Georgia Traffic Safety Facts

2024 Data

September 2026

Key Findings

- In 2024, the number of young drivers (ages 15-to-20 years) involved in fatal crashes increased by 10% (from 176 drivers in 2023 to 193 in 2024). Three-quarters (75%) of young drivers involved in fatal crashes were 18-to-20 years of age.
- Young drivers accounted for 8% of all licensed drivers, 9% of all drivers involved in fatal crashes, and 10% of all drivers involved in motor vehicle crashes.
- Among all fatal and serious injuries in multi-vehicle crashes that involve young drivers, 46% were occupants in the vehicle operated by the young driver, and 54% were occupants of other vehicles or non-motorists.
- In 2024, the total motor vehicle crash-related hospitalization and emergency room charges among Georgia residents 15-to-20 years was $243 million.

Cross-Cutting Findings

- In 2024, 31% of young drivers 15-to-20 years of age involved in a traffic crash were confirmed or suspected of distracted driving.
- Among drivers aged 15-to-20 years involved in fatal crashes, 10% consumed alcohol (0.01+ g/dL BAC), and 6% had a BAC of 0.08+ g/dL.

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Young Drivers

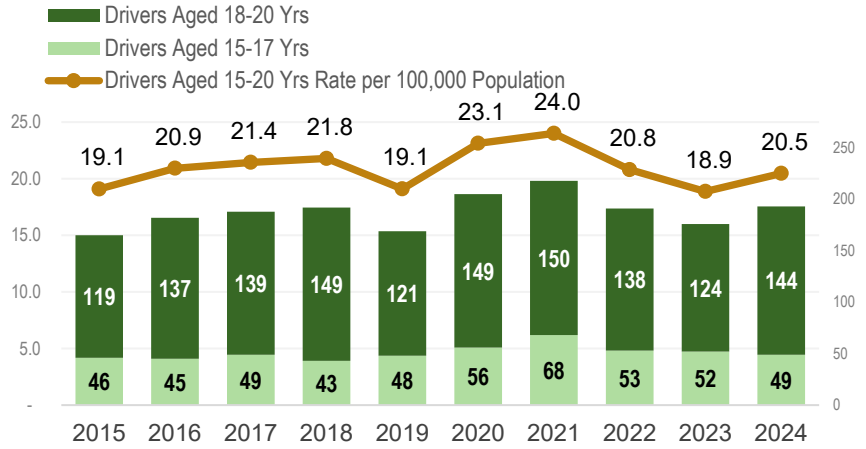
The term young driver refers to a person 15-to-20 years old operating a motor vehicle. *Young drivers' involvement in traffic crashes does not imply that they caused the crash through their actions or failure to act.*

This fact sheet contains information from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) crash data modified by the Crash Outcomes Data Evaluation System (CODES) at the Department of Public Health (DPH), Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS) licensing data, Hospital Discharge Data, and Emergency Room Data. Refer to the 'data considerations' presented at the end of this publication for more information concerning the data.

Traffic Crashes Involving Young Drivers

In 2024, the number of young drivers (ages 15-to-20 years) involved in fatal crashes increased by 10% (from 176 drivers in 2023 to 193 drivers in 2024). During this same period, the rate of young drivers involved in fatal crashes per 100,000 population increased by 8% (from 18.9 to 20.5). Young drivers represented 10% of all drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2024—2.5% were 15-to-17 years of age, and 7.3% were 18-to-20 years of age. Figure 1 shows the number of young drivers involved in fatal crashes and the rate of young drivers involved in fatal crashes per 100,000 population from 2015 to 2024.

Figure 1. **Young Drivers (15-to-20 Years) Involved in Fatal Crashes and Rate per 100,000 Population, 2015–2024**



Source: FARS 2015-2024

Young drivers aged 15-to-20 years represented 8% of the state population and 8% of all licensed drivers. However, they represented 10% of all drivers involved in traffic crashes and 9% of all drivers involved in fatal crashes. In 2024:

- For every 100,000 *traffic crashes* involving drivers aged 15-to-20 years, 239.3 were fatal crashes.
- For every 100,000 *licensed drivers* aged 15-to-20 years, 23.5 drivers aged 15-to-20 years were involved in a fatal crash.
- For every 100,000 *Georgia residents* aged 15-to-20 years, 17.4 drivers aged 15-to-20 years were involved in a fatal crash.

In 2024, young drivers in the 18-to-20 age group experienced more than double the number of motor vehicle crashes and had a higher rate of involvement in fatal crashes compared to drivers in the 15-to-17 age group. The 15-to-17 age group had the lowest rate of drivers involved in fatal crashes per motor vehicle crash and population compared to all other age groups (Table 1).

