

Traffic Education

The Traffic Education (TE) Program manages the state novice driver education program. Summer one-day workshops provide advanced driver training at the Montana DR.I.V.E. facility in Lewistown for school bus drivers, state agencies, businesses and the general public. The TE unit assists 139 districts providing driver education to approximately 8,500 teens annually.

The Traffic Education Program:

- Sets program, curriculum and teacher preparation standards to assure quality and increase teen driver safety. Also provides technical assistance to program managers and professional development opportunities for teachers.
- Monitors programs through desk audits and site visits. When public schools meet all applicable state standards, the OPI reimburses a portion of the expenses incurred delivering the driver education from a percentage of driver license fees.
- Created in collaboration with the Department of Justice, a parent's guide to graduated driver licensing (GDL) to help parents understand their role in supervising, coaching and restricting teen driving in high risk conditions.
- Pilot-tested the nation's first driver education parent/teen homework assignments, in cooperation with the Montana Traffic Education Association (MTEA). The use of the parent teen homework (Keep Encouraging Young-driver Safety – KEYS) is increasing by recruiting and training more teachers on using the materials.
- Created a Law Enforcement Guide to the GDL to aid officers in properly citing violations, in cooperation with Montana law enforcement.
- Partnered with Western Transportation Institute to conduct research in order to better understand teen distracted driving and the effectiveness of possible safety measures.
- Is evaluating Montana's driver education program and developing an updated sustainable quality assurance process to ensure teens are getting the best possible driver education. This evaluation will be conducted by outside researchers and is funded by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety.
- Provides advanced driver training to approximately 500 drivers each summer through one-day workshops with Montana DR.I.V.E. (Driver in Vehicle Education) in Lewistown. This training develops behind-the-wheel skills to respond safely to driving risks. The program has nine professional instructors, a fleet of school buses and sedans, as well as a dump truck, an ambulance and a fire truck. It is supported solely by user fees.