



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**Ohio Traffic
Safety Office**



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OVERVIEW

OFFICE MISSION STATEMENT

The Ohio Traffic Safety Office (OTSO) is dedicated to saving lives and preventing injuries on Ohio's roads by using creative leadership, innovative education, and comprehensive enforcement programs. OTSO strives to work in partnership with local, state and federal entities to advance equity in highway safety programs, ensuring they benefit all who travel Ohio roads.

Under the direction of the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) in Columbus, the division oversees Ohio Driver Training, Motorcycle Ohio, and the Ignition Interlock Program. OTSO is also responsible for awarding millions of dollars in federal highway safety funds from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for programming to improve traffic safety across the state.

LETTER FROM DIRECTOR EMILY DAVIDSON



The Ohio Traffic Safety Office Annual Report highlights traffic safety program activities conducted or funded in 2024. Our office continues to work with partners at the federal, state, local, and community level to build driver education programs and fund projects that address Ohio's most significant traffic safety challenges.

Our state continues to experience a road safety crisis. Projections from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimate 1,242 people - or about three people every day - were killed in traffic crashes throughout Ohio in 2023. That's a 2.6% drop from 2022, but our state still ranks ninth in the nation for traffic fatalities. These aren't just numbers, these statistics represent parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters whose deaths could have been prevented.

Transportation is about people, and we all have a shared responsibility to make our roads safer for everyone. With the understanding that all crashes can be prevented, there is a renewed focus on traffic safety in Ohio. Education is one of the keys to safer roadways, and this report reflects the ongoing work of how those efforts are reaching the public.

OTSO is leveraging significant, never-before-seen investments at both the state and federal levels to educate drivers, passengers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and others. In 2022, the Ohio Legislature dedicated \$13 million (\$6.5 million per year) of the Ohio Operating Budget to traffic safety. OTSO uses these funds to advance our mission in several ways, but there has been a significant focus on youthful drivers. Our research has shown there's a correlation

OVERVIEW

between youth who complete driver training and obtain their license before they turn 18 and their crash outcomes within the first year of licensure. That's why we launched two grant programs aimed at making driver training more accessible to Ohio youth. These unique programs will help thousands of teenage drivers in Ohio who otherwise would not be able to get the training they need for a lifetime of safe and confident driving.



This year has been a year of growth and progress for the Ohio Traffic Safety Office. Our dedicated staff has grown to 33 positions, with new positions focusing on traffic safety programmatic support and driver training support. OTSO staff is making an impact at the national level, as well, with representation on committees for the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and the State Motorcycle Safety Association (SMSA). The great work being done in Ohio has also been showcased nationally, with OTSO staff invited to present on various traffic safety initiatives at national conferences including Lifesavers, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), and the American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association (ADTSEA).

Saving lives and preventing injuries on our roads will take a comprehensive solution, which includes ongoing education and public outreach combined with strict enforcement of the most dangerous driving behaviors. Preliminary numbers show road fatalities in 2024 are down 7% and we're making progress in increasing seat belt use and stopping distracted driving, but there is more work to do. We are looking forward to continued success in 2025.

-Emily Davidson, Director

OVERVIEW



AAMVA AWARD

OTSO was recognized by AAMVA with the Region 3 Communications Video Award. OTSO was honored for its teen driver video series, which was launched in 2023 to better engage young drivers on safety topics including: Ohio's Graduated Driver's License Program, distracted driving, sharing the road, and the top reasons for crashes.

The award is presented to the best internally-produced video using internal resources by internal personnel. AAMVA aims to recognize creativity, cost effectiveness, and the ability to reach consumers with a well-crafted, measured, and executed message.

measured, and executed message.

For this video series, OTSO worked with a creative team to create the concept, identify the talent and film and produce the videos. Driver training staff provided the content to ensure it aligned with Ohio driver training standards.

OHIO TRAFFIC SAFETY SUMMIT

Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Andy Wilson kicked off the 2024 Ohio Traffic Safety Summit by saying that he was, "proud of the work that the Ohio Traffic Safety Office has accomplished, especially in promoting safe behaviors to our youngest drivers." Safety topics aimed at Ohio's youth were a priority at OTSO's first summit with workshops focused on the elementary seat belt program, teen driver training, a listening session with teenagers, and an empowering closing message from keynote speaker Torine Creppy, the president of Safe Kids Worldwide.

The two-day summit at The Ohio Union in Columbus was attended by more than 370 people including OTSO grantees, driver training schools, law enforcement representatives, government agencies, and other traffic safety professionals like researchers, traffic planners, and engineers. More than 60 presenters and speakers led workshops and panel discussions focused on Ohio's updated distracted driving law, preventing pedestrian fatalities, marijuana impairment, media coverage of traffic safety issues, motorcycle safety, proactive traffic enforcement, trends in seatbelt use, older road users, and speed management.



Feedback from attendees was positive, and many said they were particularly inspired by the presentation by the opening keynote speaker, Dr. David Harkey, the president of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). Dr. Harkey shared some of the latest crash test research being conducted by IIHS, and the ways in which this data can support key areas of the Safe System Approach, including safer speeds, safer vehicles, and safer people.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

A variety of resources are used to determine and prioritize Ohio's traffic safety problems and traffic safety-related infrastructure needs. Federal priorities, past evaluations, and recommendations from resources, such as the most recent NHTSA assessments (motorcycle, impaired driving, occupant protection, traffic records, and emergency medical services), Countermeasures That Work, and results from annual observational seat belt surveys are reviewed to identify program direction.

Ohio has prioritized its problem areas as follows: Impaired Driving (alcohol and/or drugged), Occupant Protection, Speed, Motorcycles, Youthful Drivers, Aging Road Users, Distracted Driving, Traffic Records, Pedestrian, and Bicycle. This selection was determined based upon problem identification as it relates to the core measures. Ohio's impaired driving fatal crashes have increased, and Ohio is now considered a mid-range state. Ohio's non-motorized fatalities have also increased, and Ohio is now eligible for non-motorized funding.

BY THE NUMBERS

For Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024, OTSO awarded more than \$23 million for statewide programming to improve traffic safety and reduce traffic-related fatalities.

