number of lanes or the direction in which you're traveling.
- 2. Can you ever turn left on a red light?
 - a. Never.
 - b. Yes, from a one-way to another one-way.
 - c. Yes, if no traffic is within sight of the intersection.
 - d. Yes, if there's no photo surveillance, police, or other traffic.
- 3. What should you do when you hear an emergency vehicle coming?
 - a. Stop wherever you are until it passes you.
 - b. Pull over and stop on the right.
 - c. Pull over to the right lane and continue moving at the lawful speed limit.
 - d. Speed up so that you're always ahead of it and not impeding its progress.
- 4. How far should you drive behind another vehicle?
 - a. Two car lengths for every 10 mph.
 - b. One car length for every 10 mph.
 - c. Twenty-five feet.
 - d. Five feet.
- 5. When two cars meet at an unmarked intersection, which has the right of way?
 - a. The driver who arrived at the intersection first.
 - b. The driver on the left.
 - c. The driver on the right.
 - d. The driver who makes the first move to enter the intersection.
- 6. Is it always lawful to drive at the posted speed?
 - a. Yes.
 - No, you must adjust for weather conditions, road and traffic conditions.
 - c. It depends on what state you live in.
 - d. Yes, but you must maintain a greater distance between you and the car in front of you if there is bad weather or heavy traffic.

- 7. What action can you take when an on-coming driver forgets to dim their bright lights?
 - Activate your high beams and leave them on so the on-coming driver can experience what you're experiencing first-hand.
 - b. Do not look directly at the lights of on-coming vehicles. Look slightly to the right at a right lane or edge marking if available.
 Remember to be courteous when flashing oncoming cars as a reminder to them to dim their lights; do not flash lights if they are within 300 feet of you.
 - Flash your lights from high beam to low beam repeatedly until the oncoming car activates its low beams.
 - d. Activate you high beams and swerve slightly into their lane to get the other driver's attention.
- 8. What are blind spots?
 - a. Dirty spots on your automobile windows.
 - Places behind you and on either side of you that your mirrors do not reflect.
 - c. Scratches on the lenses of your glasses.
 - d. The passenger seat when occupied by a very tall person.
- 9. How can you communicate to other drivers?
 - a. Warn other that you are about to slow down by lightly tapping your brake pedal, just enough to flash the brake lights.
 - a. At dusk or dawn, or in the rain or snow when it's hard to see, use your headlights.
 - a. When it's legal, tap the horn lightly, or at night, flash your lights from low to high and back to let others know when you're about to pass.
 - a. All of the above.
- 10. What are driving hazards?
 - a. Any road condition or other road user that is a possible danger to you.
 - b. Flashing red light of a police vehicle or emergency vehicle.
 - c. Orange cones or barrels indicating a road construction site.
 - d. All of the above.

After finishing the Traffic Safety Jeopardy game, have the same teams of people answer the Traffic Quiz in the Participant Workbook. Review the answers to those items not already covered in the Jeopardy game.

Internal/External Hazard Scenarios

Internal/External Hazard Scenario 1

Jim wakes up late for work because the electricity went off during the night and his alarm clock failed to go off as set. Jim called his boss and informed him he'd be late. His boss wasn't happy or supportive. In fact, he told Jim that they'd be having a talk about his work performance when he finally arrived at the job. Jim hastily showered and shaved and dressed for work. He didn't have anything for breakfast. He jumped in his car and began the twenty mile drive to his job. His mind was thinking about the upcoming meeting with his boss. He failed to notice that his gas gage was precariously close to empty until he became acutely aware of the traffic jam on the freeway. Tuning his radio to the traffic channel, he learned that a big rig tanker had overturned and spilled its load of fuel onto the freeway. Traffic was at a complete standstill. Jim jumped on his cell phone to let his boss know of his latest misfortune. A car in the lane to his left decided to merge into his lane. Jim never saw the turn signal or the car. It resulted in a fender bender.

- · What are the internal and external hazards in this scenario?
- · What, if anything, should Jim have done differently?

