

AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

1998

Definitions

Aggressive driving is defined as “driving behavior that endangers or is likely to endanger people or property.” (NHTSA)

What causes aggressive driving? (NHTSA)

- Crowded roads
- Road work
- Stress from other areas of life
- Dangerous driving attitudes
- Being in a hurry

Types of aggressive drivers include: (“*Steering Clear of Highway Madness*, Dr. John Larson, 1997)

The **speeder**, who wants to get from point A to point B as quickly as possible and will become enraged if forced to slow down.

The **competitor**, who sees the speeder coming and decides to race.

The **passive aggressor**, who blocks other drivers and does not let them pass or cut in.

The **narcissist**, who takes a dislike to another driver because of race, sex or type of car.

The **vigilante**, who is going to make a violator of the rules pay.

National Statistics

In 2003, 43,220 people died and over 3 million more were injured in police reported crashes. Approximately 1/3 of these crashes and 2/3 of the resulting fatalities can be attributed to behavior associated with aggressive driving. (NHTSA)

According to NHTSA, approximately 66% of all traffic fatalities annually are caused by aggressive driving behaviors, such as passing on the right, running red lights, and tailgating.

Five percent of fatal crashes can be attributed to a driver operating a vehicle in an erratic, reckless, careless, or negligent manner. (NHTSA)

A recent study conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that nearly 90% of drivers have experienced an aggressive driving incident in the past

In a 1996 poll, residents of Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia listed aggressive driving as a bigger concern than drunk driving. (*U.S. News*)

Violent incidents recorded by police have increased 51% over 5 years. (*NHTSA*)

Speeding is one of the most common offenses committed by the aggressive driver. (*NHTSA*)

70% of drivers get angry at slow drivers. (*NHTSA*)

Congestion is a leading cause of aggressive driving. (*Federal Highway Administration*)

The amount of vehicle miles traveled since 1987 has increased by 35%, whereas miles of road increased by only 1%. (*FHA*)

The number of drivers on the road is increasing. As of 1990, 91% of people drove to work (*SFI*)

Commuters in one-third of the largest cities spent well over 40 hours a year in traffic jams (*SFI*)

Eighty-two percent of drivers get angry when someone cuts them off. (*NHTSA*)

Seat belts are the best defense against aggressive driving. A person is twice as likely to die or sustain a serious injury in a crash if unbelted. (*NHTSA*)

Road Rage

Aggressive driving can lead to road rage, which includes obscene gestures, horn beeping, and sometimes violent attacks. (*NHTSA*)

In approximately 44% of violent traffic altercations, the perpetrator used a weapon such as a firearm, knife, club, or tire iron. (*NHTSA*)

In 35% of violent traffic altercations, the perpetrator used the vehicle itself as a weapon. (*NHTSA*)

Resources

The National Safety Council offers defensive driving training. Contact a local Council

chapter or call 1-800-621-6244 for a training location near you.

National Safety Council
1121 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143-3201
Tel: (630) 285-1121
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www.nsc.org