NEGATIVE: Driving Age 18

By Katherine Baker

Affirmative plan tells the states that they have to raise the age for driving to 18 or else they lose some percent of their federal highway funding. The federal government cannot fiat the age directly because it falls under state jurisdiction. Neg will argue that an inexperienced 18-year-old driver is just as bad as an inexperienced 16-year-old driver, and experience is the real issue, not age. Forcing inexperienced drivers to wait until 18 is worse because at that age driver's education classes are not longer mandatory like they are under State laws for drivers under 18.

The result is worse for safety, not better.

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Negative: Driving Age 18

VOTING CRITERION RESPONSE

"Saves Lives" is not the sole valid Affirmative voting criterion. If it is, then we need to ban cars

Dr Bryce Wilkinson 2017 (PhD economics; Senior Fellow at The New Zealand Initiative, and also the Director of the Wellington-based economic consultancy firm Capital Economics ) 20 Oct 2017 "Now Not To Save Lives" <https://nzinitiative.org.nz/reports-and-media/opinion/how-not-to-save-lives/>

What about safety? Should cost be immaterial if lives are being saved? Not outside comic book fiction. Banning cars would slash the road toll. But the cost would be unacceptable.

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

AFF philosophy justifies: "just lock teens up"

The Herald, 2008 updated in 2016. (The Herald is the pre-eminent source of local news, information and advertising for residents in York, Chester and Lancaster counties of South Carolina.) “Don't raise driving age” SEPTEMBER 14, 2008, UPDATED DECEMBER 06, 2016 <http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/article11609189.html#ampshare=http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/article11609189.html>

But the same argument could be made for just about any teen privilege. If we could keep them all locked up until they turn 18, everyone would be safer. But the newly released teens would have little practical experience in the world. They still would all be potentially dangerous drivers until they got some practice.

MINOR REPAIR – Better training

Simply change focus of driving training to improve attitudes and behaviors

Hughes and Coleman law firm 2017. (Hughes and Coleman has over 25 years of experience in personal injury law.) “For Teen Driver Safety Raise the Driving Age… Or Lower it?” Jul 7, 2017 <https://www.hughesandcoleman.com/teen-driver-safety-raise-driving-age-lower/>

Voices are also being raised that the focus should be not on the legal driving age itself, but rather on the type and quality of driving training available. Some studies show that more hours of on-the-road training shows little correlation with the rate of crashes among young drivers because the primary factors involved in those crashes are not skill-related but attitude-related. Therefore, programs that more strongly address teenagers’ attitudes towards risk-taking and dangerous on-the-road behaviors promise to be more effective in reducing car crashes than those that simply focus on driving skills. Nevertheless, others still make the argument that even within those skill-centered courses too little emphasis is placed on how to handle emergencies, for example, sliding on black ice.

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety is wrong: Training can make 16-year-olds excellent drivers, no need to raise the age

Kate Willette, 2008. (senior instructional designer at SWERVE Driver Training, a Puget Sound driving school whose mission is to change the way people drive.) “Training — not age — the key to making teens great drivers” <https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/training-8212-not-age-8212-the-key-to-making-teens-great-drivers/>

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has issued a report calling on states to raise the minimum driving age to 17 or 18. While I share the IIHS’s concern over the staggering number of 16-year-olds — as well as 17-, 18- and 19-years-olds — who are injured or killed in car collisions every year, I disagree that the problem is age. With up-to-date driver training, more hours of careful behind-the-wheel practice and effective parental involvement and role modeling, 16-year-olds can be excellent drivers.

Solution is to train teens, not raise the driving age

Kate Willette, 2008. (senior instructional designer at SWERVE Driver Training, a Puget Sound driving school.) “Training — not age — the key to making teens great drivers” <https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/training-8212-not-age-8212-the-key-to-making-teens-great-drivers/>

I spent a good part of a recent Tuesday listening to talk-show hosts and callers discuss the pros and cons of raising the minimum driving age to 17 or 18. People repeated over and over that 16-year-olds just aren’t mature enough to be trusted on our roads. I wish I had heard more comments suggesting that we take a closer look at what we can do to better train our new teen drivers. In the classroom, it was clear to me that the answer to the question of how to keep teens safe is not to raise the driving age but to take the time to inspire and to train them to be great drivers.

