

Instructor's Guide

RAGE BEHIND THE WHEEL: A LOOK AT TEEN DRIVERS AND ROAD RAGE

Introduction

This instructor's guide provides information to help you get the most out of the program *Rage Behind the Wheel: A Look at Teen Drivers and Road Rage*. The film invites viewers to explore the triggers and consequences of road rage. It also offers strategies for avoiding violent, aggressive behavior behind the wheel.

Learning Objectives

After viewing the program, students will be able to:

- Name at least three behaviors associated with teen road rage.
- Give at least three examples of road rage triggers.
- Describe the consequences of road rage.
- Identify strategies for avoiding aggressive, violent driving.

Educational Standards

HEALTH STANDARDS

The activities in this guide were created in compliance with the following National Health Education Standards, supported by the American Cancer Society

HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD 8: Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family and community health.

National Health Education Standards, supported by the American Cancer Society, and conducted by the American Association of Health Education, the American School Health Association, the American Public Health Association, and the Society of Directors of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Reprinted with permission.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

The activities in this Teacher's Guide were created in compliance with the following National Standards for the English Language Arts from the National Council of Teachers of English.

Standard 7: Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

Standard 8: Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

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TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS

The activities in this Teacher's Guide were created in compliance with the following National Education Technology Standards from the National Education Technology Standards Project.

Standard 2: Communication and Collaboration

Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

Standard 3: Research and Information Fluency

Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.

Standard 4: Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving & Decision-Making

Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.

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Program Overview

This program examines road rage to discover not only its triggers, but also how it can be avoided. Law enforcement and youth psychology experts offer explanations for road rage incidents involving teen drivers. These same teens are also filmed in a group setting where they honestly express their points of view as frustrated drivers while openly taking responsibility for their inappropriate anger. Potential life-changing consequences of road rage ranging from a revoked license to a criminal conviction for aggravated assault or death by auto are hammered home.

Main Topics

Topic 1: Introduction

This introductory section draws viewers in a compelling montage of people's thoughts on what road rage — and its impact — is.

Topic 2: What is Road Rage?

In this segment, law enforcement and youth psychology experts, as well as a teen, describe what road rage is, including how it is manifested.

Topic 3: Cause and Effect

This section explores common road rage triggers among teen drivers and underscores the harmful — often deadly — results of this emotionally-driven aggression behind the wheel.

Topic 4: Prevention

Here, viewers garner advice from experts and teens on ways young drivers can avoid road rage and thus the consequences that accompany it.

Topic 5: Wrap-up

This final segment underscores the importance of teen drivers being responsible and in control behind the wheel, emphasizing that they can control their road rage triggers to ensure a safer driving experience for everyone on the road.

Fast Facts

- Though typically identified as one motorist being antagonistic toward another motorist, there is no actual legal definition of road rage.
- Road rage — often described as aggressive, violent behavior — usually ends up in injuries, and accidents...and sometimes, death.

- Tailgating is a common road rage precursor.
- Contributors to road rage include modern-day stressors, particularly a hurried lifestyle fueled by technology (computers, cell phones, iPods).
- Road rage takes two: the best prevention is not to retaliate against the aggressive motorist who initiated the confrontation.
- Parents are influential driving role models; they should talk to their teens about the best way to conduct themselves behind the wheel.
- There are bad drivers on the road; it is best to not let their actions affect your own good driving.
- A revoked driver's license is a major consequence of aggressive driving.
- Anger triggers road rage, although the anger has probably been triggered by circumstances external to driving.
- Staying focused on the road at all times is key to good and responsible driving... and avoiding mistakes that can trigger a motorist's anger.

Vocabulary Terms

aggressive driving: The operation of a motor vehicle in a way that endangers or can/will endanger persons or property.

antagonistic: The state of actively expressing opposition or hostility.

assaultive: Of, relating to, or leaning toward assault or physical aggression.

consequences: Something produced by a cause or condition.

impulsive: Triggered or swayed by emotional or involuntary impulses.

profanity: Vulgar (profane) conduct or language.

prosecutor: A person (e.g., a complainant or chief witness) instigating prosecution in a criminal proceeding.

reckless driving: Driving without caution; careless driving that demonstrates lack of concern about consequences.

retaliate: To take revenge for a perceived wrong.

revoke: To take back or withdraw.

road rage: Violence drivers exhibit on the road.

tailgate: To follow or drive hazardously close to the rear of another vehicle.

trigger: Anything that stimulates, initiates, or precipitates a reaction or series of reactions.