Table 1. **Drivers Involved in Crashes, by Age Group, 2024**

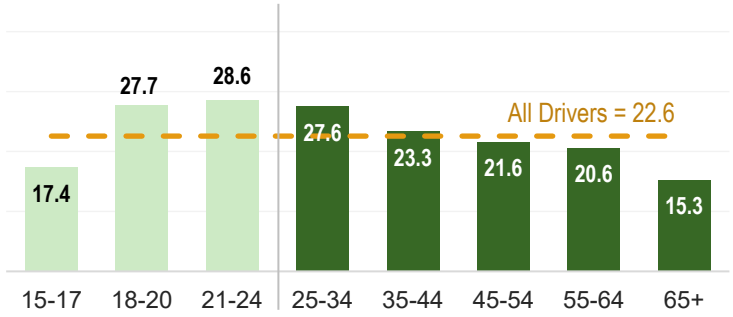
Age Group (Years)	Number of Drivers Involved		Licensed Drivers*	Estimated Population	Rates of Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes		
	Crashes	Fatal Crashes			Per 100,000 Crashes	Per 100,000 License	Per 100,000 Population
15-20	**68,128** (10%)	**163** (9%)	**8%**	**8%**	**239.3**	**23.5**	**17.4**
15-17	*21,164 (4%)*	*49 (3%)*	*3%*	*4%*	*231.5*	*17.4*	*10.8*
18-20	*46,964 (7%)*	*114 (6%)*	*5%*	*4%*	*242.7*	*27.7*	*23.7*
21-24	65,492 (10%)	166 (9%)	7%	6%	253.5	28.6	26.5
25-34	149,396 (22%)	416 (22%)	17%	14%	278.5	27.6	27.0
35-44	123,927 (18%)	343 (18%)	17%	13%	276.8	23.3	23.0
45-54	97,625 (15%)	289 (15%)	15%	12%	296.0	21.6	20.8
55-64	79,057 (12%)	272 (14%)	15%	12%	344.1	20.6	20.1
65+	66,598 (10%)	280 (15%)	21%	16%	420.4	15.3	15.4
TOTAL**	**691,003** (100%)	**1,973** (100%)	**100%** 8,741,666	**100%** 11,204,208	**285.5**	**22.6**	**17.6**

*Licensed drivers include all unexpired licenses, which may include individuals who are deceased. See data considerations for more information.
**Totals include drivers 14 years or younger or with unreported age
Source: FARS 2024; CODES 2024; DDS 2024; OASIS 2024

Figure 2 displays the rate of drivers involved in fatal crashes per 100,000 licensed drivers by age group.

- Drivers in the 21-to-24 and 18-to-20 age groups have the highest rate of involvement in fatal crashes compared to other age groups—28.6 drivers for every 100,000 licensed drivers aged 21-to-24 and 27.7 drivers for every 100,000 licensed drivers aged 18-to-20.
- Drivers in the 15-to-17 age group have the second-lowest rate of involvement in fatal crashes compared to other age groups—17.4 per 100,000 licensed drivers.

Figure 2. **Rate of Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes per 100,000 *Licensed Drivers* by Age Group, 2024**



Source: FARS 2024, DDS 2024

Georgia had the lowest rate of young-driver fatal-crash involvement compared to NHTSA Region 4 and nationally for both age groups (drivers 21-to-24 and 18-to-20 years). In 2024, In 2024, Georgia young-driver fatal-crash involvement rates were 36.0 per 100,000 licensed drivers ages 15–20 and 30.9 per 100,000 ages 21–24.

Table 2. **Young Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes by Age Group by Region 4 State and U.S., 2024**

NHTSA Region IV States	Drivers Aged 15-20 Involved in Fatal Crashes		Drivers Aged 21-24 Involved in Fatal Crashes	
	Count	Rate Per 100,000 Licensed Drivers	Count	Rate Per 100,000 Licensed Drivers
Florida	379	54.3	406	43.4
Tennessee	156	53.3	162	52.3
Alabama	120	43.7	111	45.1
South Carolina	125	42.2	134	54.2
Georgia	163	36.0	166	30.9
Region 4	**943**	**46.8**	**979**	**43**
National	**4,873**	**39.2**	**4,800**	**32**

Source: FARS 2024, FHWA 2024

Fatalities and Serious Injuries in Crashes Involving Young Drivers

Table 3 shows the total number of fatalities in crashes involving young drivers from 2020 to 2024. In fatal crashes involving young drivers for the 5-year period from 2023 to 2024:

- Fatally injured young drivers aged 15-20 years remained the same (67 young driver fatalities).
- Fatalities among the passengers of young drivers increased by 26% (from 34 fatalities to 43 fatalities). The average age of **all** passengers riding with young drivers involved in fatal crashes decreased from 23.7 years in 2023 to 18.9 years in 2024.
- Occupant fatalities of other vehicles not operated by the young driver *decreased* by 27% (from 66 fatalities to 48 fatalities).
- Non-motorist fatalities (pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorists) *decreased* by 20% (from 25 fatalities to 20 fatalities).

Table 3. **Traffic Fatalities in Crashes Involving Young Drivers by Person Type and Year, 2020-2024**

Year	Young Drivers	Passengers of Young Drivers by Age				Occupants of Other Vehicles	Non-Motorists	Total
	(15 - 20)	< 15	15 - 20	21 +	Total*			
2020	76	5	34	11	51	73	15	215
	35%	*2%*	*16%*	*5%*	*24%*	*34%*	*7%*	*100%*
2021	94	3	21	13	38	77	23	232
	41%	*1%*	*9%*	*6%*	*16%*	*33%*	*10%*	*100%*
2022	78	4	24	10	38	60	29	205
	38%	*2%*	*12%*	*5%*	*19%*	*29%*	*14%*	*100%*
2023	67	3	18	13	34	66	25	192
	35%	*2%*	*9%*	*7%*	*18%*	*34%*	*13%*	*100%*
2024	67	7	30	6	43	48	20	178
	38%	*4%*	*17%*	*3%*	*24%*	*27%*	*11%*	*100%*

Note: Percent is calculated across the rows. * Includes passengers of unknown age.
Source: FARS 2020-2024