INHERENCY

1. Status Quo graduated driving privileges solve better

Advocacy: States are doing graduated driving privileges (teens have curfews, must be accompanied, etc.). Do more of that instead of raising the age

BISMARK TRUBUNE 2008 (S. Dakota newspaper) " Increasing driving age a bad idea" 21 Sept 2008 <http://bismarcktribune.com/news/opinion/editorial/increasing-driving-age-a-bad-idea/article_c760e01d-f7d2-5d75-950f-8c4b13445610.html>

Increasing the driving age is a bad idea, especially in states like North Dakota, where the numbers just don't add up to change. There are, however, several alternatives to bring about safer highways and teen drivers. One is the continuation, even enhancement, of graduated driver's license programs. They are three-stage processes including a supervised learning period, intermediate license and then full-privilege license.

Solves Better than AFF: Limited-privilege driving under 18 makes drivers safer than full driving for the first time at 18

Daniel C. Vock 2013 (journalist) 2 Sept 2013 Teens Go Slow on Getting Driver's Licenses <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2013/09/02/teens-go-slow-on-getting-drivers-licenses>

“We certainly have a concern that roughly half of new teen drivers aren't benefitting from learning in the (graduated driver's license) process, which has been shown to have a major reduction in crashes for youngsters,” said Justin McNaull, director of state relations for AAA, the automobile organization. Only 44 percent of teenagers said they got their license within a year of when they first became eligible for one, according to a [recent survey](https://www.aaafoundation.org/timing-driver%E2%80%99s-license-acquisition-and-reasons-delay-among-young-people-united-states-2012) for the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. By the time they turned 18, only 54 percent said they had a license. Safety experts credit the graduated driver's licenses, which states began adopting in the mid-1990s, and the recent recession, when fewer people were driving, for reducing teen deaths in traffic accidents.

Driver's Ed Teachers Agree: Graduated driving privileges make a lot more sense than blocking everything 'til 18

Ted Gregory, 2008. (Chicago Tribune reporter) “Should 16-year-olds drive?” September 9, 2008. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-teen-driving-study_09sep09-story.html#ampshare=http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-teen-driving-study_09sep09-story.html>

But veteran driver's education teachers are skeptical about raising the age when a teenager can get a license. "That's like saying we're not going to let any kid get near a pool or lake or the ocean and the drownings will go down," said Brent Johnston, a driving teacher at Hinsdale Central since 1974. "I think Illinois has gone the proper way—reward the kids who do a nice job and penalize the kids who don't. The teen driving issues are not about age and maturity as much as they are about making good choices and demonstrating exceptional behavior, whether they start that driving experience at 16, 17 or 18."

Graduated drivers licenses reduce risks

The Herald, 2008 updated 2016. (The Herald is the pre-eminent source of local news, information and advertising for residents in York, Chester and Lancaster counties of South Carolina.) “Don't raise driving age” SEPTEMBER 14, 2008, UPDATED DECEMBER 06, 2016 <http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/article11609189.html#ampshare=http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/article11609189.html>

Many, however, including South Carolina, have adopted graduated driving privileges, which is a sensible way to reduce the risk. In South Carolina, for example, teens can get a beginner's permit with a written test at age 15. They are required to have an adult over age 21 with them at all times when they drive. After 180 days, they can get a restricted or conditional license that allows them to drive alone during daylight hours. After dark, an adult must accompany them. They cannot get an unrestricted driver's license until they have held a restricted or conditional license for a year.

Graduated licenses create better drivers

Fox News, 2005. (News broadcast) “Is 16 Too Young to Get a Driver's License?” June 19, 2005. <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2005/06/19/is-16-too-young-to-get-driver-license.html>

One solution is graduated licensing, a program that restricts nighttime driving for teens, cell phone usage while driving, and the number of passenger in a teen’s vehicle. After a certain amount of time the teen gets the full rights of a licensed driver. “The fact is that the 16 year olds are inexperienced, so if you add in graduated licensing, where they have more time with the learners permit and more time with the supervision of a parent or guardian that can supervise their driving, then they can be much better prepared to be on our roads as a driver,” Mary Ann Viverette (search), chief of police in Gaithersburg, Md., told FOX News.

