

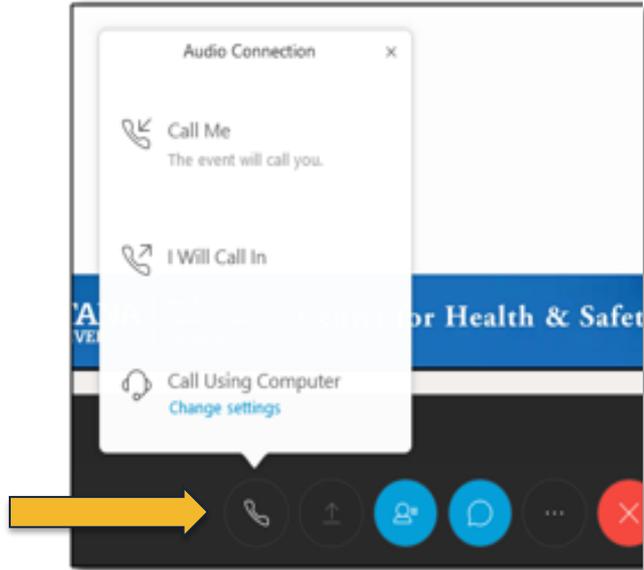
# Proactive Traffic Safety: Empowering Behaviors to Reach Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries

Dr. Kari Finley  
12:00 pm MST

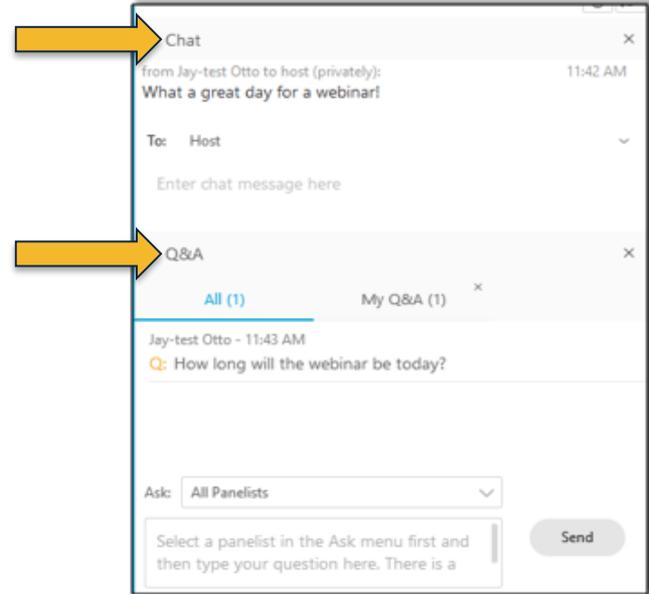


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# About the Center for Health and Safety Culture

We are an interdisciplinary center serving communities and organizations through research, training, and guidance to cultivate healthy and safe cultures.