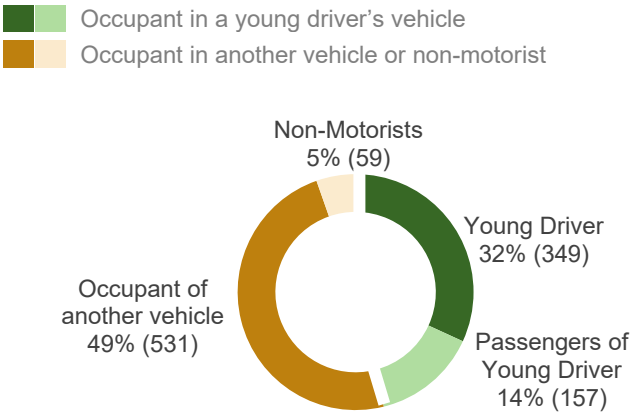
In 2024, there were 983 people with suspected serious injuries involved in *multi-vehicle* crashes that involved young drivers—17% of all serious injuries in multi-vehicle crashes. Figure 3 shows the percentage of severe injuries (serious or fatal) among all people involved in crashes with at least one young driver in 2024.

Among all severe injuries involving young drivers:

- 46% were occupants in the vehicle operated by the young driver (represented by light and dark green in Figure 3).
  - 32% were young drivers
  - 14% were passengers of the young driver

- 54% were occupants of other vehicles or non-motorists (represented by light and dark yellow in Figure 3).
  - 49% were occupants of vehicles that were *not* operated by a young driver
  - 5% were non-motorists (i.e., pedestrians or bicyclists)

Figure 3: **Percent of Persons *Seriously or Fatally Injured* in *Multi-Vehicle** Crashes Involving Young Drivers by Person Type, 2024**



Multi-vehicle crashes involving young drivers resulted in **983** serious injuries and **113** fatalities.

* Multi-vehicle crashes include single-vehicle crashes with other non-motorists.

Source: CODES 2024

Traffic-Related Injuries and Fatalities among the Young Population

In 2024, young people aged 15-to-20 years represented 12% of all emergency room visits[1] (11,041 out of 96,008) and 8% of all hospitalizations (705 out of 8,488) related to motor vehicle traffic incidents. The total motor vehicle traffic-related hospitalization and emergency room charges among Georgia residents aged 15 to 20 years were $243 million.

Table 4. **Number, Percent, and Rate of All Motor Vehicle Traffic-Related Emergency Room Visits, Hospitalizations, Suspected Serious Injuries, and Fatalities by Age Group, 2024**

Age Group	Emergency Room Visits			Hospitalizations			Police Reported Suspected Serious Injuries			Traffic Fatalities		
	Number	Percent of Total	Rate per 100,000 Population	Number	Percent of Total	Rate per 100,000 Population	Number	Percent of Total	Rate per 100,000 Population	Number	Percent of Total	Rate per 100,000 Population
Less than 15	5,563	6%	271.4	86	1%	4.2	378	5%	18.4	38	3%	1.9
15-20	**11,041**	**12%**	**1,179.6**	**705**	**8%**	**75.3**	**841**	**11%**	**89.8**	**126**	**9%**	**13.5**
15-17	*4,010*	*4%*	*883.1*	*225*	*3%*	*49.5*	*314*	*4%*	*69.1*	*46*	*3%*	*10.1*
18-20	*7,031*	*7%*	*1,458.9*	*480*	*6%*	*99.6*	*527*	*7%*	*109.4*	*80*	*6%*	*16.6*
21-24	9,481	10%	1,513.7	740	9%	118.1	792	10%	126.4	113	8%	18.0
25-34	21,695	23%	1,407.8	1,613	19%	104.7	1,728	22%	112.1	252	18%	16.4
35-44	17,502	18%	1,175.5	1,326	16%	89.1	1,414	18%	95.0	221	16%	14.8
45-54	12,656	13%	909.0	1,101	13%	79.1	1,031	13%	74.1	173	12%	12.4
55-64	9,769	10%	723.3	1,203	14%	89.1	856	11%	63.4	212	15%	15.7
65+	8,301	9%	456.2	1,714	20%	94.21	796	10%	43.8	255	18%	14.0
Total	**96,008**	**100%**	**856.9**	**8,488**	**100%**	**75.8**	**7,950***	**100%**	**71.0**	**1,403***	**100%**	**12.5**

*Total includes serious injuries and fatalities with unreported or unknown age

Source: Georgia Department of Public Health, Office of Health Indicators for Planning (OHIP) Hospital Inpatient Discharge and Emergency Room Visit Data, CODES 2024, FARS 2024, OASIS 2024

[1] Hospitalization may include individuals who visited the emergency room. Emergency room visits may include individuals who discharged directly from the emergency room. Hospitalizations and emergency room visits are for Georgia residents only, while fatalities can be for persons out of state.

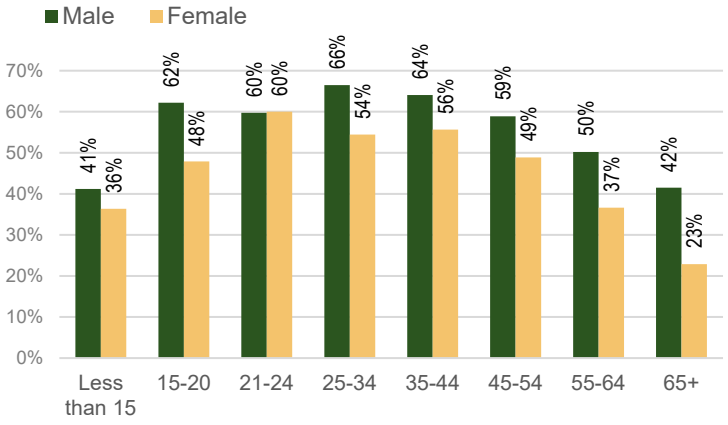
Restraint Use & Seatbelt Violations

Figure 4 shows the percent of fatally injured passenger vehicle occupants (across all seating positions) who were unrestrained by age group and sex from 2020 to 2024. Passenger vehicles include passenger cars, pickup trucks, SUVs, and vans. Based on known restraint use among young occupants of passenger vehicles aged 15-to-20 involved in fatal crashes from 2020 to 2024:

- **62%** of fatally injured male occupants were unrestrained.
- **48%** of fatally injured female occupants were unrestrained.

