

# Adolescent Risk Research Unit

Rise, and shine.

## Young and unlicensed: Risky driving before entering the licencing system

Scott-Parker, B., Watson, B., King, M.J. & Hyde, M.K. (2012)

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The full article is accessible at - <http://bit.ly/2c4z3X9>



### Why do this research

Around the world there is evidence that teenagers are driving on the road even before they gain their learner licence (which is usually obtained after a learner knowledge test). Pre-licence driving appears to be particularly risky because the young driver hasn't even passed a basic knowledge test, and in many instances appear to be driving without the supervision of a qualified experienced driver. Therefore we wanted to investigate the pre-licence driving experience of young drivers in Queensland.

### What did we do?

1032 young drivers aged 17 to 19 years completed an online survey which explored their pre-licence and learner driving behaviour. Six months later, 365 of these participants completed a second survey exploring their driving experiences as a P-Plater.

### What did we find?

Across Queensland, 12% of young drivers reported that they had driven on the road before they had a learner licence. In comparison to young drivers who didn't report driving on the road before they had a learner licence, generally pre-licence drivers reported much more risky driving behaviours during both the learner and their provisional licence phase, including speeding and driving in response to heightened emotions such as anger.

### What does it mean?

Driving on the road without a licence places not only the young driver, but also anyone else in their car with them, at great risk. The risk is also increased for anyone they are sharing the road with. Furthermore, it appears that these drivers then continue to be risky throughout both the learner and provisional licence phases. Early intervention should target risky driving behaviours, and youth detected driving without a valid learner licence appear to require targeted intervention to ensure they minimise road risks – for themselves, their vehicle occupants, and anyone else with whom they may share the road.