The funds were directed to OTSO from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Some 164 grants were awarded to 135 local agencies in 62 counties to support the efforts of safety partners



FFY 2024 FUNDING	
PROGRAMS	AWARDED AMOUNTS
STATEWIDE PROGRAMMING	\$13,244,880.07
IMPAIRED DRIVING ENFORCEMENT & SELECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM	\$4,633,625.20
DEDICATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM	\$148,902.91
COUNTYWIDE OVI TASK FORCES	\$2,881,055.45
SAFE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS	\$2,170,213.39

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

statewide and focus on traffic safety priority areas, including impaired driving, seat belt usage, distracted driving, youthful driving, and motorcycle safety. The competitive grant process solicited grant proposals from state agencies, non-profit organizations, colleges, universities, hospitals, political subdivisions, and other interested groups within selected Ohio counties and jurisdictions based upon the number of fatal crashes.

OTSO uses paid media to inform the public of the dangers of impaired driving, driving unrestrained, distracted driving, and the importance of motorcycle awareness. Paid media placement is guided by NHTSA's national communications plan during specific timeframes. Across all the paid media campaigns, the media buyer estimates that the size of the audience exceeded 255,630,740.

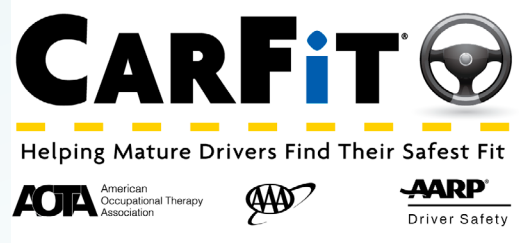
FFY 2024 PAID MEDIA OVERVIEW	
PROGRAMS	COST
TV/CABLE	\$493,058.43
RADIO	\$393,635.94
PRINT	\$3,925.00
INTERNET	\$750,564.94
OUT OF HOME/OTHER	\$1,585,927.66
TOTAL MEDIA COST	\$3,243,611.97

CARFIT

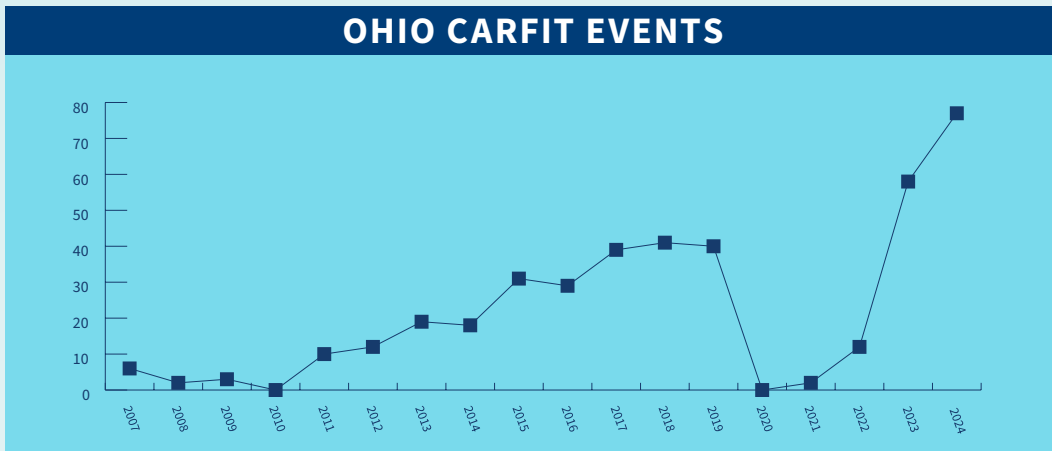
In 2024, OTSO continued to direct federal funds to expand Ohio's CarFit program – an educational program developed by the American Automobile Association, the American Association of Retired Persons, and the American Occupational Therapy Association to prevent injuries among older drivers. CarFit is not a skills assessment, but rather

an opportunity for older adults to improve their safety and comfort behind the wheel by completing a 12-point safety checklist with a trained volunteer.

Ohio is one of only three states with a dedicated, statewide CarFit Coordinator whose priority is to train more CarFit volunteers and plan events to reach more older adults. In 2024, CarFit reached record levels in Ohio, with more than 800 trained volunteers, and 77 CarFit events that touched the lives of 528 participants.

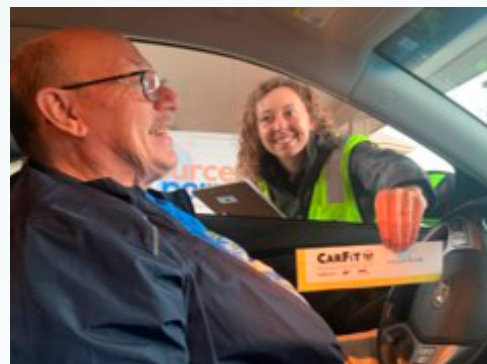


FEDERAL PROGRAMS



OTSO received 267 post-event questionnaires from participants since it began providing them in summer 2023. One hundred percent of respondents stated CarFit was useful to them. Other responses demonstrate the program's impact:

- 87% rated the event 'excellent.'
- 98% of respondents felt safer in their vehicles after attending a CarFit event.
- Steering wheel and head restraint adjustments were the top topics learned at the CarFit events that participants were not previously aware of.



FEDERAL PROGRAMS

IMPAIRED DRIVING STRATEGIC PLAN WORKING GROUP

Ohio recently moved into the mid-range level of alcohol-impaired driving, a determination made by NHTSA based on the state's impaired driving fatalities. This is the first time Ohio has moved out of the low-range category in recent history, and the mid-range category requires Ohio to develop an impaired driving strategic plan. A task force was created under the Ohio Traffic Safety Council in a cooperative effort to develop a strategic plan to identify short-term and long-term activities to prevent impaired driving in Ohio.

The Impaired Driving Strategic Plan working group members included OTSO staff, state and local law enforcement, criminal justice system representatives, public health organizations, and community engagement professionals. The working group met five times to discuss the statewide impaired driving programs and efforts. Open discussion fostered genuine opinions on successes and pitfalls of efforts currently underway, and what the experts deemed would elevate those efforts.

In the plan presented to NHTSA, task force members identified the following strategies:

- Focused communication/education attention on drug-impaired driving to coincide with the new adult-use marijuana law.
- Training for local law enforcement on how to conduct alcohol sale compliance checks.
- A review of Ohio's drug laws, specifically "Drug of Abuse" language.
- Additional and expanded training opportunities for the judicial, prosecutor, and law enforcement communities.