For all age groups, the percent unrestrained was higher for male occupants than for female occupants.

Figure 4. **Percent of Fatally Injured Passenger Vehicle Occupants Unrestrained* in Traffic Crashes by Age Group and Sex, 2020-2024**



*Based on known restraint use
Passenger vehicles include passenger cars, pickup trucks, SUVs, and vans.
Source: FARS 2020-2024

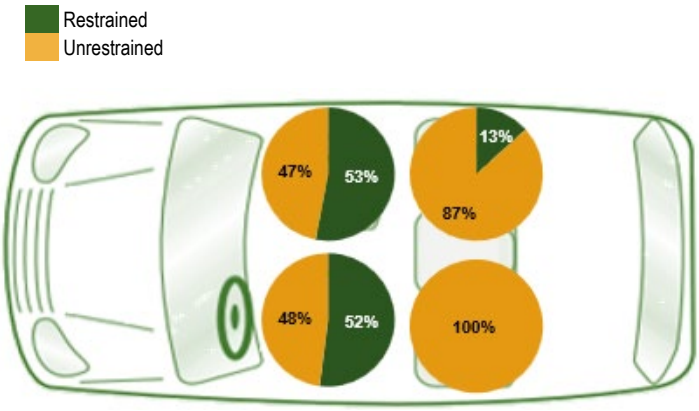
In 2024, **32%** of seriously injured[2] young drivers were unrestrained, and **33%** of seriously injured young passengers were unrestrained (based on known restraint use). Young drivers represented 8% of all seatbelt violations and 5% of child safety seat violations. Young drivers may be cited and convicted for seatbelt or child safety seat violations for other occupants within their vehicle.

Seating Positions: Driving with Peers

Figure 5 displays the seating positions of young drivers and their passengers, ages 15 to 20, who were fatally injured and *un*restrained from 2020 to 2024.

- **48%** of all fatally injured young drivers aged 15-to-20 years old were unrestrained.
- **60%** of all occupants (regardless of seating position) riding with a young driver involved in a fatal crash were 15-to-20 years of age.
  - **47%** of fatally injured front-seat *passengers aged 15 to 20* were unrestrained.
  - **100%** of *young* passenger fatalities seated behind the driver were unrestrained.
  - **87%** of *young* passenger fatalities seated behind the front seat passenger were unrestrained.

Figure 5. **Percent of Fatally Injured Young Drivers and their Fatally Injured Passenger Occupants (Aged 15-to-20) Unrestrained* by Seating Position, 2020-2024**



*Based on known restraint use
Source: FARS 2020-2024

[2] Serious injuries are non-fatal, suspected serious injuries reported by law enforcement.

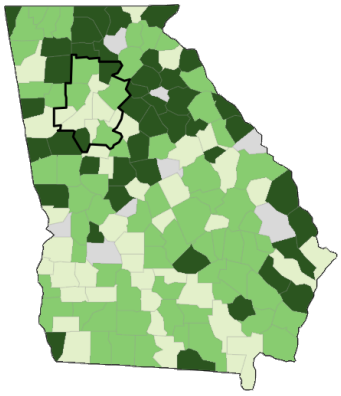
Young Driver Licensing

In Georgia, young drivers (15-to-17-year-olds) generally obtain a license for the first time under a Graduated Driver's Licensing (GDL) program to safely gain driving experience — this is known as Joshua's Law[3]. Georgia young drivers hold either an instructional permit (issued to drivers at least 15 years old), Class D (provisional license issued to drivers 17 years old or younger), or a Class C license (issued to drivers 18 years old or older without restrictions). Young drivers 18 years or older obtaining a license for the first time are not required to complete driver's education under Georgia's GDL program. In 2024:

- Young drivers (ages 15-to-20 years old) accounted for 8% (692,892 out of 8.74 million) of all licensed drivers statewide.
- Across the state, 73% of all youth (ages 15 to 20 years old) hold either an instructional permit or a driver's license.
- The percentage of teens and young adults who held an instructional permit or driver's license in rural counties (81%) was higher than among teens and young adults in the Atlanta region (73%) or other urban counties[4] (70%).

Figure 6 presents the percentage of teens and young adults with an instructional permit or driver's license[5] by county.

Figure 6. **Percent of Teens and Young Adults (15-to-20 Years) with an Instructional Permit or License to Drive by County, 2024**



Dark-bordered region is the Atlanta Region

	Atlanta Region	Other Urban Counties	Rural Counties	Statewide
Young drivers with an instructional permit or license to drive (all license classes)	312,530	229,852	150,510	692,892
Population 15-to-20 years	429,176	326,816	186,914	942,906
Percent of teens and young adults with an instructional permit or license to drive	**73%**	**70%**	**81%**	**73%**
Young drivers involved in motor vehicle traffic crashes	32,587	24,599	10,906	68,092
Rate of young drivers involved in crashes per 100,000 licensed young drivers	10,426.8	10,702.1	7,246.0	9,827.2

Source: DDS 2024, OASIS 2024

There are four approved methods for meeting Georgia's GDL requirements. Each method consists of some combination of instruction (either classroom or online) at a DDS-approved school and supervised driving (either six hours of behind-the-wheel training with an approved DDS school instructor along with 40 hours of supervised driving with a parent/guardian or completion of the Parent/Teen Driving Guide).

