

Before Starting the Conversation About Driving...

You may have reasons for talking to your loved one about their driving. Even if you do not see a warning sign, it is wise to make a plan before there is a crisis.

Some warning signs to look for are:

- The person is involved in a fender bender.
- They hit a mailbox or other object.
- They are confused when driving or forget their way home.

Some common problem areas are:

- Making left turns
- Driving at night
- Merging into traffic
- Changing lanes
- Yielding to traffic
- Following traffic signals
- Impaired driving (including prescription and over-the-counter medication)



There are options and help is available – for you and for them

- A primary care provider can help by identifying warning signs and other issues.
- Driver rehabilitation specialists work with people of all ages and abilities, exploring alternative transportation solutions for drivers with special needs. This includes helping older drivers and their families master the challenges of diminishing driving skills.
- Numerous self-evaluation options are available to help the individual reach the right conclusion. You can review them with the loved one.



Other events that can help start a conversation:

- The person is having surgery.
- They comment about problems with night vision.
- They have lost a partner and are concerned about being the sole driver.

Printed Materials

Access to local resources, such as driver rehabilitation specialists, local transportation options, and more are available in Florida's Guide for Aging Drivers. To receive a free copy of the guide, please contact:

Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy
Safe Mobility for Life Resource Center
P.O. Box 3061121
Tallahassee, FL 32306
Email: safe-mobility-for-life@fsu.edu
Phone: 850-644-8145

On-line Resources

Family and Caregiver Resources:

www.FLsams.org (under "Resources" tab)

The Hartford's "Family Conversations with Older Drivers":

www.thehartford.com/talkwitholderdrivers

University of Florida's Fitness-to-Drive Screening Measure:

fitnesstodrive.phhp.ufl.edu

Find a Driver Rehabilitation Specialist:

www.aded.net

www.aota.org/olderdriver

Information on How to Report an Unsafe Driver:

www.flhsmv.gov/FloridaGrandDriver/reportUnsafeDriver.html

Funded by the



www.SafeandMobileSeniors.org



Families & Caregivers



Tips for Talking with Aging Drivers about Safe Driving Concerns



www.FLsams.org



How to Start a Conversation

It is your responsibility and will not go away by itself, even if they do not want to talk.

A family member or caregiver should talk about safe driving to ensure the older adult drives safely for as long as practical. Involve the individual in the plan for what to do when they cannot drive safely. Remember, it is not just the person that is affected. Everyone on the road can be affected by an unsafe driver. Do not wait for a crisis! Start talking now!

Use a script and plan what to say

Do not get discouraged by what you think their responses will be. Write down every point that you want to get across to them and make sure you say them. They will hear you, even if at first they are resistant.



What to say and do

Follow this simple outline to create your script

- Identify how you will start the conversation.
- Make sure to express your concern and let them know why.
- Say everything you need to discuss.
- Be informed about aging issues:
 - ▶ Learn about effects of aging on driving ability.
 - ▶ Discover how to improve functioning through different strategies.
 - ▶ Find out how to use adaptive equipment.
 - ▶ Explore what community transportation options are available.
- Limit access to the vehicle or keys, or disable the vehicle, if necessary.

How NOT to say it

- Do not bring it up at a family gathering.
- Do not bring it up during another stressful situation.
- Do not threaten or bully.

How to say it

- Be calm at all times, even if they are not.
- Be respectful and recognize that the loved one has years of driving experience.
- Be hopeful, since alternatives to driving may not be apparent to the aging road user who feels they will lose their independence.

When necessary...

- Medically impaired drivers of any age, who may pose a threat to public safety, can be reported **confidentially** to the Florida Department of Highway Safety (DHSMV).
- To get a copy of the DHSMV Medical Reporting Form, please contact:

Division of Motorist Services
 Attn: Medical Review Section
 Neil Kirkman Building, MS 86
 Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0507
 Phone: 850-617-3814
 Email: medical@flhsmv.gov
 On-line: www.flhsmv.gov/forms/72190.pdf

What Happens After a Driver is Reported?

- The DHSMV carefully reviews the Medical Reporting Form to ensure the information is valid. Depending on the findings, the driver may be required to:
 - ▶ Submit a medical report from their doctor for review by the Medical Advisory Board; or
 - ▶ Take a re-examination (vision, written, or driving test).
- The Medical Advisory Board considers all available facts including the driver's medical history, driving record, and any unsafe driving events. Their recommendation may be to:
 - ▶ Require the driver to submit additional medical reports; and/or
 - ▶ Require the driver to re-take the driving test; or
 - ▶ Deny the license.
- If a driver license is denied, the driver may request a hearing to provide additional information.

"Any physician, person, or agency having knowledge of any licensed driver's or applicant's mental or physical disability to drive...is authorized to report such knowledge to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles..." [Section 322.126\(2\), \(3\), Florida Statutes.](#)