Status Quo solves: All 50 states have graduated license laws

Mark Schlachtenhaufen, 2008. (Reporter for the Edmond Sun, a local newspaper in Edmond, OK) “Teens: Keep driving age 16” Sep 11, 2008. <http://www.edmondsun.com/news/local_news/teens-keep-driving-age/article_59532e0b-a787-5c6e-88c2-eb2d59d70168.html>

All 50 states have some type of a graduated driver license law. The state Legislature passed Oklahoma’s version in 1999.

2. Teens are waiting to drive anyway

Majority of teens don't get their license the first year they are eligible

Daniel C. Vock 2013 (journalist) 2 Sept 2013 Teens Go Slow on Getting Driver's Licenses <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2013/09/02/teens-go-slow-on-getting-drivers-licenses>

The AAA report also noted the lack of good historic data. The group said people often assume more teens got their licenses at an early age than actually did. Studies for decades have shown that fewer than half of teens obtained driver's licenses in the first year they were eligible, it noted. “The traditional view has been that teenagers want to get licensed as soon as possible,” the AAA researchers wrote. “In reality, that does not happen.”

Fewer teens are getting licensed these days

Daniel C. Vock 2013 (journalist) 2 Sept 2013 Teens Go Slow on Getting Driver's Licenses <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2013/09/02/teens-go-slow-on-getting-drivers-licenses>

The Federal Highway Administration collects data from states on the age of licensed drivers. The data shows the number of 16- and 17-year-olds with licenses has declined since 2007; more 16-year-olds had licenses in 2001 than any year since.

More teens are waiting to get licenses, not getting them at 16

Daniel C. Vock 2013 (journalist) 2 Sept 2013 Teens Go Slow on Getting Driver's Licenses <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2013/09/02/teens-go-slow-on-getting-drivers-licenses>

Only 44 percent of teenagers said they got their license within a year of when they first became eligible for one, according to a recent survey for the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. By the time they turned 18, only 54 percent said they had a license.

3. New Technology solves

Driver assistance technology comes with "teen driver mode" and solves for distraction. Don't worry about driving age

The News Wheel, 2017. (The News Wheel publishes the latest automotive news, reviews, and exclusive interviews since 2013. The News Wheel is a product of Reynolds & Reynolds, one of the oldest names in the automotive industry.) “Should the Legal Driving Age Be Raised? 10 Points to Consider” May 15, 2017 <http://thenewswheel.com/should-the-legal-driving-age-be-raised-10-points-to-consider/>

Technology: Instead of putting the burden of proper behavior on drivers, today’s intuitive assistance technology in vehicles is being the ears, eyes, and brakes of people who are distracted behind the wheel. In fact, many cars now come with teen driver modes. If cars themselves can avoid accidents, why should we worry about the driving age?

On the Cusp of Driverless cars

John M. Vincent, 2017. (Automotive Consumer Advice Writer for US News and World Report.) “9 Cars That Are Almost Self-Driving” August 28, 2017 <https://cars.usnews.com/cars-trucks/cars-that-are-almost-self-driving>

The time when we can sit back and tell our car where to drive itself is getting closer every day. Self-driving cars (also called autonomous vehicles or driverless cars) promise new levels of efficiency and take driver fatigue and inattention out of the safety equation. We’re on the cusp of a transportation revolution, where driverless cars become an essential mobility option. It won’t happen overnight, but self-driving vehicles and changes to our transportation infrastructure are coming sooner than you might think. Self-driving cars require sophisticated suites of sensors, backed by advanced software that can interpret massive streams of data in real-time. While there are several barriers to the adoption of self-driving technology, automakers are making strides to quickly bring elements of the technology to the road. Pushing harder than anyone is Tesla Motors CEO Elon Musk, whose advanced products have forced other automakers to rapidly develop their own self-driving technologies. Fully autonomous cars are currently undergoing testing in several areas of the country, but none are yet available to the general public. There are, however, several cars available that feature some level of autonomous operation. On the next slide, we look at the levels of autonomous driving. Then we'll look at some of the vehicles available today with self-driving technology.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. Teens aren't the most dangerous drivers

American Automobile Association (AAA) study: Millenials age 19-24 are the worst drivers

USA TODAY 2017. (journalist Bart Jansen) 15 Feb 2017 " Millennial drivers are highway hazards, survey shows" <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/02/15/millennial-drivers-highway-hazards-survey-shows/97888336/>

Millennial drivers are the worst. That’s not just their elders talking. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found 88% of drivers 19- to 24-years-old acknowledged engaging in risky behavior such as texting while driving, running red lights or speeding during the previous month, according to a report released Wednesday.