[3] Senate Bill 226 (Article 10 of Chapter 21 of Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated)
[4] Rural counties are counties that have a residential population less than 50,000 persons. This is different than roadway classifications where urban road systems can be located in urban clusters (or metropolitan areas) of at least 2,500 persons within the rural counties.
[5] Class types include instructional permits, Class C, and Class D licenses.

The most common methods used to fulfill Joshua's Law in 2024 were Method 4 and Method 1[6].

- **57%** of young drivers obtained their Class D license using **Method 4** – completing a DDS-approved school online course and completing the Parent/Teen Driving Guide with no additional supervised driving required.
- **32%** of young drivers obtained their Class D license using **Method 1** – completing 30 hours of classroom instruction at a DDS-approved school, six hours of behind-the-wheel training at a DDS-approved school, and 40 hours of supervised driving with a parent or guardian.

According to the Georgia Driver's Education Commission's research study of Joshua's Law,[7] Young drivers who used Method 1 to complete the GDL requirement demonstrated better and safer driver outcomes compared with the other methods. These young drivers had fewer crashes and fewer crashes with serious injuries or fatalities than young drivers who completed the GDL requirement using other methods.

Table 5 shows the number of licenses issued to young drivers (15-to 20-year-olds) by age and license type in 2024. A greater proportion of licensed young drivers held a Class C or D license in rural counties compared to urban counties across **all** ages – indicative of rural drivers obtaining driving experience earlier than their urban peers.

- **70%** of young drivers in rural counties held a Class C or D license compared to **67%** of young drivers in Atlanta and other urban regions.
- **33%** of young drivers in the Atlanta region and other urban regions held an instructional permit compared to **30%** of young drivers in rural counties.

Table 5. **Urban vs. Rural Licensed Young Drivers (15-to-20 Years) by License Type, 2024**

Age (Years)	Atlanta and Other Urban Regions				Rural Region			
	Instructional Permit		License (Class C or D)		Instructional Permit		License (Class C or D)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
15 years	50,748	100%	—	—	16,736	100%	—	—
16 years	46,410	59%	31,766	41%	10,870	48%	11,993	52%
17 years	33,342	37%	55,759	63%	6,607	27%	17,830	73%
18 years	22,834	22%	79,532	78%	4,535	16%	23,262	84%
19 years	16,045	15%	94,358	85%	3,349	11%	26,289	89%
20 years	11,272	10%	100,316	90%	2,316	8%	26,723	92%
TOTAL 15-to-20 years	**180,651**	**33%**	**361,731**	**67%**	**44,413**	**30%**	**106,097**	**70%**

Source: DDS 2024

[6] Georgia Driver's Education Commission. (2026, September). *Georgia Driver's Education Commission Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2026.* Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety.
[7] Georgia Driver's Education Commission. (2021, March). *Georgia Driver's Education Commission Grant Scholarship Program & Joshua's Law Evaluation Report.* Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety. http://www.gahighwaysafety.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/gdec-evaluation-report-executive-summary-final-.pdf

Contributing Circumstances

In 2024, 87% of all crashes involving young drivers also involved other vehicles (multi-vehicle crashes), and 13% were single-vehicle crashes. The most common harmful event in single-vehicle crashes was a confirmed inattentive driver (distraction) colliding with a fixed object.

The most common manner of collision in fatal and serious injury multi-vehicle crashes involving young drivers was angle collisions. Rear-end collisions were most common for all multi-vehicle traffic crashes involving young drivers. *The manner of collision is not vehicle-specific and does not identify which vehicle or driver was at fault.* Table 4 below shows the highest-ranked manner of collision for multi-vehicle traffic, injury, and fatal crashes that involve young drivers.

Table 6. **Highest-Ranked Manner of Collision for *Multi-Vehicle* Crashes Involving Young Drivers (15-20 Years) by Crash Type, 2024**

Rank	Fatal Crashes		Serious Injury Crashes		Traffic Crashes	
	Manner of Collision	% of crashes	Manner of Collision	% of crashes	Manner of Collision	% of crashes
1	Angle	44%	Angle	56%	Rear end (Front-to-rear)	44%
2	Head on (Front-to-front)	15%	Head on (Front-to-front)	18%	Angle	36%
3	Rear end (Front-to-rear)	8%	Rear end (Front-to-rear)	15%	Sideswipe same direction	13%
4	Sideswipe same direction	8%	*Not a collision with a motor vehicle	5%	Head on (Front-to-front)	3%

* The first harmful event was not a collision with a motor vehicle in transport
Source: FARS 2024, CODES 2024

Speeding by young drivers was the top contributing factor among drivers involved in single-vehicle crashes. In 2024, 26% of young drivers involved in single-vehicle crashes were speeding, and 14% lost control of their vehicle moments before they crashed, mostly due to speeding. The top contributing factors among young drivers and other drivers involved in multi-vehicle crashes were following too closely and failure to yield the right of way. *This does not imply that the young drivers or other drivers caused the crash either by their actions or failure to act.*

Table 7. **Top Contributing Factors with Crashes Involving Young Drivers (15-20 Years) by Number of Vehicles Involved and Person Type, 2024**