Internal/External Hazard Scenario 2

Betty is in her car driving to pick the kids up from the day care center after an extra long day at work. Because of deadlines, she had to work over three hours. The extra expense for her kids staying over their appointed departure time from day care would eat up her overtime pay. Betty is tired and angry. he tried to call her husband earlier to see if he could pick the kids up, but he could not be reached. She's pretty certain he's having an affair with his admin assistant. He's frequently not available. As Betty prepares to turn the corner, legally making a right on red turn at the intersection, she fails to notice a mother and her toddler step off the curb to cross the street. She hits the mother and child.

· What are the internal and external hazards in this scenario?

· What, if anything, should Betty have done differently?

Internal/External Hazard Scenario 3

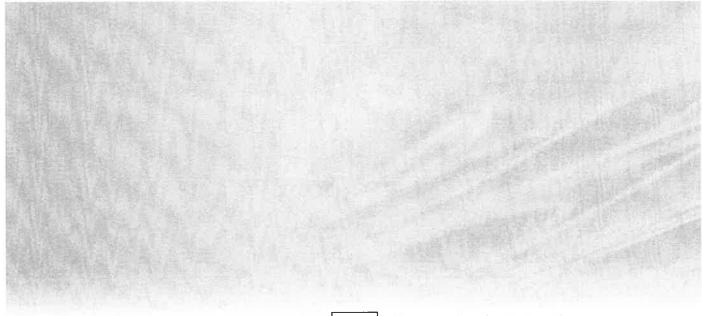
Jimmy was late picking up his girlfriend to go to the dance. She was pretty angry and is still fussing at him. He fails to respond appropriately to one of her statements. She reaches over and pokes him in the ribs while saying that he never pays attention to what she has to say. She begins to cry. Jimmy looks over and tries to reassure her. He runs into the car in front of him. It is parked at a stop sign.

- What are the internal and external hazards in this scenario?
- What, if anything, should Jim have done differently?

Internal/External Hazard Scenario 4

Sean and his buddies are out for an evening of fun and excitement. He's got his dad's car. His best buddy got a fake ID and bought some beer. He, his best buddy, and two other friends decide to drive out to a party by the lake. He and his friends are drinking and talking as well as speeding. The road to the lake is not well lit. As he rounds a curve, he fails to notice the cow in the middle of the road. His car crashes into the cow. It veers off the pavement and crashes down a ravine. Since the guys in the back seat failed to buckle their seat belts, they are ejected from the car. His best buddy flies through the front windshield. Sean is knocked unconscious. Nobody knows where they are or about the accident.

- What are the internal and external hazards in this scenario?
- What, if anything, should Sean have done differently?



CROSSROADS • A-TRA APPENDIX

News Articles

FELONY CHARGES IN DISTRACTED DRIVING CASE

AbcNEWS.com April 16, 2001

A Las Vegas woman is facing a felony indictment for allegedly causing a deadly traffic accident while talking on a cell phone.

Local prosecutors say the case is the first of its kind in Nevada, and could be a landmark nationally.

Police say Karen Morris, 34, was traveling at 64 mph in a 45-mph zone while talking on her cell phone.

They say she ran a red light, then smashed into another car — killing two people, Leona Grief, 61, and Marcia Nathans, 65. A third passenger, 44-year-old Elliot Nathans, was injured and remains in serious condition. Morris and her 7-year-old daughter were treated for minor injuries.

Witnesses told police Morris was talking on her cellular telephone as she crashed and as she swerved around a line of cars at a previous crossroads and ran that red light, Clark County deputy district attorney Mary Brown told *The Associated Press*.

Morris' attorneys say the tragedy was an accident.

Case Could Be a Landmark

"The underlying facts are that she was speeding, running red lights and talking on a cell phone without paying full time and attention," she said. "The thing that makes this case memorable is the consequences. It's certainly a first in our area, and we're not familiar with any other cases ongoing."

Brown said a Cleveland motorist was convicted in 1993 of not paying full attention while driving. In December, a Naval Academy midshipman whose car slammed into another vehicle, killing its two occupants, while he fumbled with his cell phone was acquitted of manslaughter but convicted of negligence.

He was fined \$500 for negligent driving and given four points against the revocation of his driver's license.

