

Young Drivers new report says Graduated Driver Licensing ('GDL') is failing where it matters most: The Practice Gap

Young Drivers Labs and Research Inc. identifies verified hours, digital logbooks, and financial supports to close the "Practice Gap."

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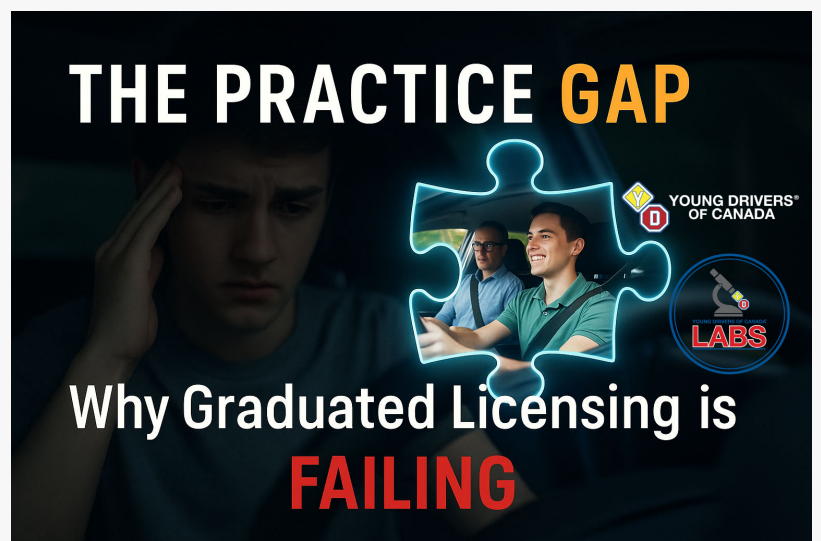
EINPresswire.com/ -- Young Drivers Labs and Research Inc. (YDLRI), the research division of [Young Drivers of Canada](#), today released The [Practice Gap](#): Critical System Failure in Graduated Driver Licensing Programs Worldwide" (22 August 2025), a comparative analysis by Bapreet Kaur and Andrew Marek. The report's

bottom line is blunt: Graduated Driver Licensing ("GDL") works—but most jurisdictions aren't ensuring enough real world practice before solo driving. "The fundamental conclusion is stark: GDL systems worldwide are failing to achieve their full potential because people simply do not practice enough," the report concludes.

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Young Drivers recently released Drivers Coach, an AI enhanced iOS App to bridge the Practice Gap - to make Graduated Driver Licensing more effective through driving practice accessible to every family"

*Andrew Marek, CGO & CAO
Young Drivers of Canada*



"The Practice Gap" - Young Drivers Report on Graduated License Effectiveness

"GDL reduces risk. The bottleneck is practice," said Andrew Marek, Chief Growth & AI Officer at Young Drivers of Canada, "When we pair structured GDL with enough verified practice, new drivers are safer from day one. Without the practice foundation, we're leaving proven safety benefits on the table."

WHAT THE DATA SHOWS

- GDL is effective, but underused where practice is concerned. Across programs, crash risk for the youngest

drivers drops 20–40%, and fatal crashes among 16 year old drivers decline 11%. Those gains are undermined when learners arrive at road tests under practiced.

- Practice requirements are a patchwork. NSW, Australia requires 120 hours under age 25; U.S. states range roughly 0–100 hours; the U.K. sets no minimum; Germany leans on professional instruction with no extra supervised practice requirement.

- Test failures point to practice gaps, not policy design. The most common reasons for failing in Great Britain—ineffective junction observations, mirror use, moving off, positioning, and traffic light response—are exactly the skills built through varied, repeated practice with feedback.

- More supervised practice = safer early driving. Recent evidence links greater supervised practice volume to fewer crashes/near crashes and risky events in the first months of independent driving—the first statistically significant relationship of its kind. “This is where policy must catch up with evidence,” said Andrew Marek.

- The stakes are large. U.S. modeling estimates 2,000 lives and \$13.6B saved annually with comprehensive GDL; each roadway fatality carries average discounted economic costs of \$1.6M (or \$11.3M including quality of life).

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE NOW

“Set the bar where the evidence points,” said Andrew Marek. “We’re calling on regulators to require 100–120 verified hours before solo driving, and to verify those hours digitally so they’re real, not just reported.”

1. Adopt evidence based practice minimums. Target 100–120 verified hours across diverse conditions (including night), following best practice jurisdictions.

“...a **statistically significant** positive relationship between supervised practice volume and teen driver safety.



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Supervised Practice Volume = Teen Driver Safety

Failures stem from **insufficient practice** and inadequate skill development, not system design flaws.



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Driving Test Failures Stem from Insufficient Practice and Inadequate Skill Development

2. Require digital logbooks and feedback. As shown in the report, digital systems (GPS verification, supervisor sign off, automated tracking) beat paper on integrity and engagement—and can add coaching, badges, and progress visualization that keep teens practicing. “Digital logbooks turn a compliance chore into a guided learning journey,” added Andrew Marek.
3. Fund and incentivize practice. Ease cost and time barriers via subsidized lessons, community options for vehicles/instructors, and insurance incentives tied to verified preparation. “If we want more practice, we have to make it possible for every family,” said Andrew Marek.
4. Modernize training. Blend in simulators/VR and structured hazard perception programs that match how today’s learners build skills and expect feedback, where Young Drivers released ["Drivers Coach"](#) an AI enhanced iOS App to bridge this Practice Gap.

ABOUT THE REPORT

The Practice Gap: Critical System Failure in Graduated Driver Licensing Programs Worldwide reviews global GDL models (Australia, U.S., U.K., Germany, New Zealand and others), analyzes test failure patterns, synthesizes safety and cost evidence, and outlines a practical roadmap to ensure learners gain the quantity and quality of practice needed for safe, independent driving.

About Young Drivers Labs and Research Inc. (YDLRI)

YDLRI is the research division of Young Drivers of Canada, focusing on evidence-based insights that improve novice driver safety and program outcomes. Founded in 1970, Young Drivers of Canada is Canada’s largest driver training organization, dedicated to reducing collisions through advanced driver education. With more than 140 service areas coast-to-coast, YDC has trained over 1.4 million Canadians in collision avoidance techniques, defensive driving, and lifelong safe driving habits.

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