AAA study: Teens 16-18 have safer driving habits than older age groups

Michele Debczak 2017 (journalist) Millennials, Not Teens, Are the Most Dangerous Drivers <http://mentalfloss.com/article/92289/millennials-not-teens-are-most-dangerous-drivers>

The market research firm GfK surveyed 2511 drivers late last summer for AAA’s latest Traffic Safety Culture Index [[PDF](http://publicaffairsresources.aaa.biz/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2016-Traffic-Safety-Culture-Index-report.pdf)]. Following drivers in their early twenties, motorists ages 25 to 39 were the second most dangerous group. More than 79 percent of drivers in this age bracket reported one of the bad behaviors above, making Millennials (defined by Pew as those [between the ages of 20 and 36](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/25/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/)) the most reckless generation on the road. Generation X doesn’t fare much better, with 75 percent of respondents ages 40 to 59 engaging in at least one of the risky acts. Teenagers ages 16 to 18 years old came in third place with 69.3 percent admitting to dangerous habits, followed closely by drivers 75 and older with 69.1 percent, and drivers ages 60 to 74 with 67.3 percent.

2. Teen drivers are much safer now

Teen casualties have reduced so much that we should consider LOWERING the driving age

Hughes and Coleman law firm 2017. (Hughes and Coleman has over 25 years of experience in personal injury law) “For Teen Driver Safety Raise the Driving Age… Or Lower it?” Jul 7, 2017 <https://www.hughesandcoleman.com/teen-driver-safety-raise-driving-age-lower/>

But a closer look at the statistics on teenage driving reveals an often overlooked aspect of the story. While it is still true that teenagers are involved in more fatal car crashes than any other age group, this trend has begun to change dramatically in the past decade or so. Data from the years 2004-2015 reveal a marked decline in motor vehicle crash-related fatalities as well as in both serious and minor injuries in the 15-20-year-old age group. Fatal accidents dropped by 51 percent, while the injury rate dropped 54 percent for serious injuries and 59 percent for minor injuries. This change is not only very large in itself but equally significant when compared to other age groups – the decrease was greater for teenagers than for drivers 35 to 40 years of age, when considered as a ratio per 100,000 licensed drivers. What should be credited as the force behind this optimistic trend in teenage driving? Research suggests that a considerable part of it is owed to GDL, or Graduated Driving Licensing, that has contributed to reducing crashes involving young drivers by 10 to 30 percent. GDL, however, not only delays full licensure until a later age but also compels teenagers to obtain more supervised training behind the wheel. Thus, when a young adult is finally able to get a full license, he or she has more experience and is better prepared to deal with the challenges of the road. These statistics lead some to believe that laws concerning age limits for driving should be, in fact, less strict, allowing teenagers to start driving sooner to obtain more experience.

3. Age isn't the problem

“Young Drivers " aren't the problem, the problem is inexperience – at any age

The News Wheel, 2017. (The News Wheel publishes the latest automotive news, reviews, and exclusive interviews since 2013. The News Wheel is a product of Reynolds & Reynolds, one of the oldest names in the automotive industry.) “Should the Legal Driving Age Be Raised? 10 Points to Consider” May 15, 2017 <http://thenewswheel.com/should-the-legal-driving-age-be-raised-10-points-to-consider/>

Experience: While statistics show that young drivers have a higher likelihood of being in collisions, they don’t necessarily take into account that young drivers are also new, inexperienced drivers–which would happen at any age. Many of these studies only prove that “inexperienced drivers make more mistakes than experienced drivers.” No duh.

Immaturity, not age, is greatest problem – plan doesn't solve the real risks

*The Pantagraph, 2006 (The Pantagraph is a daily newspaper that serves Bloomington-Normal Illinois, along with 60 communities and eight counties in the Central Illinois area.) “No need to increase minimum driving age” Feb 7, 2006.* [*http://www.pantagraph.com/news/opinion/editorial/no-need-to-increase-minimum-driving-age/article\_42a3dbfb-4e86-5fa2-8655-44f08aadd228.html*](http://www.pantagraph.com/news/opinion/editorial/no-need-to-increase-minimum-driving-age/article_42a3dbfb-4e86-5fa2-8655-44f08aadd228.html)

"Immaturity" is often given as a reason for increasing the age limit. And an observation from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety is usually used: The risk for drivers is highest at age 16. What do they expect? They are the least experienced drivers, another of the leading causes of teen-driver fatalities cited by the Insurance Institute. If the limit were 18, the same risk would then be assessed to those inexperienced 18-year-old drivers.