Pre-Program Discussion Questions

1. What are a driver's main responsibilities with regard to driving and road safety?
2. Identify some of the results and/or consequences of irresponsible and unsafe driving.
3. If you drive, you know that auto insurance rates for teens are high. Why are these rates so high for this population?
4. What are the primary causes of auto accidents among teen drivers?
5. How can teens become and remain more responsible and careful drivers?

Post-Program Discussion Questions

1. How does road rage typically unfold?
2. What is the difference between aggressive driving and road rage? How are they related?
3. Why do some teen drivers engage in aggressive driving? What triggers this type of behavior?
4. If teen road rage is largely emotionally triggered, what can teens do to ease their emotions, particularly those associated with anger?
5. Discuss road rage experiences you have had. How did they play out?
6. Describe strategies you employ to drive safely, especially in situations where you are provoked or confronted by an aggressive driver.

Group Activities

Deal With It

What are steps teen drivers can take to avoid aggressive, violent confrontations with other motorists? Students can create a design for a Web site that offers peers concrete strategies for avoiding roadway violence and for negotiating an aggressive driver while on the road. The following sites not only offer such strategies, but also serve to jumpstart the design process.

Road Rage: How to Deal with It

www.dmv.org/how-to-guides/road-rage.php

How to Avoid Road Rage

www.ehow.com/how_2000688_avoid-road-rage.html

Statistically Speaking

Students can research national teen road rage statistics and then compare them against teen road rage statistics in their state (or region or community). They determine their comparative ranking and create an education program that will help teens in their state (region, community) reduce road rage. They can present their education plan to the central school district, the state motor vehicle department, or similar entities.

Road Rage Prevention Forum

Students organize a school or community forum centered on road rage. In this forum, students have opportunities to present their stories, and community experts (department of motor vehicle representatives, law enforcement specialists, driver education instructors) share their knowledge about teen road rage — causes, impact, consequences, prevention strategies, etc.

Individual Student Projects

Rage-Free Mechanization

Students create a car of the future that has among its high-tech features mechanisms that alert drivers to probable road rage hazards (or growing anger in the driver) and ways to avert them. They present their futuristic autos to the class, which draws on all of the models to design the “perfect” car. Students might submit their ideas to car manufacturers or scientific journals. To jumpstart their “inventions,” students can read “Cars That Think: Future Commute” at <http://tinyurl.com/3lkso2>

Driver Education: Road Rage Course

Students create an outline for a road rage course that could become a mandated component of driver education programs. If possible, students can partner with community driving education programs to co-develop a course, or at least to get feedback from experts regarding content and approach.

National Safe Driving Month

Imagine designating one month each year as National Safe Driving Month. Students can design a series of community road-rage centered events and activities that might be offered during this special month. They might pitch their National Safe Driving Month idea, along with the proposed events and activities, to a community or school official.

Internet Activities

Contributors to Road Rage

What incites road rage, especially among teens? Students can conduct Internet research to discover a variety of road rage contributors to create a public awareness poster for fellow students. The following links jumpstart student research:

The Growing Problem of Road Rage

<http://crime.about.com/od/victims/p/roadrage.htm>

Houston Chronicle's "School Zone": Text messaging, fatigue, road rage, oh my

<http://tinyurl.com/476vg2>

ABC News: Teens & Road Rage

<http://tinyurl.com/3ktjj8>

Road Rage Potential

Students can take one or more online quizzes (several noted below) to determine their road rage potential. They then create a related print or digital survey that they distribute to their school and community peers to determine the statistical probability of road rage among their local peers.

Progressive Auto Insurance: Road Rage Test

<http://tinyurl.com/6gfh39>

Road Rage Quiz

<http://www.quizplz.com/driving/road-rage-quiz.htm>

RoadRagers.com: Analyze Your Driving Style

<http://roadragers.com/test/index.htm>

Online Driver's Ed

Students can review or even take several online driver education courses and then create a design for an online road rage prevention course. Sample online courses include (students can also look for state-offered online courses):

Driver Education from AARP Driver Safety Program

http://www.aarp.org/families/driver_safety

Drivers Ed. com

<http://driversed.com>

Assessment Questions

Q1: What is the link between aggressive driving and road rage?

Q2: What do experts say is typically the root cause of road rage?

Q3: What can a driver do when provoked by another motorist?

- a) Pull off the road and wait
- b) Use a cell phone to call 911
- c) Respond

Q4: Which of the following does *not* characterize an aggressive driver?

