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# **Delayed Licensure & Reasons for Delay among 18- to 20-Year-Olds: A National Survey**

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# Background

- No reliable data on young driver licensing
  - Current proportion licensed?
    - by age?
    - by state?
  - Historical trends?
    - in relation to GDL?
    - other factors?

# Background

- Perception that young people are delaying getting their license
- Why?
  - GDL makes it difficult?
  - GDL makes it undesirable?
  - Facebook etc. = no need to drive?
  - High cost, tough economy, etc?

# Objective of this Study

- Determine proportion licensed
  - Within 6 months of state's minimum age
  - Within 12 months of minimum age
  - Before vs. after 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
- Investigate reasons for delay
  - Demographic factors  
(sex, household income, race/ethnicity, urban/rural, strength of GDL, licensing age)
  - Self-reported reasons



# Methods

- Nationally-representative survey
  - Ages 18-20
  - Research panel recruited via probability-based sampling (telephone and mail)
  - Questionnaires administered online
  - Computer, internet provided if needed
  - English & Spanish
  - Weighted to reflect US population
  - N=1,051





# Methods

- Questionnaire covered:
  - Current license status
  - Age at licensure, permit
  - Reasons for delay
    - 19 items: Very important reason
    - Somewhat important reason
    - Minor reason
    - Not a reason



# Licensure Status at Time of Survey

- 71% licensed
- 13% learner permit
- 16% no license, no permit

# Timing of Licensure

- 29% licensed within 6 months of minimum age
- 44% licensed within 12 months of minimum age
- 54% licensed before 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 72% permit before 18<sup>th</sup> birthday





# Factors Associated with Not Getting License Before 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday

## Household Income

< \$35K/year:	68% <u>not</u> licensed before 18
\$35-75K/year:	49%
> \$75K/year:	27%

## Race/ethnicity

Non-Hispanic white:	33%
African American/Hispanic:	69%

Sex, urban/rural, GDL strength, state licensing age: not significant



# Self-Reported Reasons for Delay (Among Those Not Licensed by 18)

(% “Very Important” or “Somewhat Important”)

- 45% - No car
- 40% - Could get around without driving
- 36% - Too expensive
- 31% - Nervous about driving
- 29% - Just not interested
- 28% - Had to complete driver ed first
- 26% - Parents too busy
- 21% - Respondent too busy
- 17% - Could connect with friends online







# Limitations

- Self-reported data
  - Might not have remembered when they got licensed
  - Might not really *know* why they delayed
- National survey
  - 3 states account for 27% of all responses
  - 8 states account for 50% of all responses
  - Not much variation in GDL

# Conclusions

## Most don't get licensed right away

- Only 44% licensed within 12 months of minimum age, 54% licensed before 18
- Most cite cost, lack of opportunity, lack of interest; few cite difficulty of GDL or desire to avoid GDL
- Majority of those not licensed by 18 still not licensed by 19, many not even licensed by 20





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