# Core Issues



Traffic Safety

Substance Misuse



Domestic Violence



Child Wellbeing



# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

## RESEARCH SPONSOR



TRANSPORTATION POOLED FUND PROGRAM

### Traffic Safety Culture Pooled Fund

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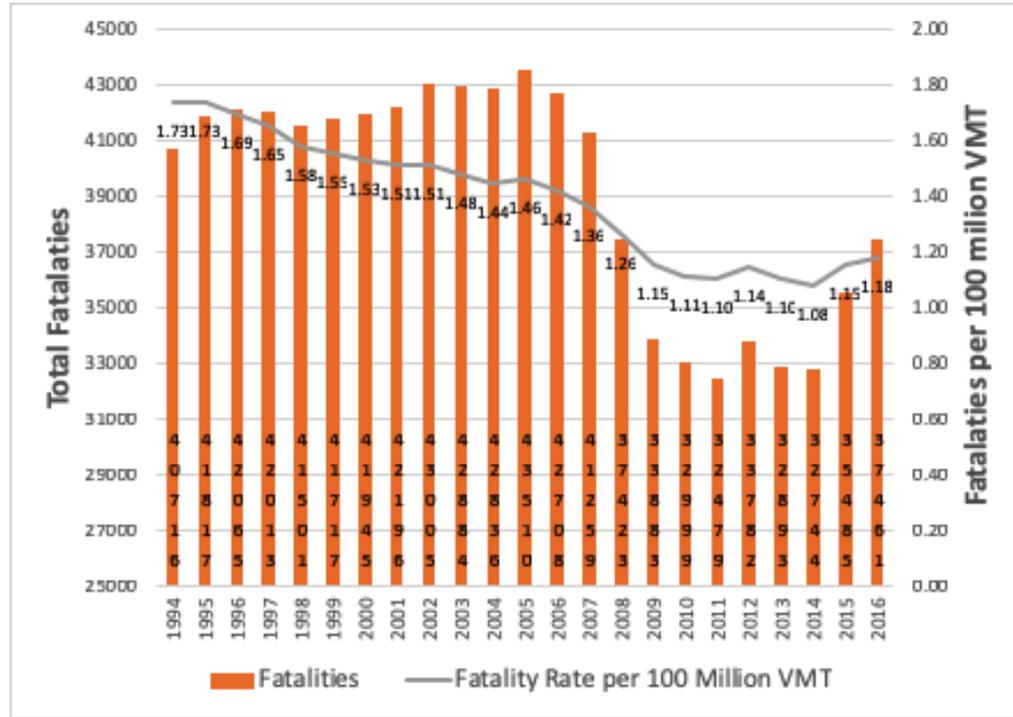
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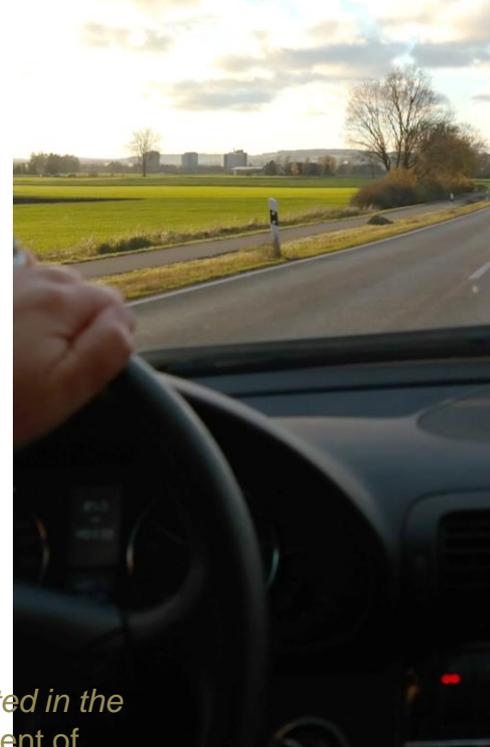
# We Are in This Together

The only acceptable traffic safety goal is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries to zero.



# We Are in This Together

- Driver behavior is a significant factor contributing to motor vehicle crashes.<sup>1</sup>
- To improve traffic safety, we must focus on strategies that influence risky driver behaviors.
- Risky driver behaviors include deliberate behaviors like
  - speeding,
  - texting while driving,
  - impaired driving, and
  - not wearing a seat belt.



1. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). *Critical Reasons for Crashes Investigated in the National Motor Vehicle Crash Causation Survey*. (DOT HS 812 115). Washington, DC: US Department of Transportation. 2015. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812115>.

# We Are in This Together

The majority of road users already engage in safe behaviors.

- Most people (90%) wear a seat belt.<sup>1</sup>
- Most people (92%) do not drive within two hours of drinking alcohol.<sup>2</sup>
- Most people (95%) do not drive within two hours of using cannabis.<sup>2</sup>
- Most people (81%) do not speed (in excess of 10 mph over the posted speed).<sup>3</sup>

1. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). *Traffic Safety Facts: Seat Belt Use in 2017—Overall Results*. (DOT-HS-812-465). Washington, DC: US Department of Transportation. 2018. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812465>.

2. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. *Results from the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Washington, DC: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2018.

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHDetailedTabs2017/NSDUHDetailedTabs2017.htm#tab6-84B>

3. De Leonardis, D., R. Huey, and J. Green. *National Traffic Speeds Survey III: 2015*. (DOT HS 812 485) (March, 2018). Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. 2018.

# We Are in This Together

## QUESTION

- How do we leverage the large group of people already engaging in safe road user behaviors to influence the smaller group engaging in risky road user behaviors?

## ANSWER

- Proactive Traffic Safety



# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

- The roadway transportation system is a shared community.
- Each of us is a member of the community because we depend on this shared system to connect us with people, places, goods, and services.
- For this system to meet everyone's needs and be sustained, we have an obligation to one another to act in ways that support the system.
- **Compliance... AND SOMETHING MORE!**

# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

## COMMITMENT

- To achieve higher levels of safety, individuals need to go beyond compliance to commitment – a commitment to safety for themselves and others.
- A commitment to safety means committing to avoiding risk as well as committing to taking actions to keep safe.



# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

## PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY IS...

- Proactive behaviors demonstrating commitment to a safe roadway transportation system.
- *“Proactive”*
  - “acting in anticipation of future problems, needs, or changes”<sup>1</sup>
  - “serving to prepare for, intervene in, or control an expected occurrence or situation, especially a negative or difficult one”<sup>2</sup>

1. Merriam-Webster Dictionary. “Proactive” Accessed April, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/proactive>.

2. Dictionary.com “Proactive” Accessed April, 2019. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/proactive>

# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

## **PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY INCLUDES PROACTIVE BEHAVIORS LIKE:**

- Supporting existing traffic safety efforts
- Staying informed of safety-related issues
- Planning a safe way to get home before drinking alcohol

# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

## PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY INCLUDES PROACTIVE BEHAVIORS LIKE:

- Speaking up about unsafe behaviors like not wearing a seat belt or driving distracted
- Establishing family rules about safety like never texting while driving or never riding with someone who has been drinking alcohol
- Establishing a workplace policy like always wearing a seat belt in a company vehicle

# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

## GROWING PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

- Creates a shared commitment to safety
- Encourages proactive behaviors that support safety efforts
- Encourages proactive behaviors that extend beyond one's own safety to support the safety of others
- Expands the focus to include the large group of safe road users as a way to influence the small group engaging in risky behaviors
- Enhances existing Strategic Highway Safety Plan efforts

# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – What You Need to Know

Growing proactive traffic safety is an opportunity for traffic safety professionals and stakeholders to create lasting and sustainable improvements in traffic safety behaviors.



# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY – Where We Go from Here

## TOOLS

- A Proactive Traffic Safety Primer
- A Proactive Traffic Safety PowerPoint Presentation
- A Conversation Guide
- A Proactive Traffic Safety Poster



# A Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

## Proactive Traffic Safety:

Empowering Behaviors to Reach Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries



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## Proactive Traffic Safety:

Empowering Behaviors to Reach Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries



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<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/trafficsafety-primer.shtml>

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# Proactive Traffic Safety Primer

- Section 1
- Section 2
- Section 3
- Section 4

# A Proactive Traffic Safety PowerPoint Presentation

## Proactive Traffic Safety:

Empowering Behaviors to Reach  
Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths  
and Serious Injuries



# A Conversation Guide

## CONVERSATION GUIDE

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the conversation guide is to promote dialogue to foster shared understanding and actions to grow proactive traffic safety.

### GUIDANCE

Proactive traffic safety is a new opportunity to strategically address risky traffic behaviors and ultimately achieve and sustain our Towards Zero Deaths goals. As a traffic safety professional or stakeholder, you are a leader to get conversations about proactive traffic safety started. Creating an environment that supports curiosity and lots of questions is important. You might not have all of the answers but, allowing ample time for discussion and exploration is key.

### CONVERSATION TIPS

Conversations can occur between two people or among small groups. It is critical that everyone is actively engaged in the conversation so keeping the group size to four people or smaller is encouraged. If the group is larger than four people, consider breaking into smaller groups and allow additional time for groups to share thoughts between discussion questions.

#### Tip for Effective Conversations



- Listen for understanding.
- Seek to build connections between various thoughts.
- Allow plenty of time to let the conversation unfold. Your investment of time will pay off many times over in the future.
- Encourage input from everyone.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Here is a list of discussion questions from which to choose. You could choose a few questions to discuss, or you could have the group choose which questions they would like to discuss.

- What opportunities can you see for applying proactive traffic safety in your work right now?
- How could growing proactive traffic safety help you achieve your desired outcomes?
- What would it take to incorporate proactive traffic safety?
- What is needed going forward?
- What are our immediate next steps?
- How is proactive traffic safety similar and different than what we are already doing?
- What are examples of proactive traffic safety we could grow to address our priority safety issues?
- If we were to be successful at growing proactive traffic safety, what new partners might we seek to engage?
- Which of our current partners is in the best position to advocate for and/or grow proactive traffic safety?
- How might we grow proactive traffic safety in the context of families? In the context of workplaces? In the context of schools? In the context of governmental agencies?

# A Proactive Traffic Safety Poster



## Proactive Traffic Safety: Empowering Behaviors to Reach Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries

### INTRODUCTION

The only acceptable traffic safety goal is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries to zero. While significant improvements in traffic safety have been made, our shared vision of zero deaths and serious injuries on our nation's roadways is not fully realized. There is more work to be done.

A significant factor contributing to motor vehicle crashes is driver behavior. Risky driver behaviors include deliberate behaviors (i.e., behaviors that we choose to commit) like speeding, texting while driving, driving impaired, or not wearing a seat belt. These deliberate risky behaviors can be changed. Motor vehicle crashes and serious injuries are preventable, and our efforts must focus on changing behavior. Specifically, we must focus on creating conditions that increase safer deliberate behaviors.