DRIVER TRAINING

BY THE NUMBERS

The Ohio Department of Public Safety licenses and regulates driving schools for teens and adults. Driving schools are inspected regularly for compliance with Ohio rules and regulations.



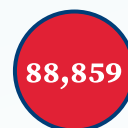
**DRIVER
EDUCATION
PROGRAMS**



**LICENSED
ENTERPRISES**



**LICENSED
INSTRUCTORS**



**TEENAGE
DRIVERS
TRAINED**



**TOTAL
STUDENTS
TRAINED**

DRIVER TRAINING

Ohio's 14 driver education programs include: CDL (Class A, Class B, Passenger, School Bus), Class D (Novice teen), Class D online, Abbreviated Adult, Abbreviated Adult Online, Disability, Adult Remedial, Juvenile Remedial, Advanced Juvenile Driver Improvement Program, Mature Operator, and Adult Remedial Online.

SECOND ROUND DRIVE TO SUCCEED

The cost of teen driver training can be a huge barrier to obtaining training for youth from low-income families. With courses typically costing between \$500 - \$900, many teens wait until they are at least 18, when training is no longer required, to obtain a driver license.

The Ohio Traffic Safety Office awarded \$2.5 million in grants to help more teenagers from low-income families get access to driver education. Thirty-five local governmental agencies covering 43 counties received the grants as part of the "Drive to Succeed" scholarship program. The agencies include health departments, police departments, public schools, and educational service centers who will use the funds to establish teen driver training scholarships. These grants are expected to support about 5,500 young people who otherwise likely wouldn't have had the means to complete driver education and gain the experience needed to become safe drivers.

This is the second round of funding offered through the scholarship program, which previously awarded \$575,000 to 25 agencies in 2023. Eight of the second-round grantees also received Drive to Succeed funding during the first round of funding.

DRIVE TO SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - ROUND 2		
AGENCY	COUNTIES SERVED	GRANT AMOUNT
ATHENS-MEIGS EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER	ATHENS & MEIGS	\$30,450
BUTLER TECH AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS	BUTLER	\$61,335
COLUMBIANA COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER	COLUMBIANA	\$88,110
VILLAGE OF WEST LAFAYETTE	COSHOCTON	\$98,335
BETHEL TATE LOCAL SCHOOLS	CLERMONT	\$116,630
FELICITY FRANKLIN LOCAL SCHOOLS	CLERMONT	\$46,500
GOSHEN LOCAL SCHOOLS	CLERMONT	\$61,500
SANDUSKY CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	ERIE	\$39,600
FAIRFIELD UNION LOCAL SCHOOLS	FAIRFIELD	\$27,750
LANCASTER CITY SCHOOLS	FAIRFIELD	\$37,000
CITY OF GROVE CITY DIVISION OF POLICE	FRANKLIN	\$49,375
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER OF CENTRAL OHIO	FRANKLIN	\$168,000
SOUTH-WESTERN CITY SCHOOLS	FRANKLIN	\$23,500
WHITEHALL DIVISION OF POLICE	FRANKLIN	\$25,970
GREENE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH	GREENE	\$15,600
OHIO VALLEY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER	GUERNSEY, NOBLE, WASHINGTON, MONROE, FRANKLIN & PERRY	\$37,000
CINCINNATI POLICE DEPARTMENT	HAMILTON	\$56,160
KNOX PUBLIC HEALTH	KNOX	\$142,000
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER OF THE WESTERN RESERVE	LAKE, GEauga & PORTAGE	\$53,760
TOLEDO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	LUCAS	\$133,500
WASHINGTON LOCAL SCHOOLS	LUCAS	\$111,250
MARION CITY SCHOOLS	MARION	\$37,600
MADISON-CHAMPAIGN EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER	MADISON & CHAMPAIGN	\$66,755
BOARDMAN TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT	MAHONING	\$147,885
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER OF EASTERN OHIO	MAHONING, TRUMBULL & COLUMBIANA	\$227,200
MERCER COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER	MERCER	\$24,750
KETTERING CITY SCHOOLS	MONTGOMERY	\$12,600
MUSKINGUM VALLEY ESC	MUSKINGUM, HARDIN, CRAWFORD, FAIRFIELD, FULTON, LOGAN & RICHLAND	\$44,400
PICKAWAY COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT	PICKAWAY & ROSS	\$61,560
MANSFIELD SR. HIGH SCHOOL	RICHLAND	\$46,350
PICKAWAY-ROSS JOINT VOCATIONAL SCHOOL	ROSS	\$72,280
STARK COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER	STARK & CARROLL	\$98,750
AKRON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	SUMMIT	\$134,000
EAST CENTRAL OHIO EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER	TUSCARAWAS, BELMONT, CARROLL & STARK	\$64,750
WARREN COUNTY FAMILY AND CHILDREN FIRST COUNCIL	WARREN & MONTGOMERY	\$33,450

DRIVER TRAINING

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DRIVER EDUCATION GRANT AWARDS

The Creating Opportunities for Driver Education (CODE) grant is new funding provided by OTSO aimed at increasing capacity at driver training schools to help meet the demand of current and new students. This grant program was developed to provide opportunities for more teens to access affordable, quality driver education and to fill training gaps within Ohio.

OTSO received overwhelming interest in the CODE grant program, with 53 applications submitted seeking a total request of nearly \$15 million. After careful review, 34 grants totaling more than \$4.5 million were awarded to current and prospective driver training enterprises, educational service centers, school districts, and career technical schools to establish or expand driver training enterprises at nearly 100 locations throughout Ohio. OTSO awarded grants based on the amount of funding available, and the need of each community determined by the area of the state, poverty level, and population.

