

Tuesday 2nd October 1100–1230
Concurrent A: Transportation, Legislation
and Policy

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**DOES PRE-LICENSED DRIVING EXPERIENCE AFFECT
CRASH RISK AS AN UNSUPERVISED RESTRICTED
LICENSED DRIVER? FINDINGS FROM THE NEW
ZEALAND DRIVERS STUDY**

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Background There is a popular notion that driving experience before commencing licensing may help improve driver safety as a newly licensed driver. The limited empirical evidence available suggests that the opposite may be the case.

Aim To examine the relationship between on and off road pre-licensed driving experience and crash risk as an unsupervised restricted licensed driver.

Methods The New Zealand Drivers Study (NZDS) - a prospective cohort study - included 1,424 15-24 year old drivers who completed study-specific interviews at each licence stage (learner, restricted and full) of the graduated licensing process. Pre-licensed driving experience, car/motorcycle use both on and off road, demographic and behavioural data were obtained at the learner licence interview. Car driving exposure data was obtained at restricted and full licence interviews. Crash data sources were police traffic crash reports and self-reports.

Results Using multivariate logistic regression, after controlling for potential confounders (driving exposure, gender, residential location, alcohol, cannabis, herbal high use, impulsivity, sensation seeking, aggression/hostility), off road motorcycle use (OR=1.9) was the only pre-licensed driving behaviour associated with crash risk

Contribution to the Field Overall, pre-licensed driving experience did not affect crash risk when unsupervised driving was allowed, although off road motorcycling may increase risk.