SOLVENCY

1. False assumption

AFF assumes reckless drivers get safer by being older

*The News Wheel, 2017. (The News Wheel publishes the latest automotive news, reviews, and exclusive interviews since 2013. The News Wheel is a product of Reynolds & Reynolds, one of the oldest names in the automotive industry.) “Should the Legal Driving Age Be Raised? 10 Points to Consider” May 15, 2017* [*http://thenewswheel.com/should-the-legal-driving-age-be-raised-10-points-to-consider/*](http://thenewswheel.com/should-the-legal-driving-age-be-raised-10-points-to-consider/)

Diversity: Not every person–teenage or otherwise–is identical. Some teenage drivers are cautious and wise, while some adult drivers are impulsive and reckless. Raising the driving age assumes that bad teen drivers will get better by simply being older.

DISADVANTAGES

1. More dangerous drivers

Washington State Study: Drivers who waited until 18 got 3 times more tickets than 16 year olds

SEATTLE TIMES 2016 (journalist Evan Bush) 16 Feb 2016 " Teens delay getting licenses — and their driving is worse" <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/young-drivers-wait-to-get-licenses-with-dangerous-consequences/>

The problem with teens waiting to get licensed: Those who wait become worse drivers, statistically, at least. Recent licensing-department citation data shows drivers who got their licenses at age 18 received, on average, about three times as many citations as people who began driving at 16. Drivers over 18 are more likely to fail their driving tests.

Washington State motor vehicle official admits: new 18 year old drivers are more dangerous than 16-17 year olds

SEATTLE TIMES 2016 (journalist Evan Bush) 16 Feb 2016 " Teens delay getting licenses — and their driving is worse" <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/young-drivers-wait-to-get-licenses-with-dangerous-consequences/>

But for Washington teens, a subtle shift is under way. More are waiting to get licensed. To nervous parents, it might sound appealing to put off sleepless nights worrying about car crashes. But to the Department of Licensing, the trend is troubling because it means more new 18- to 21-year-old drivers are hitting the pavement. “Those are some of the riskiest drivers on the road,” said Department of Licensing Special Projects Manager Brady Horenstein — even riskier than 16- to 17-year-olds who, counterintuitively, make better drivers.

18 – 19 year olds are more dangerous first-time drivers: less home instruction and more exposure to alcohol

Daniel C. Vock 2013 (journalist) 2 Sept 2013 Teens Go Slow on Getting Driver's Licenses <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2013/09/02/teens-go-slow-on-getting-drivers-licenses>

Older teens face challenges while learning to drive that younger ones do not, said AAA's McNaull. Many move out of their parents' home, which means they do not have experienced drivers around to help them learn how to drive. Plus, McNaull said, young drivers are far less likely to get into drunk driving accidents, because they have less exposure to alcohol. “We've seen these good results with (graduated driver's licenses) for 16- and 17-year-olds. We'd really like to find ways that they could be extended across to 18- and 19-year-olds as well,” he said.

2. Less driver education

Over 18, you don't have to take drivers' ed classes. Some even now wait 'til 18 to avoid the classes

SEATTLE TIMES 2016 (journalist Evan Bush) 16 Feb 2016 " Teens delay getting licenses — and their driving is worse" <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/young-drivers-wait-to-get-licenses-with-dangerous-consequences/>

In Washington, driver’s education usually costs about $500, and until you’re 18, classes are required to get a license. Janet Ray, of AAA Washington, said some frugal or financially unable teens simply wait until they’re 18, so they don’t have to pay for class.

Brink: No graduated licenses for 18-year-olds

Daniel C. Vock, 2013. (transportation and infrastructure reporter; developed a deep knowledge of government generally, and of states specifically, as a reporter for the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin and for Stateline. He has a master’s degree in public affairs reporting from the University of Illinois Springfield and a bachelor’s degree in English and German from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.) “Teens Go Slow on Getting Driver's Licenses” September 02, 2013. <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2013/09/02/teens-go-slow-on-getting-drivers-licenses>

Drivers typically start off with a learner's permit, which allows them to drive with adult supervision. After reaching a certain age and passing a driving test, they can get a license to drive on their own. States generally bar 16- and 17-year-olds from driving at night or with other passengers, until the drivers reach a certain age or experience level. Most states also impose tougher restrictions on using cell phones for young drivers. Except in New Jersey, those restrictions do not apply to drivers who are 18 or older, even if they are inexperienced drivers who just received their licenses. “We certainly have a concern that roughly half of new teen drivers aren't benefitting from learning in the (graduated driver's license) process, which has been shown to have a major reduction in crashes for youngsters,” said Justin McNaull, director of state relations for AAA, the automobile organization.