When Inattention Is a Criminal Act

Morris was charged with three felony counts of reckless driving and two felony counts of involuntary manslaughter for the March 25th incident. If convicted on all counts, she faces up to 26 years in prison.

A local prosecutor said the use of cell phones while driving is legal. But if a driver causes an accident while using one, they had better be prepared to face the music.

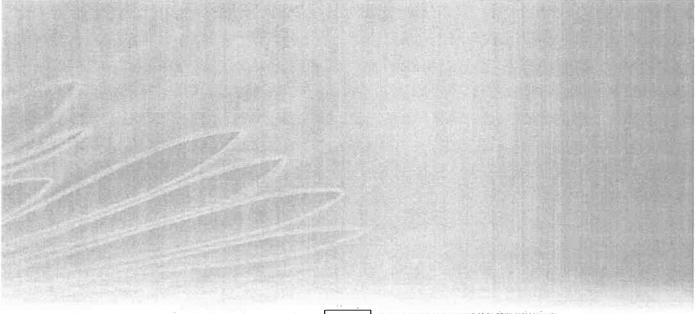
"If you are inattentive because of that cell phone, you are violating the law...And if that contributes to a crash and someone is killed then you have committed a criminal act," prosecutor Gary Booker told KLAS television.

Cell Phones: As Bad As DWI?

Defense attorneys say the accident was nothing more than an accident. But Booker said recent studies suggest that using cell phones while driving is not just a nuisance for others on the road, it's a hazard almost on par with driving while intoxicated.

"The studies tend to suggest that using a cell phone renders you four times as likely to be involved in a crash," Booker said. "That's very nearly the same as alcohol, by the way."

Morris is free on \$100,000 bail. She faces an arraignment on April 25th. Some nations have banned the use of cellular phones while driving. In the United States, many communities are considering similar moves. Brooklyn, Ohio, Marlboro, New Jersey, and Suffolk County, New York, are among those to have banned the practice.



News Articles

CELL PHONE EXECUTIVE APPEALS \$103,000 SPEEDING FINE IN FINLAND, WHERE TICKETS ARE BASED ON INCOME

The Associated Press

Helsinki, Finland — At 46 miles an hour, he didn't set any land-speed records. But Nokia executive Anssa Vanjoki could set the record for the costliest ever speeding ticket a \$103,000 fine.

Vanjoki, a 45-year-old executive vice president of Nokia's mobile phones division, is fighting to get the fine reduced.

He was slapped with the ticket for speeding on a motorcycle in a 31-mph zone on an island near Helsinki last October, chief police inspector Olli Yliskoski said.

But in Finland, traffic fines are not just based on the seriousness of the infringement, they're also tied to the offender's income, and there's no limit. Worse for Vanjoki, his fine was based on his net income in 1999, when he reportedly made \$5.2 million because of option sales.

He has appealed for the fine to be based on his income in 2000, when his gross income dropped from more than \$12.4 million to about \$970,000, according to tax authorities.

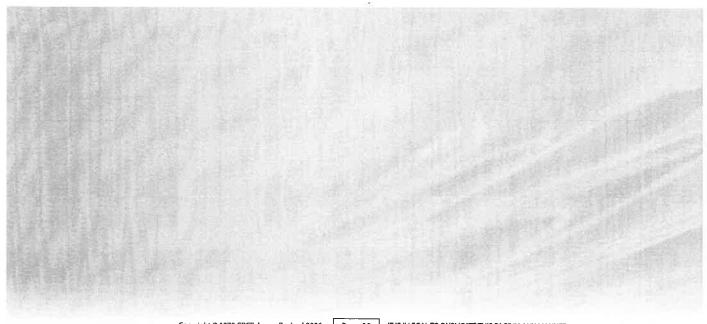
Official net income figures were not available, and Vanjoki did not return phone calls seeking comment. The case goes to court next month.

In a similar incident last year, a Helsinki court slashed a traffic fine levied against Internet millionaire Jaakko Rytsola for switching lanes too often. It was cut from \$45,000 to \$119 after his income showed a dramatic drop.

Earlier, Rytsola paid a \$74,600 traffic fine, reportedly the highest ever in Finland.

