New Training Teaches Skills to Avoid Crashes

Premise: The current method of training teens is inadequate for providing them with the skills needed to keep them out of crashes. More important than learning merely to "move" the vehicle is acquiring Awareness and Space Management, and learning the art of Speed Control. When teens become adults they are involved in 84% of all crashes. The crash epidemic is not only a teen problem — but the solution lies in this new model of teen training, which offers Family Wellness Training for all members of the family, beginning with Pedestrian Awareness Training.

There are many reasons for the high rate of roadway crashes, all of which can be linked to the low standards of the driver licensing exam, which fails to evaluate the skills that are needed to prevent collisions. Most collisions are a result of drivers, bicyclists, or pedestrians lacking awareness of the critical seconds leading up to the crash.

When a person is distracted, impaired, or speeding, it reduces their ability to recognize critical seconds. Even when individuals are not distracted, impaired, or speeding, there are still crashes because they never had the opportunity to learn, practice, and master strategies for how to find, solve, and control the critical seconds.

A New Training Model for Teens: Professor Mottola's Driving MIND System provides teens and their family with the opportunity to acquire expert awareness, and to perfect the important strategies as pedestrians, bicyclists, passengers, and co-drivers, **before becoming licensed**. Parents can require their teens to earn the Co-Driver Diploma before they take the licensing exam.

1. **The Principles and Strategies of Zone Control** are learned from e-coach activities at NIDB College, which provides a scientifically structured set of standards that are measurable. By being measurable, users of the roadway — drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and passengers — get positive feedback when performance is correct, and they learn how to correct errors so they are not repeated into bad habits. (See Appendix A for the listing of Zone Control Strategies and Principles).

2. **Professor Mottola's Driving MIND Simulator** organizes 21 Space-Management Options, and Six Searching Locations, to provide precise timing for where, when, and how the Principles and Strategies of Zone Control should be used. There are 12 Phases of the Brain Simulator; each phase builds upon previous ones. Each phase introduces the use of additional Zone Control Principles, which provides the opportunity for the teen to forget, then recall what was learned. This provides "deliberate practice,"which produces myelin as insulators for the brain's axions to increase the speed of responses. The more "deliberate practice," the more myelin gets produced. The more myelin produced, faster and more accurate performance takes place. (See Appendix B for 230 Zone Control Strategies).

3. **Co-Drivers and MIND Cues** provides the teen with the opportunity to get "deliberate practice" in managing the critical seconds preceding a potential crash. Teens are able to find and solve how the critical second should be controlled if they were the driver. The use of Mind Cues sets the criteria for what to practice. With this "deliberate practice" the brain produces myelin to create fast, spontaneous, accurate responses. (See Appendix C for a sample of Mind Cues used for Pedestrian Awareness Training).

4. **Physical-Mental Equivalent Practice (PEP) Activities** enhance the understanding of Zone Control Strategies and how they are applied to traffic situations. For example, a simulated steering wheel can be used to have the teen experience effective use of central and fringe vision for detecting and correcting an off-target skid condition.

5. **Model Roadway Mental Preparation** takes place before any behind-the-wheel driving procedure is performed. Each step of a maneuver, whether it is making precision turns, or entering a freeway, are learned and practiced, building myelin in the brain so the actions take place automatically by habit — before the teen begins to drive. The entire maneuver is seen, along with reference points, for essential relationships. Then, each step is performed, seeing the relationship of cause and effect between each step.

6. **Driving in a Parking Lot** takes place after successful Model Roadway performance is achieved. The teen is able to demonstrate to the Driver Wellness Coach what was learned, step-by-step. In a parking lot, dozens of precision turns can be made within 30 minutes. These repetitions build more myelin for fast and accurate performance. With the success comes a reward of dopamine that makes the teen feel good and enjoy the experience.

7. **The Driver Wellness Coach uses the ECCCR process** (**Evaluate** an action, **Complement** when done correctly, **Cue** when help is needed to achieve success, **Coach** if more help is needed, **Rationale** for why the action is taken is explained by the teen). The Wellness coach is looking for one or two actions at the precise moment they are needed.

8. **Driving on the Road** takes place after successful performance in the parking lot. The Driver Wellness Coach creates detailed route plans for best use of the environment to achieve the objectives of each lesson. The Zone Control Strategies and Precision Maneuvers are performed and the Coach is able to evaluate the performance one-step at a time. To guide the structure of the in-car lesson, the Coach can use the Driving MIND Evaluation App on their tablet.

9. **The Driving MIND Evaluation App** is used to evaluate the teen's habits. The progress the teen makes is recorded. In each lesson, the coach can view what strategies were successfully performed and which needed more practice. There is no time limit for the completion of the program. It's all performance based. (See Appendix D for a sample of the Evaluation App).

10. **Three months, Six months, One Year, Two Years** after licensing, the teen's habits should be evaluated by a Driver Wellness Coach. During this 30-minute session in the family vehicle, it is recommended that a parent attend in the backseat to observe how well the teen performs. During these evaluations the Driver Wellness Coach can detect bad habits that crept into the teen's performance since becoming licensed, and correct them.

For how you can become a Driver Wellness Coach, contact **ProfMottola@NIDB.org**

Appendix A **Ten Habits Zone Control Strategies and Principles**

Appendix B **Professor Mottola's Strategies for Driver Wellness**

Appendix C **Practice Pedestrian Awareness MIND Cues**

Appendix D **Driving MIND Evaluations Sample 012923**