GRANTEE	COUNTY	AMOUNT
2ND NATURE DRIVING ACADEMY	MAHONING	\$229,160.00
ADA EXEMPTED VILLAGE SCHOOLS*	HARDIN	\$63,694.00
BLACK RIVER LOCAL SCHOOLS	ASHLAND	\$153,696.67
BUCKEYE CENTRAL LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT*	CRAWFORD	\$63,694.00
CHAMPION CITY DRIVERS ED	CLARK	\$317,980.00
CHOFFIN CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTER	MAHONING	\$65,330.00
DRIVING SCHOOLS OF OHIO (TALLMADGE)	SUMMIT	\$211,356.67
DRIVING SCHOOLS OF OHIO (WESTERVILLE)	MORROW	\$175,043.33
EAST CENTRAL OHIO EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER	TUSCARAWAS	\$246,503.33
EAST MUSKINGUM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT*	MUSKINGUM	\$63,694.00
EHOVE CAREER CENTER	ERIE	\$79,246.67
ELGIN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT*	MARION	\$63,694.00
FAIRFIELD COUNTY ESC	FAIRFIELD	\$100,958.33
FAYETTE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT*	FULTON	\$63,694.00
FOXFIRE	MUSKINGUM	\$63,694.00
GALLIA-JACKSON-VINTON VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS	GALLIA	\$106,183.33
INDIAN LAKE LOCAL SCHOOLS*	LOGAN	\$63,694.00
JEFFERSON COUNTY ESC	JEFFERSON	\$261,030.67
LICKING VALLEY DRIVING SCHOOL	LICKING	\$245,123.33
MONTGOMERY COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CTR	MONTGOMERY	\$304,120.00
NATIONAL TRAIL LOCAL SCHOOLS*	PREBLE	\$63,694.00
NORTH UNION*	UNION	\$63,694.00
NORTHERN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT*	PERRY	\$63,694.00
PICKAWAY COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER	PICKAWAY	\$322,737.33
RIDGEDALE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT*	MARION	\$63,694.00
SCHWARTZ DRIVING SCHOOL (MADISON-CHAMPAIGN)	CHAMPAIGN	\$265,026.00
SCHWARTZ DRIVING SCHOOL (LOGAN COUNTY)	LOGAN	\$203,133.33
SHELBY CITY SCHOOLS*	RICHLAND	\$63,694.00
SOUTHERN LOCAL SCHOOLS*	PERRY	\$63,694.00
SPRINGFIELD-CLARK CAREER TECHNOLOGY CENTER	CLARK	\$165,550.17
TRI-COUNTY NORTH LOCAL SCHOOLS*	PREBLE	\$63,694.00
TWIN VALLEY COMMUNITY LOCAL SCHOOLS*	PREBLE	\$63,694.00
UPPER SCIOTO VALLEY LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT*	HARDIN	\$63,694.00
WASHINGTON COUNTY CAREER CENTER	WASHINGTON	\$146,150.00
TOTAL		\$4,626,069.83

*In partnership with Muskingum Valley ESC

DRIVER TRAINING

ADVANCED DRIVER TRAINING SUMMER SERIES



Advanced Driver Training programs are specially designed classes that allow teens to practice skid recovery, anti-lock braking system exercises, and other crash avoidance skills with an instructor on a closed course. In 2023, OTSO started promoting these programs by producing a video and launching a new web page dedicated to Advanced Driver Training to better inform parents about these programs.

In the summer of 2024, OTSO partnered with three Advanced Driver Training programs to increase access and bring free hands-on practice to teen drivers. Ohio-based providers DriveTeam and Professional Driving Systems each conducted three sessions. The Ford Philanthropy's award-winning Ford Driving Skills for Life held two additional sessions in Cleveland and Cincinnati as part of the summer series. The series was planned to occur during the "100 deadliest days" for teen drivers, the time period between Memorial Day and Labor Day that historically accounts for more than a third of all teen crashes.

ADVANCED DRIVER TRAINING SUMMER SERIES ATTENDANCE

DATE	LOCATION	TEEN ATTENDANCE
JUNE 8-9	NELSONVILLE YORK HIGH SCHOOL, ATHENS COUNTY	32
JUNE 19-20	CANFIELD FAIRGROUNDS, MAHONING COUNTY	41
JULY 6-7	PROFESSIONAL DRIVING SYSTEMS, MONTGOMERY COUNTY	40
JULY 17-18	ZANESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL, MUSKINGUM COUNTY	35
AUG. 3-4	I-X CENTER, CUYAHOGA COUNTY	293
AUG. 7-8	LIMA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, ALLEN COUNTY	45
SEPT. 21-22	OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WOOD COUNTY	26
SEPT. 28-29	MANHEIM AUTO AUCTION, BUTLER COUNTY	248

DRIVER TRAINING

AAA FREE CURRICULUM

In an effort to enhance Ohio's teen driver training, in July 2024 OTSO began offering AAA's nationally recognized driver training curriculum, *How to Drive*, free of charge to current and prospective driver training schools in Ohio. This new resource will support driver training schools, instructors, and students by providing turn-key, high-quality educational content. The AAA *How to Drive* Novice Driver Training Program is designed specifically to address the causal factors in young driver crashes. It is the only officially nationally recognized curriculum that is endorsed by the American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association.



Between July and December, 107 companies requested the free materials, including 201 instructor guides, 2,848 hardback textbooks, and 8,328 student workbooks.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS CURRICULUM & TRAIN-THE-TRAINER OPPORTUNITIES



In July 2024, new educational resources became available for diverse communities in Ohio to help English Language Learners (ELL) become licensed drivers. OTSO developed a curriculum and train-the-trainer program to help non-English speakers learn safe driving practices and prepare for the written and driving tests at the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV). The curriculum includes information on the requirements for obtaining a driver's license

in Ohio, the meanings of traffic signs and signals, and other basic traffic safety laws.

DRIVER TRAINING

A pilot program was first introduced at OTSO's 2024 Ohio Traffic Safety Summit in Columbus and was launched statewide a few months later. At a train-the-trainer program, participants are guided through the curriculum in English before they can translate the materials to share in non-English speaking communities.

In 2024, the curriculum slides and instructor resource guide were requested by 52 individuals. The driver training team assisted with four train-the-trainer events, including one in Springfield, which included an eight-lesson behind-the-wheel module to help guide in-car training with non-English speakers. Fourteen individuals attended the Springfield event, and they all plan to facilitate the program in the community.



SPRINGFIELD SIMULATOR INITIATIVE

When concerns about safe driving were raised in the city of Springfield, OTSO stepped in to help. A large number of Haitian migrants recently settled in this area, many of whom have had little or no driver training. Since 2023, OTSO has been working with leaders in Springfield to help educate immigrant drivers who may not fully understand the rules of the road.

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced a new traffic safety initiative in Springfield to help the Haitian community practice safe driving skills on a simulator. Ten driving simulators were donated to OTSO by Virtual Driver Interactive and the Maria Tiberi Foundation and placed in six different locations in the community. This technology will give new drivers the opportunity to experience dangerous driving scenarios and hazards without putting themselves or others at risk. Training scenarios include driving in severe weather; hydroplaning and skidding; overcorrection; distracted driving; following too closely; parking and backing up; dangers of speeding; and the importance of seat belts.



