

Reduce the risk, Raise the Age!

Topic: The age to obtain a driver's permit/license in Florida, and how it should be raised

General Purpose: To PERSUADE

Specific Purpose: To persuade voters, legislators, and law-makers to raise the minimum age required to attain a driver's permit/license in Florida.

I. Introduction:

A. Attention Getter: As a kid that just got my driver's permit, I could honestly tell you guys that I'm scared to start driving and getting on the road.

B. Statement of Relevance: The more teen drivers on the road, the more crashes and fatalities there are, emphasizing a need for new legislation.

1. **Supporting Idea #1:** According to the Florida Teen Driver Fact Sheet, "Florida has more than 400,000 registered teen drivers, age 15 to 19. In Florida, teen drivers were involved in 60,135 crashes resulting in 279 fatalities and 2,200 serious injuries in 2019. Nationally, drivers aged 16 and 17 have the highest crash rates of any age group" (Source 1). I'm about to be that age, and I really don't want to turn into one of those statistics

This should offer additional support and information relating to the NEED of your speech (great area to add in a source)

C. Statement of Credibility: Attaining my permit, I had to undergo the process of researching and getting to know the driving laws and restrictions, and it truly made me realize that there's a problem. I would connect the legislation with my own experiences or those of others. I've witnessed friends of mine literally get into accidents in this very parking garage at FAU, while only one car was moving. I've additionally spent countless hours exploring horrifying statistics that revealed the death and fatalities that young, inexperienced drivers caused. As college students on a shared campus with high schoolers, and even having high schoolers in your classes, wouldn't you rather have these drivers that are parking in the same garages as your precious cars have more experience and maturity?

D. Thesis/purpose statement: Florida voters and lawmakers **should** raise the minimum age required to attain a driver's permit/license from 15/16 to 17/18.

E. Preview of Main Points: In my speech today, I will show that because younger drivers aren't mature, they have less experience and awareness, and because there are healthier alternatives to driving, 15 and 16-year-olds should not be on the road. This will occur within my three main points: The need, satisfaction, and visualization.

Transition: First, I'd like to tell you all why we so desperately need to make this change.

II. Main Point 1: the “need”

A. Because teens at the ages of 15/16 have the ability to drive, it presents a dangerous environment for others on the road due to their lack of maturity, preparation, and awareness.

1. **Supporting Idea #1:** This lack of maturity can cause teenagers to do dangerous, stupid things on the road, without thinking of the potential consequences of their actions. For example, an article titled “The Effects of Text Messaging on Teen Drivers”, by Simon Hosking and co- authors, states that “Young drivers are particularly susceptible to driver distraction and have an increased risk of distraction-related crashes” (Source 2).
2. **Supporting Idea #2:** At the mere age of 16, teens have far too little maturity to be handling a vehicle, especially with other passengers. There are so many distractions for teens while driving, the most dangerous being their phones, and they don’t have the self-will to put their phones away or on silent while driving. I personally have a few friends that still snap while driving, and they most likely don’t understand the danger that they’re putting themselves and others in. These high school friends of mine might THINK that they’re familiar with the campus roads, so they could send a quick little snap, but they are really endangering themselves and potentially you guys with their lack of maturity.
3. **Supporting Evidence:** Furthermore, Catherine Durkin Robinson, in a FlaglerLive post, states that teens “distract easily and are inclined to take risks without considering the consequences. These tendencies fade as they grow and mature” (Source 3).

a. **Explanation/Warrant:** If these immature tendencies went away as teenagers grew up, then the age needed to get a permit and license should most definitely be raised to an age in which they’ll be more responsible and less distracted.

Transition: Now that we know the importance of making this change, I will now speak on the positive results that making this change will have.

III. Main Point 2: “satisfaction”

A. According to a Senator Langerholc post, it states that “The rate of fatal crashes per mile driven is around half as high for teens aged 18 or 19 as for 16- and 17-year-olds.¹ It is thought that raising the driving age to 18 could help lower the overall rate of fatal crashes” (Source 5).

The second main point will present the solution. Make sure that it is well-described and defend the solution to the audience as acceptable.

