

# ROAD SAFETY

## THE JOURNEY AHEAD

### VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

Rates of injury and death due to road traffic collisions have declined in Canada<sup>1</sup> and Ontario<sup>2</sup> over the past four decades.

	Injury*	Death*
1964	202.5	5.3
2010	69.8	0.6

In 2010, 579 Ontarians died due to road traffic collisions.<sup>2</sup>

**Pedestrians and bicyclists** are at high risk of road traffic injury and death.

\*Rate per 10,000 licensed drivers of road traffic injury and death in Ontario.<sup>2</sup>

While the rate of emergency department visits for road traffic injury in Ontario has decreased overall, this is not the case for pedestrians and bicyclists.<sup>3</sup>

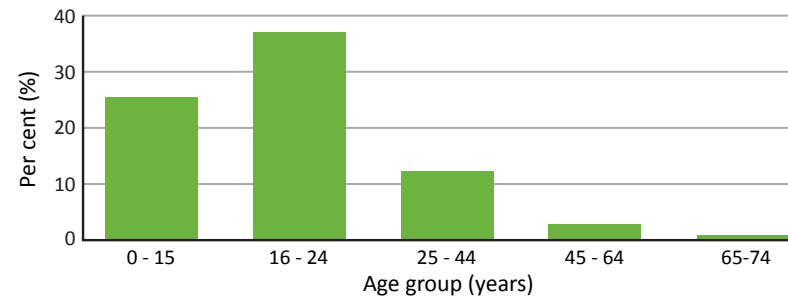
Number of emergency department visits in 2012:



### YOUNG DRIVERS

Road traffic collisions are the leading cause of injury-related death among 16-24 year olds in Ontario, accounting for 37.0% of preventable deaths.

**Road traffic deaths as a proportion of all deaths from preventable causes by age group, Ontario, 2000-2009<sup>4</sup>**

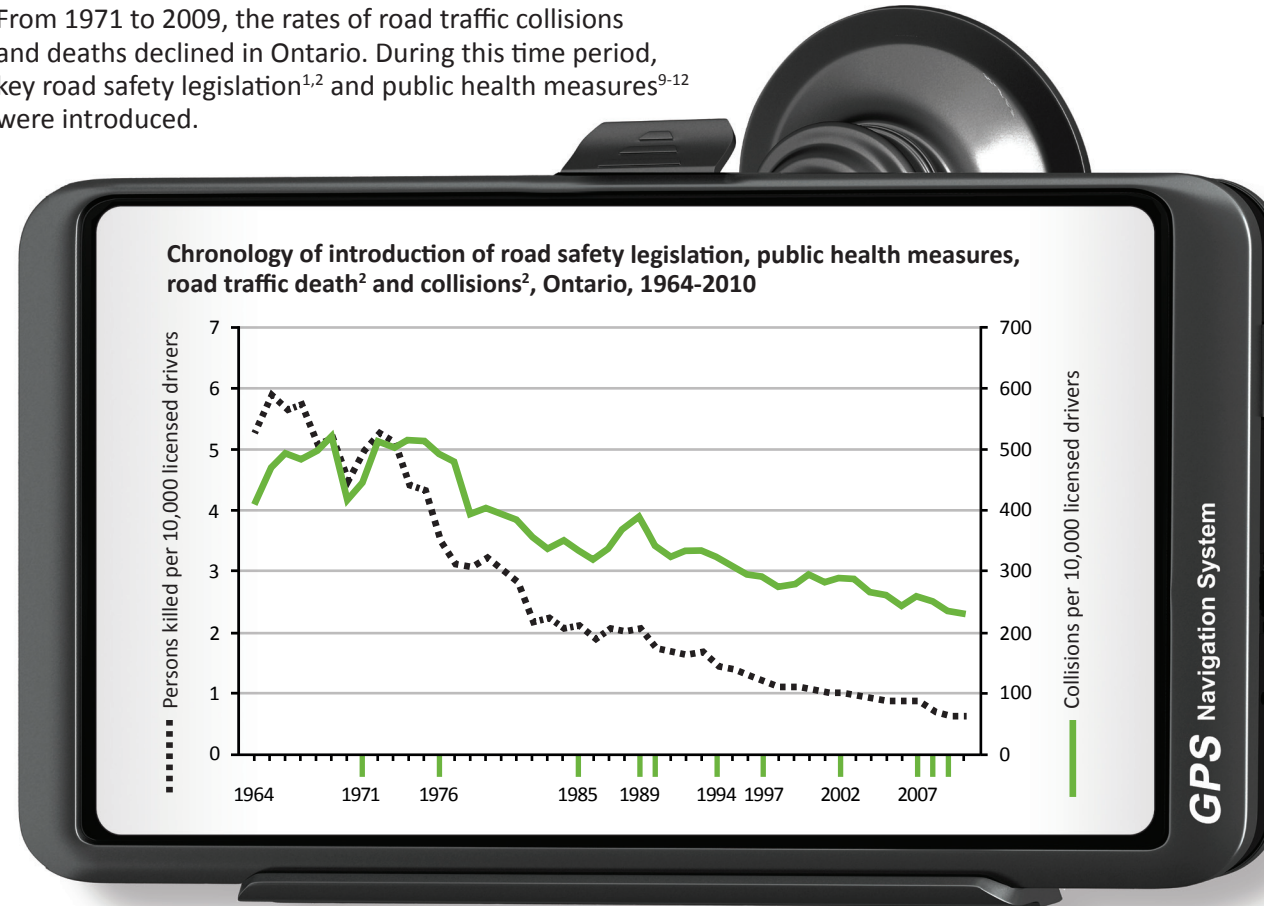


**1 IN 5** road traffic deaths in 2010 were among those aged 16-24,<sup>2</sup> which is higher than would be expected given the proportion of licensed drivers in this age group.

