

## Helpful Resources and Websites

**www.aarp.org** - a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50 and over improve the quality of their lives.

**www.aaaseniors.com** – extensive content, resources and tools related to senior mobility challenges.

**<http://mature.idrivesafely.com/Senior-Driver-Improvement.html>** - The I DRIVE SAFELY course for senior driver improvement first-time and refresher insurance discounts is designed with your convenience in mind.

**www.seniordrivers.org** - a website for the senior drivers, their families, traffic safety professionals, and alternative transportation providers.

**www.car-fit.org** - The CarFit program provides information and materials on community-specific resources.

**www.adrc-tae.org** - information and resources available to states and community organizations.

**www.aoa.gov** - Administration on Aging (AoA) is to help elderly individuals maintain their dignity and independence in their homes and communities.

**www.beverlyfoundation.org** - The mission is to offer options to enhance mobility and transportation for today's and tomorrow's older population.

**<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>** - National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, outlines the physical effects of aging, as well as tips.

**www.asaging.org** - Resources, publications, and educational opportunities are geared to enhance the knowledge and skills of people working with older adults and their families.

**<http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Seniors.shtml>** - Senior Citizens' Resources  
Official information and services from the U.S. government  
**www.itnamerica.org** - ITNAmerica is the first and



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# Observing the Senior Driver



## Before you have “The Conversation”

Talking to older adults about safe driving can be very challenging, especially IF it means taking the keys away or offering other alternatives. As we all age, our reflexes and reactions diminish; however, we do not all age at the same rate and our abilities differ from person to person.

It is important to plan ahead and take steps to ensure the safety of the older driver on the road. Remember that many older drivers look at driving as a form of independence and something they may have done for many years. Bringing up the subject of their driving abilities or the possibility of not driving can make some older drivers defensive.

Here are a few suggestions that can help you begin the conversation and prepare you when observing the older driver.



## Signs to look out for

If you notice any of these signs in the older driver, you may need to prepare for intervention:

- Have you noticed new dents, scratches or other damage to the vehicle?
- Has he or she experienced a near miss or crash recently?
- Does he or she get lost on routes that should be familiar?
- Does he or she take medication that might affect driving?
- Does he or she drive too slowly or inappropriately?
- Is he or she overwhelmed by signs, signals and everything that needs attention while driving?
- Has he or she been warned by a police officer or received any moving violations lately?

If the answer is yes to one or more of these questions, there is potential danger looming for the older driver and others sharing the road.

## The Approach

Keep in mind that you will want to be realistic, yet sensitive in your approach. Before speaking with the older driver, be prepared to offer alternatives and talk with family members, caretakers and friends who are willing to assist with transportation alternatives. You don't want the driver to become defensive, angry, hurt or withdrawn. Be certain that you have taken a full inventory of their driving skills and do not confront them because of speculation or what you've heard from others. Remain calm, open minded, and listen to their concerns.



## Suggestions

These suggestions will help in your approach and the driver's transition. If the driver has dementia, Alzheimer's or other potentially dangerous conditions, this will not apply.

- Suggest driving only in the daylight and during good weather.
- Work out a schedule with people willing to drive the older person around.
- Use local car services or public transportation.
- Take care of their errands for them, or what you can do.
- Find other activities that do not require driving to occupy their day.

## To summarize it all

There is a vast amount of knowledge and intervention ideas that you can use to make this sensitive situation easier. We've listed many websites that can give you information and the professional attention that you and your loved one will need.

- Carefully assess the situation.
- Approach the person tactfully and have alternatives to offer.
- Involve others: family, caretakers, clergy, physicians and the community.
- Keep accurate records.
- Check medications and be sure all health appointments are kept.
- Seek advice and assistance from your local DMV or Office for the Aging.
- Remember...what goes around, comes back around. Take action and show love and concern!