DRIVER TRAINING

Anyone in Clark County, especially those working toward a driver's license, can sign up to use the simulators. Use of the simulators is free and managed by trainers and translators at each location. The technology can track individual as well as group performance.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Driver education holds numerous training courses throughout the year to provide support and resources for schools and instructors. In 2024, some 33 training events were held, with more than 450 attendees.

DRIVER TRAINING EDUCATION EVENTS AND ATTENDANCE		
EVENT	QUANTITY	ATTENDEES
CDL BASIC INSTRUCTOR COURSE	12	127
JDIP CONTINUING EDUCATION	1	13
CDL INSTRUCTOR & TRAINING MANAGER CONTINUING ED.	3	35
CLASS D INSTRUCTOR & TRAINING MANAGER CONTINUING ED.	3	60
CLASS D OPEN FORUM	1	93
TRAINING MANAGER COURSE	3	50
CDL NEW SCHOOL ORIENTATION	5	68
ONLINE PROGRAMS NEW SCHOOL ORIENTATION	5	22

Additionally, the office worked to improve and update resources available for schools and instructors through the following efforts:

- Released the updated Ohio Driver Training Curriculum, which was restructured in a progressive manner (so skills build upon each other).
- Assisted Department of Public Safety (DPS) Training in launching the DPS Defensive Driving Course for all DPS employees.
- Modified Class D & Abbreviated Adult New School Orientations on the Public Safety Training Campus to include Probationary Training Manager, Split Licensing, and Reciprocity.
- Introduced Split Licensing for Class D Instructors, which includes new training forms, new user guides, and a quick-glance guide.

- Introduced Probationary Training Manager requirement to allow schools to open sooner.
- Modified the online Class D & Abbreviated Adult Basic Instructor Course to include Probationary Training Manager, Split Licensing, and Reciprocity.
- Introduced a Juvenile Driver Improvement Program survey to gather insight on why teenage drivers choose to speed.



MOTORCYCLE OHIO

BY THE NUMBERS

The Ohio Department of Public Safety, through the Ohio Revised Code, is charged with establishing a motorcycle safety and education program. Motorcycle Ohio trains around 12,000 students each year with the understanding that education for riders is one of the keys to making our roadways safer for all drivers.

Funded by motorcycle plate fees and class registrations, the mission of Motorcycle Ohio is to provide affordable, effective training courses, and to reduce fatalities and injuries on Ohio's roadways through rider education, public information campaigns, and licensing improvement. Three-wheel motorcycle training started in Ohio in May 2024 at two private provider training sites in Columbus and Elyria.

36

TRAINING
SITES

263

INSTRUCTORS

12,211

STUDENTS
TRAINED IN
2-WHEEL COURSES

126

STUDENTS TRAINED
IN 3-WHEEL
COURSES

MOTORCYCLE OHIO

Motorcycle Ohio State Administrator Michele Piko, Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Andy Wilson, and OTSO Assistant Director and Training Programs Administrator Kimberly Schwind kicked off the 2024 riding season with a press conference and event at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Dayton. Director Wilson stressed the importance of training for all riders, no matter their skill level, noting that 78% of Ohio's motorcycle fatalities in 2023 involved riders who were untrained. The event concluded with a mentorship ride with U.S. Air Force personnel and members of the public.



NHTSA MOTORCYCLE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Motorcycle Ohio completed a program assessment, conducted by NHTSA with the goal of enhancing the effectiveness of the motorcycle program in preventing injuries and saving lives on Ohio's roadways. The assessment was completed using 13 rounds of virtual interviews with individuals from OTSO, Motorcycle Ohio, the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles, law enforcement representatives, and others. The team heard from 28 different guest interviewees on topics such as personal protective equipment, licensing, legislation, highway engineering, and communication programs.

MOTORCYCLE OHIO

The final report from the assessment team commended Motorcycle Ohio for strong leadership, data-driven decisions, comprehensive education and training, and collaborative partnerships that enhance safety for motorcyclists across the state. The team also praised Motorcycle Ohio for their “Saved by the Helmet” program, adding that this type of rider recognition should serve as an example for all safety and education programs across the country.



STATE MOTORCYCLE SAFETY ASSOCIATION AWARD

This year, Motorcycle Ohio was honored at the State Motorcycle Safety Association National Safety Training Summit in Denver, Colorado. The program was recognized with the 2024 Outstanding State Member Award, which goes to a state with a comprehensive state motorcycle safety program whose implemented program goals and strategies were successful, effective, and can serve as best-practice guidelines for other states.

SMSA noted Motorcycle Ohio’s excellence in data use, quality assurance, and the “Saved by the Helmet” program.

ZANE STATE TRAINING SITE OPENS

Motorcycle Ohio opened a new training site in Muskingum County at Zane State College. Officials held a ribbon cutting ceremony and press conference in April. The location in Zanesville was part of Motorcycle Ohio’s mobile training program in 2014 and 2015, and Zane State College wanted to continue the partnership as a regular training site.

Shelley Zimmerman, dean of health, public service and social sciences, noted that Zane State has an ongoing commitment to safety on campus, and this partnership extends its reach into the broader communities it serves. She added that motorcyclists are drawn to the Zane State College area, which is near the starting point of OH-555, a 36-mile scenic byway known as the “triple nickel.”

MOTORCYCLE OHIO



TRAINING RETURNS TO ODOT AND ODPS

Motorcycle Ohio held a soft opening for two new training sites in Franklin County, located at the Ohio Department of Public Safety and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). These locations were previously part of the mobile training program from the late 1980s until 2018. Motorcycle Ohio, in collaboration with ODPS, ODOT, and Mount Carmel School of Nursing, is reintroducing these sites to offer more community-based training for Ohio riders. The large space allows for up to three training classes to occur simultaneously. Full capacity operation is set to begin in March 2025.



SAVED BY THE HELMET

Riders over 18 are not required by Ohio law to wear a helmet, but Motorcycle Ohio aims to promote and increase awareness of the life-saving value of motorcycle helmets by acknowledging riders who wear proper protective gear through the “Saved by The Helmet” program. Motorcycle Ohio collaborates with Safe Communities Coalitions, law enforcement agencies, and the public to identify riders who qualify for this recognition. This year, **11 presentations** were held for **28 riders** who survived serious crashes while wearing a helmet.