Young males have an increased risk of road traffic injury and death which may be due in part to a higher prevalence of risk-taking behaviour.<sup>5-7</sup>

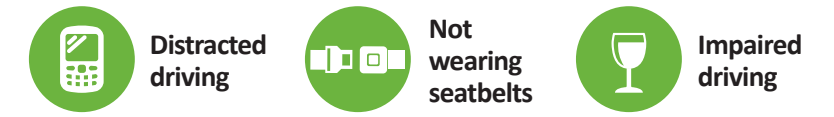
Road safety is one of the greatest public health achievements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> Continued effort to identify and address the factors that contribute to collisions is important to improving safety for all road users.

From 1971 to 2009, the rates of road traffic collisions and deaths declined in Ontario. During this time period, key road safety legislation<sup>1,2</sup> and public health measures<sup>9-12</sup> were introduced.



- 1971:** Seatbelts required in all new vehicles in Canada<sup>1</sup>
- 1976:** Ontario first in North America to pass seatbelt law<sup>13,14</sup>
- 1985:** Tougher penalties for impaired driving in Canada<sup>1,15</sup>
- 1989:** Public health mandate revised to support road safety among adolescents<sup>9</sup>
- 1990:** Daytime running lights required in all new vehicles<sup>1,16</sup>
- 1994:** Graduated licensing program introduced<sup>2,17</sup>
- 1997:** Public health mandate revised to support crash reduction<sup>10</sup>
- 2002:** Chief Medical Officer of Health report calls for measures to reduce road traffic injury and death<sup>11</sup>
- 2007:** Increased sanctions for street racing and aggressive driving<sup>2,18</sup>  
New sanctions for drivers with blood alcohol concentrations (BAC) between 0.05 and 0.08<sup>18</sup>
- 2008:** Increased sentences for impaired driving in Canada<sup>1,19</sup>  
New Ontario Public Health Standards address road safety<sup>12</sup>
- 2009:** New and young drivers must maintain a zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC)<sup>2,20</sup>  
Hand-held cell phone use while driving banned<sup>1,2,21,22</sup>  
Electronic speed limiters required in most large trucks to cap speed at 105 kph<sup>2,23</sup>

### CONTINUED THREATS TO ROAD SAFETY

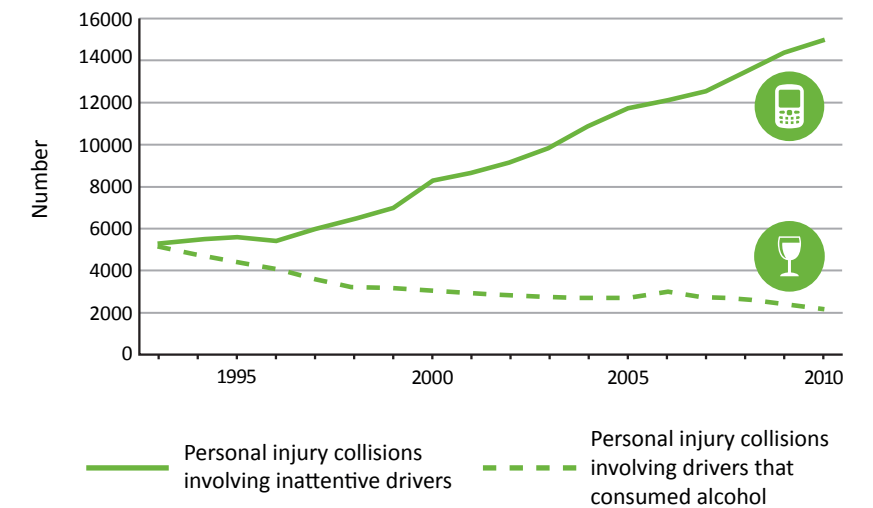


### DISTRACTED DRIVING

Distracted or inattentive driving occurs when a driver voluntarily diverts attention to a task other than driving,<sup>24,25</sup> e.g., eating or talking on a phone. Distracted driving increases the risk of road traffic collision.<sup>24-26</sup>

Cell phone use, whether hand-held or hands-free, is a common driver distraction associated with an increased risk of road traffic collision.<sup>24-26</sup>

**Number of road traffic collisions resulting in personal injury\* in which drivers consumed alcohol or were inattentive†, Ontario, 1993-2010<sup>27</sup>**



\*Personal injury includes major (required hospitalization), minor (required treatment in an emergency department), and minimal (required no formal treatment) injuries.<sup>27</sup>

†Inattentive: operating a motor vehicle without due care and attention or placing less than full concentration on driving, e.g., changing radio stations, consuming food, reading, talking on phone or two-way radio, using headphones.<sup>27</sup>

The proportion of Ontarians that have reported using a cell phone while driving has increased in Ontario<sup>28</sup>

**2003 = 41.6%**

**2009/2010 = 48.8%**

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