Rank	Single Vehicle Crashes		Multi-Vehicle Crashes			
	Young Driver		Young Driver		Other Driver	
	Description	% of drivers	Description	% of drivers	Description	% of drivers
1	Speeding / too fast for conditions	26%	Following too close	28%	Following too close	31%
2	Other	19%	Failed to yield	16%	Failed to yield	25%
3	Driver lost control*	18%	Change lanes improperly	10%	Other	13%
4	Reaction to Object or Animal	13%	Other	5%	Change lanes improperly	13%

*In the 2024 CODES data capture, the "Lost Control" category includes four subcategories: Lost Control (General), Driver Lost Control – Speed-Related, Driver Lost Control – Impairment-Related, and Driver Lost Control – Distraction-Related.
Source: CODES 2024

Distracted Driving Among Young Drivers

A distraction-related crash is any crash in which a driver was reported as a confirmed distracted driver or identified as a suspected distracted driver. Driver distraction occurs when drivers divert their attention from the driving task to focus on another activity. Often, discussions regarding distracted driving center around cell phone use and texting; however, distracted driving also includes other distraction-related activities that are manual, visual, or cognitive. Many activities, particularly cell phone use, can include multiple types of distraction. In 2024, 36% of young drivers involved in motor vehicle traffic crashes were confirmed or suspected of distracted driving. Young drivers **aged 15-to-20 years** represented:

- **8%** of all licensed *drivers*;
- **18%** of all suspected or confirmed distracted drivers involved in crashes;
- **8%** of all confirmed distracted drivers involved in fatal crashes;
- **17%** of all drivers issued a distracted driver citation after a crash; and
- **6%** of all distracted driving convictions.

Table 8. **Licensed Drivers, Confirmed or Suspected Distracted Drivers Involved in Types of Motor Vehicle (MV) Crashes, Distracted Driver Citations Issued after an MV Crash, Distracted Driver Convictions by Age Group, 2024**

Age Group	Licensed Drivers	Confirmed or Suspected Distracted Driver Involved in a Crash	Confirmed Distracted Driver Involved in a Fatal Crash*	Distracted Driver Citations Issued Post-Crash	Distracted Driver Convictions (Crash or Non-Crash)
15-24	**15%**	**31%**	**18%**	**32%**	**17%**
15-20	*8%*	*18%*	*8%*	*17%*	*6%*
21-24	*7%*	*13%*	*10%*	*15%*	*12%*
25-34	17%	23%	20%	25%	31%
35-44	17%	17%	25%	18%	25%
45-54	15%	11%	12%	11%	14%
55-64	15%	9%	13%	8%	9%
65+	21%	8%	11%	5%	4%
TOTAL	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

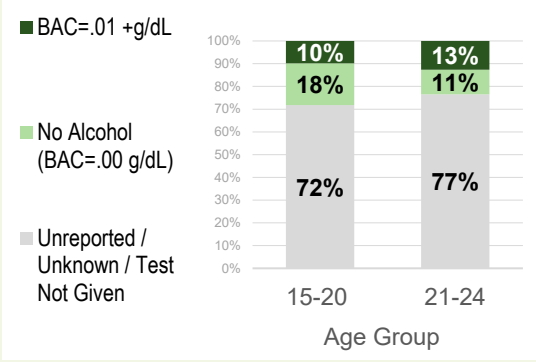
Note: Distracted driver convictions may or may not have resulted in a motor vehicle traffic crash. Percentages are calculated using records with known age over 15 years.
Source: DDS 2024, CODES 2024, FARS 2024

Alcohol Consumption Among Young Drivers

Drivers are considered alcohol-impaired when their blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is 0.08 g/dL or higher. For drivers under 21 years of age, a BAC of 0.02 g/dL or higher is considered alcohol-impaired. This does not imply that a crash or a fatality was caused by alcohol impairment. In 2024:

- Of the **163** young drivers ages 15-to-20 years involved in fatal crashes in 2024, **29%** (47) had known BAC test results reported — **10%** (16) consumed alcohol (0.01+ g/dL BAC), and **6%** (10) had a BAC of 0.08+ g/dL.
- Of the **166** young adult drivers ages 21-to-24 years involved in fatal crashes, **28%** (47) had known BAC test results reported — **13%** (21) consumed alcohol, and **9%** (15) had a BAC of 0.08+ g/dL.

Figure 7. **BAC of Young Drivers (15-to-20 and 21-to-24 Years) Involved in Fatal Crashes, 2024**



Source: FARS 2024

Environmental Characteristics

Table 9 summarizes the environmental characteristics of where and when fatal crashes and traffic crashes involving young drivers occurred in 2024.

Fatal crashes and all traffic crashes involving young drivers have similar environmental characteristics, except for the predominant location of crashes, lighting conditions, and season.

- While nearly half (47%) of all ***traffic crashes*** involving young drivers occurred at an intersection or intersection-related location, 70% of all ***fatal crashes*** involving young drivers occurred at non-intersections.
- While the majority (71%) of all ***traffic crashes*** involving young drivers occurred in daylight conditions, more than half (53%) of all ***fatal crashes*** involving young drivers occurred in dark conditions.
- While fall had the largest share of all ***traffic crashes*** involving young drivers (27%), Spring had the largest share of ***fatal crashes*** involving young drivers (35%).

Among the ***fatal*** crashes that involved young drivers:

- 71% occurred during the weekday, and 40% occurred during the weekend; and,
- 76% occurred in clear weather conditions.