MOTORCYCLE OHIO

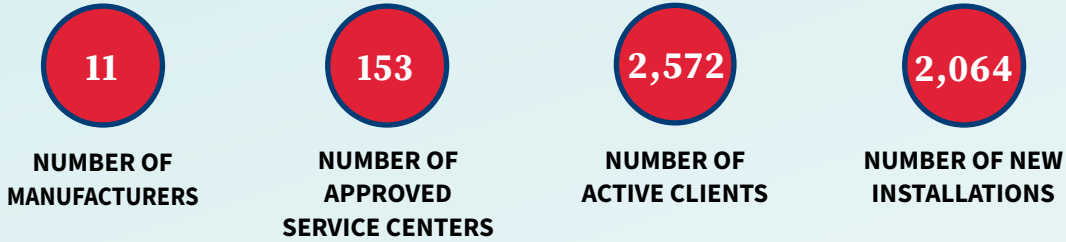
Presentations were held at events across the state including the Ohio River Sternwheel Festival in Marietta and minor league baseball games for the Akron RubberDucks, Chillicothe Paints, and Dayton Dragons.

One notable presentation was held at the American Motorcyclist Association’s Vintage Motorcycle Days at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington. Eight riders were honored after they were injured in seven separate incidents. This event marked Motorcycle Ohio’s largest “Saved by The Helmet” presentation in its 36-year history.



IGNITION INTERLOCK

BY THE NUMBERS



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Under Ohio law, an Ignition Interlock Device (IID) may be installed before driving privileges are reinstated in the following situations:

- May be ordered by the court for the first and second operating a vehicle while impaired (OVI) conviction.
- Mandated for third and subsequent OVI.
- Mandated condition for limited driving privileges.

The Ohio Traffic Safety Office carefully monitored the progress of House Bill 37, also known as Liv's Law, which increases penalties for OVI and vehicular homicide crimes. The bill was originally introduced into the Ohio Legislature in 2023 and was passed in December of 2024. Previous legislation required the installation of an IID for third or subsequent OVI convictions in Ohio. House Bill 37 requires the devices to be installed in an offender's vehicle after two or more OVI convictions when granted unlimited driving privileges, and may be ordered by a judge to be installed with limited driving privileges. Additional provisions of the legislation would require an IID for refusal-to-consent convictions, and for drivers who were previously charged with OVI but were convicted of a lesser charge and received a subsequent OVI conviction.

CAMPAIGNS & INITIATIVES

BUCKLE UP WITH BRUTUS

Motor vehicle crashes are one of the leading causes of death for children, and research from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows that 46% of child safety seats are misused. Common issues include children being in the wrong type of child safety seats for their ages and sizes, and car seats being installed improperly, both of which leave children vulnerable to injury in a crash.

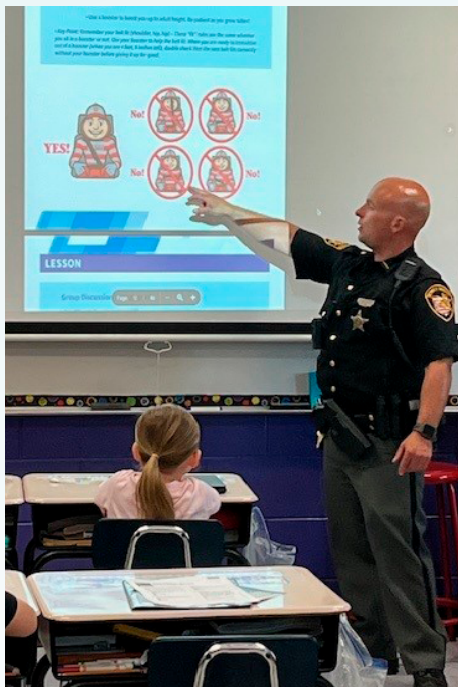


CAMPAIGNS & INITIATIVES

- Of the child passengers (age 13 and under) killed in crashes in Ohio in 2023, some 44% were unrestrained.
- Eighty-four children, the highest number in five years in Ohio, were seriously injured in 2023 because they were not wearing seat belts or using car seats or booster seats.

With the understanding that wearing a seat belt is the simplest step anyone can take to limit injuries or even survive a crash, OTSO announced a new statewide elementary school seat belt program called “Buckle Up with Brutus.” OTSO partnered with Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and The Ohio State University to design the curriculum intended to reach second- and third-grade students. School resource officers use activities, worksheets, and a video of Brutus’ Seat Belt Boogie to deliver the safety lesson in schools. Students also learn strategies for being good passengers in vehicles.

The program was first announced at the 2024 Ohio Traffic Safety Summit and launched statewide ahead of the 2024-2025 school year. It is also one of the recommendations from the Safety Belt Task Force, which released a full report on seat belt use in Ohio in May 2024. OTSO partnered with the Ohio School Resource Officers Association to share the program, and by the end of 2024, more than 4,000 students in 28 schools had seen the presentation in just the first half of the school year. During that time, deputies from Athens, Clark, Columbiana, and Pike counties sheriff’s offices presented “Buckle Up with Brutus” in elementary schools. Officers from city police departments including Bryan, Cuyahoga Falls, Dublin, Marion, New Albany, Springfield Township, and Wooster also led presentations in their schools in 2024.



CAMPAIGNS & INITIATIVES

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY CAMPAIGN “STOP MEANS STOP”

OTSO introduced a new public awareness campaign to remind drivers about Ohio’s school bus traffic safety laws. “Stop Means Stop” is focused on the school bus stop law, which requires drivers to stop for school buses when they are picking up or dropping off children. This campaign is one of the 17 recommendations from Governor Mike DeWine’s School Bus Safety Working Group, which released a full report with recommendations in January 2024.

Data from the Ohio State Highway Patrol shows an increase in citations to drivers who illegally pass a stopped school bus.

- In 2023, Troopers issued 735 citations to drivers who failed to stop for a school bus, an 18% increase from 2022.
- On average, Ohio State Highway Patrol Troopers issue 627 citations for this offense each year.

“Stop Means Stop” educational materials are available for schools, law enforcement agencies, and other entities across the state in a promotional toolkit. Printed materials include a poster, two-sided fact sheet, and rack card. The toolkit also includes social media content and an informational video produced by OTSO.