Yliskoski said Finnish authorities are considering changing the way incomes are used in determining the fines.

"They should be proportioned to the danger afflicted," he said. "If you fine somebody on the grounds of incomes peaking a certain year it can grow unreasonable."



CROSSROADS • A-TRA APPENDIX

News Articles

MAN FACES CHARGES AFTER 3 KIDS DIE IN SUBMERGED CAR

The Associated Press September 4, 2003

Clinton, III. — A man who was behind the wheel when a car went into a lake, killing three children strapped inside, has been charged with driving under the influence.

Maurice Lagrone Jr., 28, also is charged with driving with a suspended license, DeWitt County State's Attorney Jerry Johnson said.

Lagrone and his girlfriend, Amanda Hamm, 28, escaped the car after it went off a boat ramp Tuesday evening, but Hamm's three children were trapped inside, DeWitt County Sheriff Roger Massey said. Massey would not give details, including what substance or substances Lagrone was allegedly under the influence of.

Hamm called 911 from a pay phone and emergency workers were at the scene in about five minutes, but Christopher Hamm, 6, and Austin Brown, 3, were pronounced dead at a hospital. Kyleigh Hamm, 23 months, was flown to a hospital in Peoria but died Wednesday.

Residents in the town of about 7,500 people grieved Wednesday at the restaurant where Hamm worked.

"We have a small community here dealing with some big tragedy," Massey said. Clinton is about 50 miles southeast of Peoria.

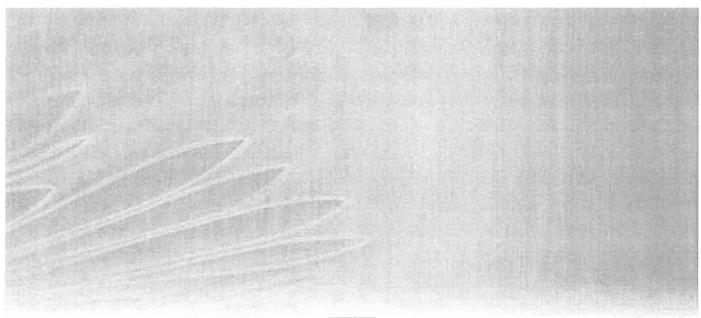
Authorities said a special prosecutor will be assigned because Hamm's mother works for the state's attorney.

"It's obvious that I'm not going to be able to handle this case," Johnson said Thursday.

The school where Christopher was a first-grader and Austin attended early childhood classes offered counseling to students.

The children were frequent visitors to the restaurant where Hamm worked, and customers and staff members spent Wednesday talking about the accident. Hamm's co-workers said they would solicit donations to help the family with expenses.

Restaurant manager Brenda Fouts said it was difficult reporting to work. "I'm doing OK, if you consider crying in spurts to be OK," she told *The* (Bloomington) Pantagraph.



News Articles

JANKLOW SENTENCE: 100 DAYS

American Motorcyclist Association January 22, 2004

Former U.S. Rep. Bill Janklow (R-SD), who was convicted December 8, 2003, of second-degree manslaughter and three other counts related to a traffic crash that claimed the life of a Minnesota motorcyclist, was sentenced today to 100 days in the Minnehaha County Jail. Janklow will not have to spend time in the South Dakota State Penitentiary, and he could be eligible for a work-release program after 30 days in jail.

On Saturday, August 16, motorcyclist Randolph Scott of Hardwick, Minnesota, was killed in a collision with a car driven by Janklow. The fatal crash took place at the intersection of two county roads in eastern South Dakota. Reports released by investigators indicated that Janklow's car, traveling at speeds of more than 70 mph, did not stop at the stop sign and continued into the path of the motorcycle, giving the rider no chance to avoid the fatal collision.

Janklow's resignation from the U.S. House of Representatives took effect on January 20, 2004.

