



## ADDITIONAL DRIVING PRACTICE – Risk Perception & Hazard Detection Exercise

### Learning Objective

In this exercise you will combine visual awareness, hazard recognition and speed and space management skills to recognize, point out and respond to risk. These skills are all critical to the perception of relative risk while driving.

### What's the Game Plan?

Build upon what you learned in the exercises in Hazard Recognition, Module 4, and Risk Perception, Module 6. Try different routes during different times of the day. When you choose your new routes, try for a mixture of residential/suburban, downtown/commercial, highway/freeway and rural/country.

Once again, the goal is for the teen and the adult to get a chance to play both roles: a driver who does commentary driving and an observer who gives feedback. The driver's job is to talk about the risks encountered on the trip. The observer's job is to give feedback to the driver after the drive is completed.

### Give Me an Example:

Some examples of hazards that increase your risk include:

- An on-ramp or off-ramp
- Traffic with lots of lane changing
- Tailgaters
- Speeders weaving through traffic
- Drivers texting or talking on the phone
- Poor road conditions
- Bad weather

### Guidelines for Being the Driver

- Rule #1 is **drive safely**. Don't get so wrapped up in describing what you are doing that you forget to follow the rules of the road. If you get overloaded or stressed, discontinue the exercise and then find a safe opportunity to pull over and stop the car.
- As you drive, don't try to comment on everything you see and hear. Just talk about the risky situations that really impact (or could impact) your driving. It's good to say, "I can see that someone is coming up too close on my rear bumper. I'm going to signal and move over a lane so they can go by." On the other hand, you don't need to say, "That car two blocks away from me is a station wagon. It looks like it's in good condition."
- While you drive, talk about what you are seeing, feeling and doing that helps you recognize and respond to risk. Stress how the following impact your relative risk:
  - Traffic conditions
  - The behavior of other drivers
  - Road conditions
  - Other hazards or potential hazards.
- When you are listening to feedback from the observer, accept it with good grace, even if you may not agree. It's best to listen and try not to argue. Focus on what the observer is saying, and take away what you can use to improve your driving.



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### Guidelines for Being the Observer

When you are the observer, you want to give feedback to the driver in a way that is helpful and constructive. To assist you, we have developed some Observer Feedback sheets you can use. These sheets are based on the following guidelines:

- **Ask the driver to pull over safely to the side of the road before starting to give feedback.** That way you can both concentrate safely on what's being said.
- **Begin by saying two or three positive things about what the driver did right.** We all like to hear something good up front. Try to make this a meaningful compliment.
- **Ask the driver for his/her own brief take on what went well and not so well.** By giving the driver the chance to express his/her own feelings first you'll reduce any sense of confrontation, and it will be easier to cover everything without repetition.
- **When you give corrective feedback, concentrate on just two or three things.** The more you criticize, the less the driver will hear or remember. So pick out two or three things that are really important. Talk about the hazards the driver missed that increased risk along. (See Give Me an Example on page 1.)
- **Focus your feedback on driving skills or how you felt during the drive.** It's better to say, "You should check your side mirrors more often for traffic behind you," or "I was feeling a little scared when we got close to that red car, because there was a chance we might hit it," than to say, "You're driving carelessly. Don't you care if you hit someone?"
- **End on a positive note.** To wrap things up, remind the driver of some of the good things he/she did. You don't want things to end with too much emphasis on what went wrong. By returning to the positive feedback, you'll make sure the driver feels encouraged and responsive.

One last word: You may be getting the idea that the observer isn't supposed to talk while the car is in motion. In general, this is a good idea. You don't want to distract the driver or interrupt his/her comments. If you do see something dangerous or threatening, you should speak up! You'd hate to have an accident and then say, "Well, I saw the truck coming, but I didn't think I was supposed to say anything!"

### A Word About Follow-Up

Once you finish the Risk Perception Driving Exercise, update your Drive Time Matrix. Continue to practice those areas where you still need practice. This means concentrating on those areas the next few times you get behind the wheel. Tell your adult how you are improving. Use the completed Observer Feedback sheets as memory joggers about skills to keep working on.



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**OBSERVER WORKSHEET: IN-CAR NOTES**

Route you are driving \_\_\_\_\_

In the chart below write a brief description of the risky (or potentially risky) situations described by the driver. Note what the driver says they are seeing, feeling and doing that helps them recognize and respond to risk. Also anything you would have done differently. Use this chart at the end of the drive as a reference for both positive comments and constructive feedback.

Risky situation #1
Risky situation #2
Risky situation #3
Risky situation #4
Risky situation #5
Risky situation #6



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### OBSERVER WORKSHEET: SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Refer to your in-car notes and rate how the driver did on each of the various driving skills. Complete this chart once the drive has ended as a reference for both positive comments and constructive feedback.

Driving Skills	Did Well	Needs Improving	Notes/ Examples
Recognizing Hazards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Recognizing Changes in Risk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Responding to Hazards Appropriately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#### Overall Feeling:

On a scale of 1-5, how comfortable/safe did you feel during the drive (circle one)?

1 = Scared to death / 2 = Uncomfortable / 3 = Mostly okay / 4 = Pretty comfortable / 5 = Completely safe and secure

When did you feel most comfortable? Why?

When did you feel least comfortable? Why?