The campaign was well-received across Ohio when it was launched in early August. Since then, the Ohio Traffic Safety Office distributed 1,583 campaign materials, including 877 posters, 383 packs of fact sheets, and 530 packs of rack cards. DPS social media accounts shared 200 posts with the campaign hashtag #STOPmeansSTOP generating 614,988 impressions, and 33,630 engagements. The public service announcement video was viewed 1,838 times on YouTube alone, or about 11 views per day on average.



STOPPING FOR A SCHOOL BUS Ohio Revised Code 4511.75

A driver must stop for a school bus when the school bus is dropping off or picking up students. When a school bus driver is preparing to stop the bus, he or she activates four yellow lights on the front and two on the rear. The lights continue to flash until the bus comes to a stop. Other vehicles are not required to stop until the school bus has stopped and its red flashing lights are activated.

When the bus comes to a stop, the lights stop flashing and the driver enters or leaves the bus. The bus is equipped with a stop sign that automatically extends to the left side of the bus. If required to stop.

School bus drivers who pass their bus will receive a citation, and enforcement, which carries a fine and points.



MEANS STOP

When you see this sign, it's
Time to STOP — it's the LAW.

Know When to Stop:

- Two-lane roadway (non-divided highway) - vehicles on both sides of the roadway must stop in either direction.
- Four-lane highways (divided or non-divided highway) - vehicles traveling the opposite direction of the bus do not have to stop. Those traveling the same direction as the bus must stop.
- Stop at least 10 feet away and wait for the lights to stop.



On roads with four or more lanes, Ohio law requires that school buses pick up students on the same side of the road that the passenger lives on.

CAMPAIGNS & INITIATIVES



SHIFTING GEARS

OTSO is expanding an educational program aimed at preventing drug-impaired teen driving. “Shifting Gears: The Blunt Truth About Marijuana & Driving” uses science-based information to explain the physical and cognitive processes that are affected by cannabis and how those effects can impact the ability to drive safely. The curriculum was developed by AAA Northeast, and has been taught in Ohio with support from Students Against Destructive Decisions. OTSO now aims to expand the program’s reach by reimbursing public agencies and non-profits for delivering the program to students.

In December 2024, OTSO announced it will be working with SADD to train “Shifting Gears” presenters, who can then immediately deliver the program in schools. OTSO will then reimburse qualifying presenters \$200 per class. Presenters can be school resource officers, law enforcement representatives, health educators, or other safety professionals.

OHIO TRAFFIC SAFETY COUNCIL

Established in 2020, the Ohio Traffic Safety Council includes representatives from federal, state, county, and local agencies along with traffic safety partners and advocates who are all dedicated to making Ohio’s roadways safer. Together, they are working to identify the leading causes of motor vehicle crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities on Ohio’s roadways and to take action to save lives using proven education, engineering, enforcement, emergency response, and public policy countermeasures.

In 2024, the Council started preparing its shift to a new structure focused on action-plan items that will be organized around the five “Safe System” objectives developed by The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. These objectives include safer people, safer vehicles, safer speeds, safer roads, and post-crash care. The “Safe System” approach objectives create multiple layers of protection to lessen the likelihood of a serious or fatal injury in the event of a crash. Council members met in November to discuss new project proposals, which include strategies to reduce drug-impaired driving, promoting safer speeds in urban areas, streamlining fatal crash investigations, and others. The new structure officially begins in 2025.



CAMPAIGNS & INITIATIVES

GRANT FOR LYFT RIDESHARE PROGRAM

In an effort to prevent impaired driving around the Halloween and Thanksgiving holidays, OTSO offered \$20 rideshare credits to drivers to encourage them to plan ahead for a safe ride home. The rideshare credits were paid for by a \$20,000 grant from the Governors Highway Safety Association in partnership with Lyft.

The office launched a pilot program in the Central Ohio area around Halloween. The goal was to reach young people in the Columbus area through social media posts and ads. Between Oct. 19 and Nov. 1, some 184 Lyft rides were completed in the eligible area under this program, and paid media ads received 279,152 impressions.

The rideshare program was expanded statewide in November and timed to begin the night before the Thanksgiving holiday, which is typically one of the most popular days during the year for alcohol consumption. Credits were available through the holiday weekend during Ohio State's rivalry football game against Michigan in Columbus. Once again, social media ads raised awareness and directed the target audience to the code to use in the Lyft app. Between Nov. 25 and Dec. 1, some 1,172 Lyft rides were completed, and paid media ads received 971,339 impressions. In addition, the Thanksgiving week campaign led to a significant amount of earned media.



This Halloween, celebrate responsibly and don't drive if you've been drinking -

get a Lyft!



If you need a safe ride, \$20 Lyft credits are available to Central Ohioans this Halloween. Go to otso.ohio.gov/lyft to learn more.
*Limited supply of codes available






Make a game plan for a safe ride...

get a Lyft!



Plan ahead for a safe ride home! \$20 Lyft credits are available to Ohioans for a limited time. Go to otso.ohio.gov/lyft to learn more.
*You only have 24 hours to take your ride after adding the code to your Lyft app.






CAMPAIGNS & INITIATIVES

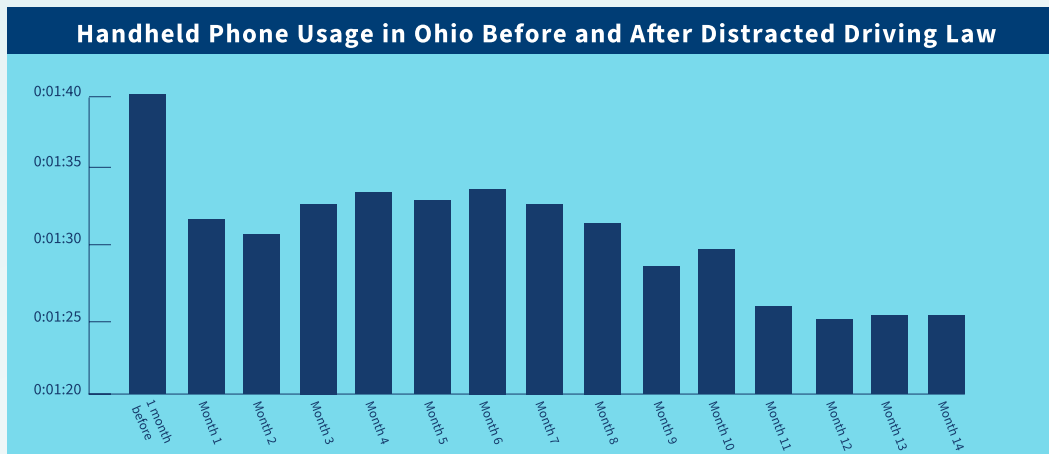
PHONES DOWN. IT'S THE LAW.