- a) Tailgating
- b) Using excessive profanity
- c) Listening to an iPod while driving

Q5: What do adults often have that teen drivers tend to lack when it comes to driving?

Q6: True or False? If a teen's parents are good drivers, he or she is more like to be a good driver, too.

Q7: Name one factor that can contribute to road rage and/or aggressive driving.

Q8: What is the value of education with regard to road rage?

Q9: Name one consequence of road rage.

Q10: Distractions can _____.

Assessment Questions Answer Key

Q1: What is the link between aggressive driving and road rage?

A: Aggressive driving includes behaviors such as excessive speeding and tailgating that can provoke other motorists to respond violently, thus triggering road rage. Essentially, road rage is often the result of aggressive driving.

Feedback: Aggressive driving and road rage go hand-in-hand. Driving behaviors that include tailgating, excessive speeding, and people deliberately slowing down in front of other drivers are considered aggressive driving. These are provocative actions that can anger other motorists who might become very angry and react in a violent fashion.

Q2: What do experts say is typically the root cause of road rage?

A: Anger that is triggered by something external to acts on the road.

Feedback: Experts say that emotions tend to trigger road rage, especially anger at something else in their lives. If teens recognize their anger and its triggers, they are more likely to control it and not respond impulsively or do something dangerous to hurt someone else.

Q3: What can a driver do when provoked by another motorist?

- a) Pull off the road and wait
- b) Use a cell phone to call 911
- c) Respond

A: b

Feedback: It takes two people for road rage to occur. The best thing to do when confronted is not to engage with the confrontational motorist; this exacerbates the aggressive behavior. Pulling off the road opens up the potential for the harasser to cause harm. Calling 911 on a cell phone for police assistance is acceptable, especially if the driver does not know the local police department's location.

Q4: Which of the following does *not* characterize an aggressive driver?

- a) Tailgating
- b) Using excessive profanity
- c) Listening to an iPod while driving

A: c

Feedback: Listening to an iPod can distract a driver and lead to mistakes or even accidents. This is irresponsible or careless driving, but not aggressive driving. Aggressive drivers tailgate, use vulgar language or gestures, cut people off without warning, etc.

Q5: What do adults often have that teen drivers tend to lack when it comes to driving?

A: Emotional maturity.

Feedback: No doubt, there is also road rage among adult drivers, but typically, because of their age, they are less likely to react impulsively to their environment. Teens are becoming adults; they are somewhat insecure about who they are, have identity issues, have a need to be right, and a need to be in control. These qualities can negatively impact their ability to be emotionally controlled and fit, especially on the road and during confrontations that can escalate.

Q6: True or False? If a teen's parents are good drivers, he or she is more likely to be a good driver, too.

A: True. A teen driver is more likely to drive responsibly and not engage in road rage, or at least have constructive ways to diffuse it.

Feedback: Parents can model good driving for their teens. And, they can talk to them about how to best handle themselves behind the wheel and negotiate different driving situations.

Q7: Name one factor that can contribute to road rage and/or aggressive driving.

A: Answers include hurried lifestyles and technological distractions (iPods, cell phones).

Feedback: Julie Brewster, featured in the film, describes it: "I think that modern-day stress and living contribute ... everything's hurried. There's a sense of urgency in this society of ours, and with the advent of computer and technology, iPods, and cell phones ... you add that to the mix ... and kids, with their lack of judgment, when they go behind the wheel and they are not emotionally under control..."

Q8: What is the value of education with regard to road rage?

A: If teens are educated about the impact and consequences of road rage, they might be less likely to engage in it.

Feedback: If teens know what is at stake, then perhaps they will think twice before they act. Education helps teens to be more aware of the enormity of their responsibility as drivers.

Q9: Name one consequence of road rage.

A: Possible answers include having your license revoked, prison, injuries, death, etc.

Feedback: Road rage has many consequences for all involved. And, often, innocent people are the unfortunate victims of road rage.

Q10: Distractions can _____.

A: Take a driver's focus off the road.

Feedback: A distracted driver can do something that might unwillingly enrage another motorist, who may view this act as provocative or as a form of aggressive driving. Also, distractions, like fiddling with the car radio or CD player or talking on a cell phone, can lead to accidents. Drivers should stay focused on the road.