Table 9. **Motor Vehicle Crashes Involving Young Drivers (15-20 Years) by Environmental Characteristics, 2024**

Environmental Characteristics	Fatal Crashes Involving Young Drivers		Traffic Crashes Involving Young Drivers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Location *				
Intersection (or related)	47	30%	30,165	47%
Non-Intersection	109	70%	26,338	41%
Other	—	—	7,041	11%
Light Conditions				
Dark	82	53%	15,891	25%
Daylight	72	46%	45,392	71%
Dawn	2	1%	753	1%
Dusk	—	—	987	2%
Day of Week / Time of Day *				
Weekday	**93**	**60%**	**45,372**	**71%**
6:00-11:59 am	19	12%	11,953	19%
12:00-5:59 pm	27	17%	22,721	36%
6:00-11:59 pm	27	17%	9,287	15%
12:00-5:59 am	20	13%	1,411	2%
Weekend	**63**	**40%**	**18,172**	**29%**
6:00-11:59 am	5	3%	2,208	3%
12:00-5:59 pm	17	11%	6,330	10%
6:00-11:59 pm	23	15%	7,847	12%
12:00-5:59 am	18	12%	1,787	3%
Weather Conditions				
Clear	119	76%	46,339	73%
Cloudy	27	17%	10,132	16%
Rain	8	5%	6,513	10%
Other	2	1%	560	1%
Season				
Winter (Jan, Feb, Dec)	32	21%	15,090	24%
Spring (Mar-May)	55	35%	16,516	26%
Summer (Jun-Aug)	41	26%	14,711	23%
Fall (Sept-Nov)	28	18%	17,227	27%

Weekday – 6:00 a.m. Monday to 5:59 p.m. Friday
Weekend – 6:00 p.m. Friday to 5:59 a.m. Monday
Daytime – 6:00 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.
Nighttime – 6:00 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.

*See data considerations for definitions of intersection and non-intersection locations. Other intersections include roundabouts, railroad crossings, and managed lanes (i.e., HOV lanes).

Source: CODES 2024, FARS 2024

Young Drivers Across Traffic Safety Emphasis Areas

Table 10 shows the percentage of young *drivers* (aged 15-20 years) across other traffic emphasis areas by crash severity.

- While only 10% of *drivers* involved in all crashes were young (15-20 years), young drivers accounted for 21% of all speeding drivers involved in traffic crashes and 18% of speeding drivers involved in severe crashes.
- Young drivers accounted for 11% of unrestrained drivers involved in traffic crashes, 12% of unrestrained drivers involved in severe crashes, and 13% of unrestrained drivers involved in other-injury crashes.
- Motorcycle crashes had a relatively high proportion of young operator involvement— 11% of all motorcycle crashes and 13% of other-injury motorcycle crashes involved young operators.
- Young drivers were disproportionately represented in severe roadside crashes and severe lane departure crashes— they were involved in 28% of severe roadside crashes and 19% of severe lane departure crashes.

Table 10 **Young Drivers Across Traffic Safety Emphasis Areas, 2024** (based on drivers of known age)

Emphasis Area	All Traffic Crashes	Severe Crashes	Other Injury Crashes	Property Damage Only Crashes
Impaired Drivers / Operators				
All Drivers*	10%	9%	10%	10%
Risky Driving Behaviors				
Speeding	21%	18%	22%	22%
Impaired (confirmed/suspected alcohol and/or drug impairment)	6%	8%	6%	6
Distracted Driving (confirmed/suspected)	11%	9%	12%	11%
Unrestrained Drivers	11%	12%	13%	9%
Restrained Drivers	11%	9%	11%	11%
Vehicle Types				
Passenger Vehicles	10%	9%	10%	10%
Large Trucks	< 1%	1%	1%	< 1%
Motorcycles	11%	9%	13%	9%
Crash Location				
All Crash Locations	17%	15%	19%	17%
Roadway / Lane Departure	16%	14%	17%	15%
Roadway Departure	16%	13%	17%	16%
Lane Departure	14%	19%	18%	12%
Work Zone	15%	11%	17%	14%
Roadside	14%	28%	18%	10%
Crashes Involving Non-Motorists				
Bicyclists	8%	5%	8%	9%
Pedestrians	8%	7%	8%	8%

Suspected and confirmed alcohol impairment and/or drug use is determined by the driver condition reported on the police crash reports. If the driver condition is unknown, and the police reported that an alcohol or drug test was administered with a positive or unknown result, then the driver is considered to be 'suspected' of alcohol impairment and/or drug use.

Distracted driving in this table represents the sum of the **confirmed** and **suspected distracted** driving percentages.

- **Confirmed distracted driving** includes drivers who have at least one distracted-driving contributing factor reported on the crash report.
- **Suspected distracted driving** is an imputed measure derived from multiple contributing factors and based on a definition jointly developed by the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, Georgia Department of Public Health, and the Georgia Department of Transportation. The imputation of suspected distracted drivers includes drivers who indicate driver inattention and distraction. The imputation removes driver contributing factors, such as drug/alcohol impairment, sleepiness/drowsiness, aggressive/reckless driving, and speeding. The definition also excludes some elements of roadway and vehicle contributing factors. The CODES Analytical Reference Guide is available upon request.

Severe crashes are crashes that involve injuries reported as fatal injury (K) or suspected serious injury (A) as the most severe injury on the crash report. **Other injury crashes** involve injuries reported as minor injury (B) or complaint of injury (C) as the most severe injury on the crash report. **Property damage only (PDO)** crashes are crashes that did not

result in an injury as reported in the crash report.