The Ohio Traffic Safety Office is part of a multi-agency effort to inform and educate all drivers about the changes to the distracted driving law, which took effect on April 4, 2023. The law makes it illegal in most cases for drivers to use or hold a cell phone or electronic device while driving. The slogan, “Phones Down. It’s The Law,” is the focus of a video public service announcement that appears on television, video streaming services, and social media.

**Phones Down
It's the Law**

Educational materials, including brochures, talking points, and posters, are distributed to interested parties and partners upon request.

Statistics show continued progress in ending distracted driving on Ohio’s roads. In October 2024, Cambridge Mobile Telematics (CMT) data showed handheld phone use and screen interaction while driving dropped 10% in Ohio since the new law took effect. At that time, CMT estimated the law had already prevented 4,014 injuries, 33 deaths, and \$283 million in economic damages.



Under Ohio’s law, first-time offenders who complete the state’s online distracted driving safety course are eligible to have the fine and points waived when they submit their course-completion certificate to the court. OTSO is responsible for the content of this free course, which is available on its website. In the first year of enforcement, approximately 15,000 people completed the course. Seventy-five percent of users were from Ohio, but people from 44 different states also completed the course.

CAMPAIGNS & INITIATIVES

SAFE STREETS, SAFE SCHOOLS

The Ohio Traffic Safety Office and another DPS division, the Ohio School Safety Center continued their partnership this year for the “Safe Streets, Safe Schools” campaign. The goal is to equip Ohio students of all ages with the resources they need to stay safe from the moment they leave their houses to head to school, at school, and until they arrive safely back home.

In 2024, OTSO and OSSC launched the Game of the Week quick click challenge as part of the “Safe Streets, Safe Schools” campaign. The social media challenge encouraged student participants to conduct a seat belt relay, and challenge their athletic rivals to beat their times. The divisions also began developing new tools to help make “Safe Streets, Safe Schools” an ongoing program in all schools. Handouts, social media content, and a 30-second video public service announcement are available on the campaign website.



**Ohio Traffic
Safety Office**



**School Safety
Center**

OLDER ROAD USER EMPHASIS AREA

The Ohio Traffic Safety Office leads the Older Road User Emphasis Area, which is one of 14 emphasis areas in the state’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The Ohio Department of Transportation oversees the SHSP with the guidance of a multi-organizational steering committee. The SHSP runs on five-year plan implementation cycles and 2024 marked the fourth year of the current cycle (2021-2025). The Older Road User Emphasis Area breaks its action plan into four subcommittees: Education, Alternative Transportation; Medically At-Risk Drivers, and Infrastructure.

During 2024, the Older Road User Emphasis Area accomplished the following:

- **Education:**
 - Participated in outreach events, including the Ohio State Fair’s Senior Day.
 - Created and distributed Older Driver Safety Awareness Week social media toolkit, newsletter copy with graphic and statewide news release.
 - Created CarFit materials, including training fliers, event fliers, event materials, and on-site event signage.
- **Alternative Transportation:**
 - Provided information to have the Safe Routes to Age in Place initiative added to the Global Database of Age-friendly Practices.
- **Medically At-Risk Drivers:**
 - Updated the training video and officer screening card for Driver Orientation Screen for Cognitive Impairment (DOSCI).

CAMPAIGNS & INITIATIVES

- Provided DOSCI card and training video for distribution to all Ohio State Highway Patrol posts.
 - Worked with the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy to include DOSCI in the new peace officer training curriculum, and a course for current peace officers called “Dementia and Related Disorders”.
 - Created an Older Driver Safety Tips handout.
 - Created a “Concerned About Someone’s Driving” roadmap graphic on the Older Road User landing page, and in printed brochure form.
- **Infrastructure:**
 - Approved 23 pedestrian safety-related applications via the Systemic program, totaling approximately \$34 million. These included projects such as enhanced crossings, multi-use paths, refuge islands, curb bump outs, and more.
 - Updated documentation on implementing Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPI), and created an LPI fact sheet, which is posted on the Older Road User landing page.
 - Researched how other states address older road user safety through specific programs/funding.

OUTREACH EVENTS

The Ohio Traffic Safety Office regularly participates in a variety of community outreach events as a way to connect with partners, increase visibility and bring educational resources directly to the public. OTSO values its partnerships and working relationships with other agencies and organizations and is continually looking for ways to increase safety for all road users in Ohio. This year, the Office continued to grow established relationships and cultivate new ones to prevent crashes through education and awareness.



Some of the events attended by OTSO staff include:

- Artiflex Safety Fair
- Columbus Blue Jackets Scoring for Safety Days with SADD and FCCLA
- Bureau of Workers’ Compensation Safety Expo
- Columbus City Schools Back to School Resource Fair
- Ford Driving Skills for Life
- Ohio School Safety Summit
- Rise Up Cbus
- Ross County Safety Council Meetings
- Safe Streets Central Ohio

OUTREACH EVENTS

HILLTOP SUMMER BASH

The Ohio Department of Public Safety hosted the “Hilltop Summer Safety Bash” in June and invited community members for a day of free family activities and safety resources, just as the summer break was getting underway. The Ohio Traffic Safety Office engaged visitors with a virtual reality driving simulator, where participants could practice safe driving by following prompts in a simulated environment. OTSO and Motorcycle Ohio also provided free traffic safety materials and information about teen driver training and motorcycle training.



OUTREACH EVENTS

OHIO STATE FAIR

Staff from The Ohio Traffic Safety Office and Motorcycle Ohio each staffed a booth at the Ohio Department of Public Safety's display for all 12 days of the Ohio State Fair. Motorcycle Ohio brought one of its new training bikes to display and held a raffle where fairgoers could win a free training class. OTSO challenged visitors to participate in the "Quick Click Challenge" and try their virtual reality driving simulator. OTSO also provided visitors with education materials about distracted driving, advanced teen driving training, and the "Buckle Up With Brutus" program.