The good news is that the majority of road users already engage in safe behaviors: most people wear a seat belt, most people do not drive within two hours of drinking alcohol or using cannabis, and most people do not speed (in excess of 10 mph over the posted speed).

A positive traffic safety culture already exists. Yet, not wearing a seat belt, impaired driving, and speeding are leading risky behaviors associated with fatal and serious injury crashes – even though it is a small portion of the population that engages in these behaviors.

The question that we must ask is: How do we leverage the large group of people already engaging in safe road user behaviors to influence the smaller group engaging in risky road user behaviors?

One way to leverage the positive road safety culture that already exists to impact the small group of road users engaging in risky behaviors is to grow proactive traffic safety.

### WHAT IS PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY?

The roadway transportation system is a shared community that includes various users and stakeholders. For this system to meet everyone's needs and be sustained, all involved have an obligation to one another to act in ways that support the system.

At a basic level, individuals can meet this obligation by complying with existing laws and regulations. However, mere compliance with existing laws and regulations fails to address the myriad of situations that occur that are potentially unsafe but are not explicitly deemed unlawful. Furthermore, compliance means we accept the status quo (i.e., that over 37,000 people are killed every year) because it is the consequence of current laws.

To achieve higher levels of safety, individuals need to go beyond compliance to commitment – a commitment to safety for themselves and others. A commitment to safety means committing to avoiding risk as well as committing to taking actions to keep safe.

This commitment can be demonstrated by engaging in proactive traffic safety.

These proactive behaviors demonstrate a commitment to safety beyond oneself to include the safety of the broader transportation system.

Proactive traffic safety is proactive behaviors demonstrating commitment to a safe roadway transportation system.

### EXAMPLES OF PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY INCLUDE...

- Supporting existing traffic safety efforts
- Staying informed of safety-related issues
- Planning a safe way to get home before drinking alcohol
- Speaking up about other people's unsafe behaviors like not wearing a seat belt or driving distracted
- Establishing family rules like always wearing a seat belt, never texting while driving, or never riding with someone who has been drinking alcohol
- Establishing a workplace policy like always wearing a seat belt in a company vehicle

### WHY SHOULD WE GROW PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY?

- Growing proactive traffic safety:
- Creates a shared commitment to safety
- Encourages proactive behaviors that support safety efforts
- Encourages proactive behaviors that extend beyond one's own safety to support the safety of others
- Expands the focus of safety efforts to include the large group of safe road users as a way to influence the small group engaging in risky behaviors
- Enhances existing Strategic Highway Safety Planning efforts

### IMPLEMENTATION

Proactive traffic safety is a new opportunity to improve traffic safety. A primer is available to help traffic safety professionals grow proactive traffic safety. Additional tips to grow proactive traffic safety include:

#### Tip #1. Think in Terms of Allies and Partners

Consider:

- Who are my allies in promoting traffic safety?
- Who can help me introduce a new idea to other key stakeholders?
- With whom can I partner?
- Who has a direct stake in growing proactive traffic safety?

#### Tip #2. Engage Others about Proactive Traffic Safety

#### Tip #3. Grow a Shared Understanding of Proactive Traffic Safety

Tip #4. Think about Hosting a Meeting, Providing a Presentation, and/or Facilitating a Conversation about Proactive Traffic Safety

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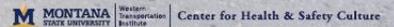
#### Tip #6. Integrate Proactive Traffic Safety into Existing Strategic Highway Safety Plans

Depending on your state's process, how you integrate proactive traffic safety into your Strategic Highway Safety Plan might look differently. Here are some ideas.

- Add a chapter on proactive traffic safety into your Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Develop principles of communication with proactive traffic safety in mind and add communication guidance as part of the plan.
- Identify strategies within the Strategic Highway Safety Plan that address high risk behaviors and consider augmenting these strategies with proactive traffic safety.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Kari Finley, Ph.D. Center for Health and Safety Culture  
Project URL: <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/trafficsafety-co-tools.shtml>



# A Proactive Traffic Safety Poster



## Proactive Traffic Safety: Empowering Behaviors to Reach Our Shared Vision of Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries

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# PROACTIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

## CONCLUSION

- Traffic safety professionals and stakeholders must continue to evolve and seek innovative ways to reduce risky driver behaviors and increase safer behaviors.
- Growing proactive traffic safety cultivates a traffic safety culture where people commit to a safer transportation system.
- Growing proactive traffic safety behaviors is a new opportunity to strategically address risky traffic behaviors and ultimately achieve and sustain our Towards Zero Deaths goals.



Thank you!

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