1. **Supporting Idea #1:** Halving the number of deaths and crashes, raising the driving age is an easy solution to prevent unnecessary fatalities. Not only does it protect and save drivers’ lives, but it also lowers insurance! I know every single one of you that has a car right now is paying way too much for insurance. If this doesn’t excite you, I honestly don’t know what will, because with less crashes and deaths comes less insurance payment and more money in YOUR pockets.

The subpoints of this section should focus on how the solution addresses the problem and solves it.

2. **Supporting Idea #2:** Making this change not only improves safety on the road, but also improves physical health in teenagers, too.
3. **Supporting Evidence:** The Teenage American Obesity rate is 1 in 6 individuals! According to Cathy Habas in a SafeWise article, she states that “It is thought that removing the option to drive will cause more teens to walk, ride bikes, or use other active options to get places. This could cut back on teenage obesity levels by providing more opportunities for exercise.” (Source 4).

B. **Explanation/Warrant:** Think about the last time you actually took a nice, long walk. Maybe from your dorm to the opposite end of campus where you have a class? I would assume that a lot of you would rather take your car than make that 1 mile walk or bike because it’s easier, but this inability to drive gives teenagers the exposure to get more exercise in, therefore fighting against obesity. I don’t know about you guys, but when I was younger, I would go EVERYWHERE on my bike. Back in NY, when all of my friends lived a lot closer together than here in Florida, we would ALWAYS be biking around. I must’ve been putting 10 miles a day on my bike, just going from school to different hang out spots and back and forth and back and forth.

Transition: Now that we know the benefits that raising the driving age will have, we can discuss what this would look like in the future with or without this change made.

IV. Main Point 3: “visualization”

A. Through the implementation of this age increase, not only will we see a significant decrease in death and fatal crashes, but we could expect an opportunity for teens to exercise more.

The third main point will look to the future either positively or negatively.

1. **Supporting Idea #1:** With the decrease of deaths and crashes comes the decreases of car insurance, giving you all more money to spend on things you actually want to spend your hard-earned money on.

B. **Explanation/Warrant:** If we don’t make this change, however, we could continue to see the outrageous insurance prices and yellow caution tape blocking off roads due to immature, reckless 15 and 16-year-old drivers.

Transition: To conclude, you all have learned about why we need to raise Florida’s minimum driving age from 15/16 to 17/18, the positive implications of this change, and what it would look like if we make or don’t make this change.

(Note: Here, the transition and reviewing of main points are combined to make a smoother transition)

V. Conclusion: “call to action”

A. **Call to Action:** I ask you all now: Are you willing to make a change?

This provides doable and achievable steps for the audience to take starting NOW

- B. **“Clincher”:** Just think really quickly about this before I’m done. Would you like, or feel safe, knowing that I’m driving around in the very same parking garage and on the very same streets as you and your car, while texting, doing bicep curls, and blasting Taylor Swift? Thank you.

End on a powerful statement that will make your speech memorable

Works Cited

- (1) “Florida Teen Driver Fact Sheet - 2021.” *Florida Teen Safe Driving Coalition*, flteensafedriver.org/florida-teen-driver-fact-sheet-2021/. Accessed 31 Oct. 2023.
- (2) Hosking, Simon G., et al. “The Effects of Text Messaging on Young Drivers.” *Human Factors*, vol. 51, no. 4, 2009, pp. 582–92, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018720809341575>.
- (3) Robinson, Catherine Durkin. “Raise the Driving Age to 18.” *FlaglerLive*, 23 July 2016, flaglerlive.com/raise-the-driving-age-to-18/#gsc.tab=0.
- (4) Habas, Cathy. “Pros and Cons of Raising the Driving Age.” *SafeWise*, 16 Oct. 2023, www.safewise.com/faq/auto-safety/raise-driving-age/.
- (5) Senator Langerholc. “Pros and Cons of Raising the Driving Age.” 7 May 2019, <https://www.google.com/urlsa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=xV1QzABHUC6CwgQFnoECA8QAw&url=https://www.senatorlangerholc.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/86/2020/01/SB-7-Article-Raising-the-Driving-Age.pdf&usg=AOvVaw11LupaEoGYAXNUE3mBi6sM&opi=89978449>