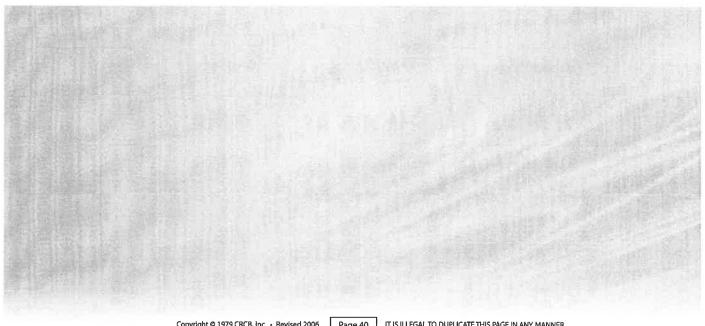
"The AMA is extremely disappointed with this sentence," said Edward Moreland, AMA Vice President for Government Relations. "This South Dakota court has handed down a judicial insult to motorcyclists nationwide, and to the memory of Randolph Scott, the motorcyclist who paid the price for Mr. Janklow's criminal conduct."

According to a recent Associated Press review of South Dakota court records dating back to 1989, 80 percent of those convicted of seconddegree manslaughter have been sent to jail or prison. Average jail time was six months, and the average prison time was almost seven years.

In the days following the accident, the AMA called on motorcyclists nationwide to contact South Dakota Gov. Mike Rounds and Attorney General Larry Long, urging them to seek justice in the case. Using AMA Rapid Response, motorcyclists and other concerned citizens can send e-mail messages directly to South Dakota officials. AMA Rapid Response, which allows users to contact lawmakers, government officials and the media with the click of a button, is available soon the Association's website, AMADirectlink.com.

The AMA notes that tragic crashes like the one involving Janklow, in which a car or other vehicle violates the right of way of a motorcycle, are all too common on the nation's highways. The most comprehensive study ever conducted into motorcycle accidents found that nearly 75 percent of motorcycle accidents involve another vehicle, and that in almost two-thirds of those crashes, the cause could be traced to the other vehicle violating the motorcyclist's right-of-way.

For more than a year, the AMA has been involved in a campaign called Motorcyclist Matter that focuses attention on the dangers faced by motorcyclists and other vulnerable road users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, as a result of drivers who violate their right-of-way. The Association is also campaigning in Washington, D.C., for funding for a new study into the causes of motorcycle accidents — the first in more than two decades.



CROSSROADS • A-TRA APPENDIX

News Articles

MISS FLORIDA HURT IN TRAFFIC ACCIDENT

The Associated Press November 8, 2003

Miami, Florida — The woman who became Miss Florida after the previous crown-holder became Miss America was critically injured Friday in a traffic accident, police said.

Shauna Pender, 24, assumed the state crown last month when Miss Florida Ericka Dunlap became Miss America.

Pender, two other women and a 5-year-old girl were in a car when a pickup truck changed lanes and caused them to veer out-of-control, said Florida Highway Patrol spokesman Lt. Julio Pajon.

An 18-wheeler also swerved and tipped over, striking the car. The pickup truck did not collide with either vehicle and left the scene, said Pajon.

Pender, who was not driving, underwent surgery and was listed in critical condition.

Pajon said she was able to speak with paramedics while rescuers cut through the wreckage to reach her.

The other two women and the child were also injured, as was the driver of the tractor-trailer. None had life-threatening injuries, Pajon said. Police declined to identify them.

ARRESTS MADE OVER THE WEEKEND

AndoverNet Today February 25, 2004

Andover, Kansas — Andover police made various traffic violation arrests over the weekend.

At 11:55 p.m. Friday, police stopped Miguel Ruiz, 22, of Wichita on a traffic violation at the intersection of Highway 54 and Onewood Drive. Ruiz was arrested after police discovered he was allegedly in possession of a stolen tag and was reportedly driving without a license.

A passenger in his car, Alejandro Meraz, 23, of Augusta, was cited for transportation of an open container, police reported.

On Saturday, Andover police arrested David Stumfoll, 54, of Andover. Stumfoll was stopped by police at 2:06 a.m. in the 500 block of South Ruth and arrested on suspicion of drunken driving.

SEVEN TEENS DIE IN TENNESSEE CAR WRECK

The Associated Press March 1, 2004

Millington, Tennessee — A car with seven teenagers aboard went airborne after going fast over a small hill, hitting a tree and killing everyone inside, police said.