Impact: Reduced safety. Studies show extra learning required of younger drivers makes them safer.

SEATTLE TIMES 2016 (journalist Evan Bush) 16 Feb 2016 " Teens delay getting licenses — and their driving is worse" <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/young-drivers-wait-to-get-licenses-with-dangerous-consequences/> (brackets added)

To become licensed before turning 18, drivers must get a permit to practice and take driver’s ed. Once they turn 18, they simply have to pass the knowledge and in-person driving tests. Conceivably, someone could pass both tests without ever having driven on a highway. The state driving test doesn’t cover that. [Washington State Dept. of Licensing Special Projects Manager, Brady] Horenstein said restrictions on licensed drivers under 18 help keep them safe. Those 16 to 17 years old receive an intermediate license — they can’t have passengers under the age of 20 for the first six months, and can’t drive between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. for the first year, unless they turn 18. “There are no restrictions at all on an 18-year-old,” said Horenstein. “Passenger restrictions, nighttime restrictions — study after study has shown those produce better public-safety outcomes.”

Impact: Nebraska Study found 24% more likely to have wreck with injury or fatality without drivers ed

University of Nebraska Communications department 2015. (study conducted by Professors Ian Newman and Duane Shell at U. Nebraska-Lincoln) 13 Aug 2015 " Study: Driver's ed significantly reduces teen crashes, tickets" <http://newsroom.unl.edu/releases/2015/08/13/Study:+Driver%27s+ed+significantly+reduces+teen+crashes,+tickets>

A new study that followed more than 150,000 teen drivers over eight years has found that driver's education significantly reduces crashes and traffic violations among new drivers. Young drivers who have not completed driver's education are 75 percent more likely to get a traffic ticket, 24 percent more likely to be involved in a fatal or injury accident and 16 percent more likely to have an accident, the study showed.

3. Youth Job Loss

Raising the driving age takes away teen independence

The Herald, 2008 updated 2016. (The Herald is the pre-eminent source of local news, information and advertising for residents in York, Chester and Lancaster counties of South Carolina.) “Don't raise driving age” SEPTEMBER 14, 2008, UPDATED DECEMBER 06, 2016 <http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/article11609189.html#ampshare=http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/article11609189.html>

By the time they are 16, we think, teens need to be taking on some responsibilities themselves, including personal transportation. If they have to wait until they are 17 or 18, they remain dependent on parents practically until they ready to go off to college, join the military or take a civilian job. Also, ask parents and many will admit that giving their 16-year-olds the keys is a big convenience. After years of carting kids to school and back and taking them wherever they need to go, it's a relief to let them drive themselves.

Driving is essential

The Herald, updated 2016. (The Herald is the pre-eminent source of local news, information and advertising for residents in York, Chester and Lancaster counties of South Carolina.) “Don't raise driving age” SEPTEMBER 14, 2008, UPDATED DECEMBER 06, 2016 <http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/article11609189.html#ampshare=http://www.heraldonline.com/opinion/article11609189.html>

We have created a nation where driving is essential. Public transportation is not an option except in large metropolitan areas. Kids need to assume responsibilities at some point. Letting them drive at 16 continues to make sense despite the obvious hazards.

Teens stripped of chance to prepare for adulthood

The News Wheel, 2017. (The News Wheel publishes the latest automotive news, reviews, and exclusive interviews since 2013. The News Wheel is a product of Reynolds & Reynolds, one of the oldest names in the automotive industry.) “Should the Legal Driving Age Be Raised? 10 Points to Consider” May 15, 2017 <http://thenewswheel.com/should-the-legal-driving-age-be-raised-10-points-to-consider/>

Convenience: If teenagers cannot obtain their licenses until later in life, it’s up to parents to continue driving them around to social and extracurricular activities–and, most importantly, part-time jobs. Most parents don’t want to sacrifice this time, and that inevitably leads to hindering their growing up and preparing for adult life.