Additional Resources

ABC 7: Drive to Stay Alive

Teens & Road Rage

<http://tinyurl.com/445nox>

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

Controlling Road Rage: A Literature Review and Pilot Study

<http://tinyurl.com/f1xu>

Children Against Road Rage

www.drdriving.org/youth

Connect with Kids

Teens & Road Rage

<http://tinyurl.com/6s453e>

MSNBC

"Road rage can churn in the calmest of hearts"

<http://tinyurl.com/442hdk>

NHTSA: National Center for Statistics and Analysis

Traffic Safety Facts

<http://tinyurl.com/4658en>

National Motorists Association

www.motorists.org

National Safety Council

www.nsc.org

The Center for Injury Research and Prevention

Young Driver Research Initiative

<http://tinyurl.com/4578co>

WebMD: Health News


Getting a Grip on Roadway Anger

<http://tinyurl.com/485rxg>

Available from www.films.com • 1-800-257-5126

Driving Tactics

- VHS/DVD
- 3-part series
- Preview clip online at www.films.com
- Includes viewable/printable instructor's guide
- Correlates to all applicable state and national standards
- Honorable Mention, Columbus International Film & Video Festival
- Item # 34604

A drive to the mall should never be a race—but it does require mental alertness, physical coordination, and respect for every other driver on the road. NASCAR Rookie of the Year David Reutimann shares his expertise in all those areas as host of this dynamic, highly informative three-part series. A strong foundation for safety-oriented driving education, Reutimann's guidance emphasizes that driving can be a fun, positive experience; that it is a privilege, not a right; and that the most important piece of driving equipment is between the ears. (3-part series, 21 minutes each) © 2005 

Dying to Get There: The Real Cost of Reckless Driving


- VHS/DVD
- Preview clip online at www.films.com
- Correlates to all applicable state and national standards
- "Before you put a key in the ignition, put this tape in your VCR. Along with seatbelts, common sense and sober driving, *Dying to Get There* should top your list of driving survival skills." —*Advice from Georgia State Troopers for teen drivers and their parents*
- Item # 333571

New drivers seem to learn very quickly about tickets, suspended licenses, and even a day in court, yet few appear to dwell much on safety. The fact is, traffic accidents are the leading cause of death among teens. This program opens a potentially lifesaving teen-to-teen dialogue on driving-related tragedies involving drivers, passengers, and pedestrians. Strong images of totaled cars, powerful mortality statistics, and firsthand stories of real car wrecks with severe consequences carry the unmistakable message that driving is no joyride. The stakes are just too high for that. (21 minutes) © 2001

Rage: A Social Analysis


- VHS/DVD
- Preview clip online at www.films.com
- Correlates to all applicable state and national standards
- Highly recommended by *Video Librarian*.
- Item # 35831

Obscenities, screaming matches, fistfights, shootings—these have become almost standard forms of public expression. This program explores the emotional causes and social dangers of short fuses, linking the pressures of a hard-driving, high-tech world to the prevalence of an easily threatened, easily

angered point of view. Breaking its analysis into three parts, the program examines road rage, workplace aggression, and violence among sports spectators, with observations from police officers, anger management counselors, athletes, and recovering “ragers.” Nonviolent ways to assert needs and grievances are highlighted. (48 minutes) © 2004 

Rage: On the Road, in the Air, and at Home

- VHS/DVD
- Preview clip online at www.films.com
- Correlates to all applicable state and national standards
- Item # 33236

This *48 Hours* report uses a pair of violent incidents to challenge assumptions about road rage and air rage. A highway encounter between two middle-aged women that ends in a conviction of manslaughter: road rage or self-defense? An incident in which a young man tries to force the cockpit door of an airliner in flight, only to be brutally subdued by passengers—a trauma that leads to his death: air rage, a drug-induced frenzy, or a panic attack? Also included is a profile of a marriage in rage-related crisis, to demonstrate nonviolent remediation through immersive anger management therapy. Produced by CBS NEWS. (44 minutes) © 2001 

Road Rage: Havoc on the Highway

- VHS/DVD
- Preview clip online at www.films.com
- Includes viewable/printable instructor's guide
- Correlates to all applicable state and national standards
- Item # 10785

Tailgating, making rude gestures, and cutting other cars off are only three of the ways that drivers exhibit aggressive behavior—behavior that can provoke road rage, a growing factor in automobile injuries and fatalities. This program spotlights a wide variety of potentially explosive driving situations in order to help students recognize the warning signs of road rage in others and in themselves. Experts offer insights into why normally capable drivers sometimes go berserk, while police officers discuss how others who share the road can avoid becoming their victims. (22 minutes) © 1998