Roadway/Lane Departure crashes are crashes in which a vehicle crosses an edge line or center line and leaves the traveled way. **Roadway departures** involve vehicles striking stationary (non-movable) objects or vehicles running off the roadway. **Lane departures** involve vehicles crossing into the opposite direction of traffic. **Work zones** include police-reported active work zones, inactive work zones, other work zones, or the presence of barrels/cones/construction signage. **Roadside** crashes involve motor vehicles striking other vehicles, and individuals stopped at the roadside (off-roadway). “Off-roadway” areas include shoulders, medians, entrance and exit ramps, gore areas, sidewalks, and parking lanes.

Data Definitions and Considerations:

This fact sheet defines young drivers as persons 15 to 20 years old operating a motor vehicle. Young drivers' involvement in crashes does not imply they were "at fault" in the crash.

A traffic crash is defined as an incident that involves one or more motor vehicles where at least one vehicle was in transport and the crash originated on a public trafficway, such as a road or highway. Crashes that occurred on private property, including parking lots and driveways, are excluded.

Fatal crashes are defined as crashes that involve a motor vehicle traveling on a trafficway customarily open to the public and that resulted in the death of a motorist or a non-motorist within 30 days of the crash.

Serious injuries are those suspected serious injuries reported by law enforcement and used when any injury, other than a fatal injury, prevents the injured person from walking, driving, or normally continuing the activities the person was capable of before the injury occurred.

Passenger vehicles are defined as passenger cars and light trucks (including vans, Sport Utility Vehicles, and pickup trucks).

"At Intersection" is used when a person is on a roadway either (1) in the intersection, (2) in the area between a crosswalk and the perimeter of the intersection, or (3) in a crosswalk (marked or unmarked) adjacent to an intersection. "Intersection-Related" is used when a person is within the trafficway 50 feet out from the perimeter of an intersection area or if the crash is related to the flow of traffic through an intersection. "Not at Intersection" is when the person or driver is more than 50 feet out from the perimeter of an intersection, and the crash is not identified as related to the movement of vehicles through an intersection. "Non-Trafficway Locations" are crashes that occur outside the boundaries of the trafficway (i.e., driveways or parking lots).

The Department of Driver Services provided licensing data for the calendar year. The driver licensing database is a live database system and represents the information at a point in time on the date of extraction.

There are three (3) types of licenses that young drivers can obtain in the state of Georgia. Young drivers at least 15 years of age can obtain an Instructional (Learner) Permit (Class CP). For young drivers less than 18 years of age (ages 16 and 17), the Class D Provisional Driver's License is the first driver's license they can obtain by satisfying one of the four methods to complete the Georgia GDL requirements. The Class C license can be issued to all drivers 18 years of age and older with no driver's education required.

For fatal crashes only, Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) values are imputed to address the problem of missing blood alcohol test results in the FARS data system. A multiple imputation methodology is employed to generate specific values of BAC for persons involved in fatal crashes. "No alcohol" refers to a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .00 grams per deciliter (g/dL). For motorists and non-motorists involved in a motor vehicle traffic crash that may or may not result in a fatal injury, many drivers confirmed or suspected of alcohol impairment will not have a BAC value reported in the police crash report. Drivers suspected of alcohol impairment may have an alcohol test administered; however, the results or findings were not validated or included in the final police crash report.

Police crash reports are reviewed in a post hoc analysis by the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, Georgia Department of Public Health, and the Georgia Department of Transportation using a jointly developed definition of suspected distracted driving based on multiple factors. The imputation of suspected distracted drivers includes drivers who indicate emotional distress and evidence of driver inattention and distraction. The imputation removes driver contributing factors that include drug/alcohol impairment, sleepiness/drowsiness, aggressive/reckless driving, and speeding. The CODES Analytical Reference Guide is available upon request.

Contributing circumstances capture the pre-crash elements or improper actions of persons (motorcycle operators, pedestrians, bicyclists, and other motorists) that may have caused the crash. Contributing factors in fatal and nonfatal crashes are often underreported in the datasets. There is at least one record per person involved in a fatal crash (FARS Data), and some missing records for persons involved in motor vehicle traffic crashes (Crash Data).

In the 2023 CODES data capture, the "Lost Control" category includes four subcategories: Lost Control (10), Driver Lost Control – Speed-Related (43), Driver Lost Control – Impairment-Related (44), and Driver Lost Control – Distraction-Related (45).

Rural counties are counties that have a population of less than 50,000 according to the United States decennial census of 2010 or any future such census (O.C.G.A. Section 31-6-2). This is different than roadway classifications, where urban road systems can be located in urban clusters (or metropolitan areas) of at least 2,500 persons within the rural counties.

For More Information:

The two-page Quick Facts for young drivers can be found on the GOHS or DPH websites below:

- https://www.gahighwaysafety.org/georgia-traffic-safety-facts/
- https://dph.georgia.gov/injury-epidemiology/crash-outcome-data-evaluation-survey-codes

Other 2024 traffic safety facts are available online at the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety and Crash Outcomes Data Evaluation Systems (CODES): Non-Motorist (Pedestrians and Bicyclists), Motorcycle Safety, Older Drivers, Distracted Drivers, Risky Driving, and Occupant Protection.

The suggested APA format citation for this document is:

Georgia Crash Outcomes Data Evaluation System. (2026, September). Young Drivers: 2024 data. (Georgia Traffic Safety Facts). Atlanta, GA: Governor's Office of Highway Safety.