Practically a terrible idea; kids have jobs to get to

Ted Gregory, 2008. (Chicago Tribune reporter) “Should 16-year-olds drive?” September 9, 2008. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-teen-driving-study_09sep09-story.html#ampshare=http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-teen-driving-study_09sep09-story.html>

Added Ken Biggs, chairman of the driver's education department at Schaumburg High School: "Idealistically, I think it'd be great" to raise the minimum age. "But practically? No. There's no mass transit to get to work, to get to jobs."

Harder to get places

Mark Schlachtenhaufen, 2008. (Reporter for the Edmond Sun, a local newspaper in Edmond, OK) “Teens: Keep driving age 16” Sep 11, 2008. <http://www.edmondsun.com/news/local_news/teens-keep-driving-age/article_59532e0b-a787-5c6e-88c2-eb2d59d70168.html>

Wilkinson has worked at Parkway Cleaners for about a year and a half. She said she has been driving herself to work and if the legal age was raised it would be harder on her parents. As it stands, she doesn’t have to worry about getting a ride home from work.

Hurts those without mass transit

The Pantagraph, 2006 (The Pantagraph is a daily newspaper that serves Bloomington-Normal Illinois, along with 60 communities and eight counties in the Central Illinois area.) “No need to increase minimum driving age” Feb 7, 2006. <http://www.pantagraph.com/news/opinion/editorial/no-need-to-increase-minimum-driving-age/article_42a3dbfb-4e86-5fa2-8655-44f08aadd228.html>

Boosting the age limit might not have the same impact in Chicago because that area has pretty reliable mass transit service well into the evening in a compact area. That's not the case Downstate. Teens are involved in sports and other extracurricular activities at school, activities that often don't mesh with the hours of working parents. So they need independent transportation.

Job loss. Teens wouldn’t be able to get jobs

The Pantagraph, 2006 (The Pantagraph is a daily newspaper that serves Bloomington-Normal Illinois, along with 60 communities and eight counties in the Central Illinois area.) “No need to increase minimum driving age” Feb 7, 2006. <http://www.pantagraph.com/news/opinion/editorial/no-need-to-increase-minimum-driving-age/article_42a3dbfb-4e86-5fa2-8655-44f08aadd228.html>

Many teens also have part-time jobs that require trips across town, or from one community into another - areas not served 24/7 by public transportation, if at all. Working parents also often depend on children to drive younger siblings to their various activities. Drivers licenses for teens Downstate are often major conveniences for families. Let's continue to emphasize safe driving to teens - and all other drivers for that matter - but leave the minimum age at 16.

Impact: Lost life skills. Work teaches time-management

Beth Kobliner ,2017 (Financial-literacy advocate and author and served on President Obama’s Advisory Council on Financial Capability for Young Americans.) “Why Your Teen Should Work Part Time During the School Year” Jun 11, 2017 <https://blogs.wsj.com/experts/2017/06/11/why-your-teen-should-work-part-time-during-the-school-year/>

Indeed, another plus of part-time work can be valuable lessons in time management. Using data from the Youth Development Study, a decades-long project launched back in the 1980s, researchers found that a clear takeaway from part-time work in high school is learning how to juggle life. Think about it: A student balancing shifts at the Sunglass Hut with jazz band, swimming and homework will have to learn to schedule in a hurry. Even better is that the same study shows that students who strike a good work-study balance in high school tend to carry it with them to college. (But don’t expect your teen to learn time management from his or her boss. Parents need to be part of this conversation, and step in when work is crowding out more important activities.)

Impact: Staying out of crime and saving lives

Ben Steverman, 2017. (writes for Bloomberg about personal finance and other topics.) “Why Aren’t American Teenagers Working Anymore?” June 5, 2017. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-06-05/why-aren-t-american-teenagers-working-anymore>

A summer job can even save lives. In a study released last month by the National Bureau of Economic Research, researchers analyzed the effects of two Chicago programs providing students with part-time jobs along with mentors for the summer. The programs had little apparent effect on the teens' later employment or education—a big concern in itself—but arrests for violent crime plunged, by 42 percent for one program and 33 percent for the other, an effect felt for at least a year after the programs ended. If teens got nothing else out of the jobs programs, the researchers suggested, they were at least "learning to better avoid or manage conflict."

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