Officers quoted friends of the driver, Michael Fradella, 15, as saying he had recently obtained his learner's permit to drive.

Steve Shular, spokesman for the Shelby County sheriff's department, told The Commercial Appeal of Memphis that investigators believe the westbound car was traveling at high speed and went airborne after topping a small hill.

The black Mazda Protégé left no skid marks and went off the south side of a two-lane road. A motorist came upon the wreckage early Sunday morning.

Other victims were identified as Samantha Stawizynski, 15; Trey Hanna, 15; Lauren Sutherland, 15; Jessica Wallace, 13; Crystal Smith, 13; and Eric Sancone, 14. All were students at Millington middle School.

Tennessee law requires minors with learner's permits to be accompanied by a parent, stepparent, grandparent or legal guardian who has a valid driver's license.

Millington is just north of Memphis in Shelby County.

News Articles

'BLACKOUT DRIVER' GETS 3 TO 6 YEARS IN DOUBLE FATAL

The Associated Press September 2, 2003

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania — A man who drove despite a lifelong seizure disorder was sentenced Tuesday to three to six years in prison for causing a crash that killed a pregnant woman and her mother in October 2000.

Jack Monroe Smith, 51, of Bethel Park, also was sentenced to 10 years' probation — during which he won't be allowed to drive — for the fatal crash and another last year in which four other women were injured.

The prison sentence was the maximum possible under state guidelines, which weigh a defendant's criminal history and the seriousness of the crime.

"Jack Smith, like all drivers, had the personal obligation to operate his vehicle safely, or not operate it at all,' Allegheny County Judge Jeffrey Manning said. "In a sense, he is worse than the drunk driver who has at least some control over is faculties and some ability to pull over and stop."

In a June non-jury trial, Manning found Smith guilty of two counts of involuntary manslaughter but innocent of vehicular homicide in the deaths of Patricia Schick, 54, and her daughter, Sherri Zeis, 27, who was two months pregnant when she died. Police said Smith was driving 77 mph when he rear-ended the woman's station wagon on a suburban Pittsburgh road, apparently after blacking out.

"On October 18, 2000, Jack Smith took my entire family from me," Robert Schick said, referring to his wife of 34 years and pregnant daughter. "We were expecting our first grandchild and we could not have been happier." Now, Schick said, "I've been devastated."

Prosecutors contend Smith had a long-standing seizure disorder, but misled his doctors and state transportation officials so he could keep his driving privileges despite a history of blackout-related crashes.

At the same trial, Smith also was convicted of four counts of reckless endangerment for an August 18, 2002, crash in which he rear-ended a car carrying four women. That crash occurred just two days after Judge Robert E. Colville Sr. had dismissed charges stemming from the Schick-Zeis crash, saying that Smith did nothing illegal because he had a valid license at the time.

District Attorney Stephen J. Zappala Jr. refilled those charges after he said a county police investigation showed that Smith had covered up past accidents and withheld information about his medical condition, in order to be cleared to drive.

At trial, defense attorney William Bishop Jr. argued that Smith didn't hide his medical condition.

On Tuesday, however, Bishop read a letter from Smith's cousin, whom he identified as Sally Grabowski, who blamed Smith's behavior on overprotective parents who taught him to hide his seizure disorder.

"I believe Jack is truly a product of his environment," the letter said. "His job and his parents were his life. I believe you could refer to him as a recluse or loner. Jack just wanted to go to work, so he just did what his parents taught him to do" and hid his medical condition.

Bishop went on to argue that "putting (Smith) in jail would just transfer his reclusive lifestyle to another location."

Smith wrapped up his wide of the case by apologizing. "I do have the deepest regret for this incident . . . it does tear my life apart," Smith said.

Assistant District Attorney Matthew Wholey argued a harsh sentence was necessary so other ill drivers wouldn't do what Smith did.

If Smith were sentenced to probation, other drivers might say, "Hey, if I kill someone, what's the worst that could happen? That blackout guy, he just got probation," Wholey said.

Manning rejected Bishop's request to let Smith remain free on bond pending appeal and "the conclusion" of the case.

"I was of the opinion, Mr. Bishop, that the conclusion just occurred," Manning said.