

Attitude Influences Behavior

Although vehicle crashes can take place on any type of road situation, a great number of serious incidents happen within the rural environment. The specific conditions of rural roads such as gravel, hills, soft shoulders, blind intersections, sharing the road with large farm implements, and others require additional attention to be safe while riding and driving in the country.

ACTIVITY

Attitude Behavior Continuum

Targeted Age: Middle School through High School

Learning Objective: The students will determine their own attitudes toward issues related to riding and driving on rural roads.

Concept: Attitudes and behaviors often influence each other. Before behaviors can change in a positive direction, a positive attitude is essential. Recognizing the difference between attitude (mental point of view) and behavior (actions) is crucial to understanding the process of staying safe.

You will need:

- ▶ Writing material
- ▶ List of 5 to 10 attitudes related to rural roads (A list is supplied, but you can make your own list more specific to your community.)
- ▶ 3 large cards with the numbers "1", "5", and "10" on each respective card

Tape the "1" card on one wall with the "10" card on the opposite wall. Place the "5" card in the middle. Have participants number a piece of paper from 1 to 5-10 (whatever number of statements you choose). Read each statement asking each person to individually put a number from 1 to 10 down beside each number. A one means total disagreement and a ten represents total agreement, with five meaning a neutral position. A three would be leaning toward disagreement and a seven would be leaning toward agreement. Emphasize there are no right or wrong answers.

When the recording is completed, have everyone stand up with their answers in hand. Instruct them to go to the number card closest to their response for the number one statement. If someone asks what the statement was, respond that you will read it as soon as everyone is positioned. If controversial statements are used there will be a wide variety of responses. Facilitate a discussion about why people answered the way they did. At the end of each statement discussion, participants may move to a different number if the discussion swayed your number choice. Repeat for each statement. Encourage discussion about attitudes and behaviors.

Suggested Statements:

- ▶ My favorite color vehicle is silver.
- ▶ Pickups are cooler vehicles than cars.
- ▶ I always wear my seat belt while in a moving vehicle.
- ▶ Having people in the vehicle while I'm driving is not a distraction to me.
- ▶ I would never drive a vehicle after drinking an alcoholic beverage.
- ▶ Parents are the best driving instructors.
- ▶ Riding on a tractor with a friend is dangerous to both the driver and the passenger.
- ▶ Speeding is never okay.
- ▶ While driving and coming up behind a slow moving vehicle, I'd pass it as soon as possible.
- ▶ There are too many laws that restrict youth drivers.



Attitude Influences Behavior (continued)

Ten statements take a lot of time to have an active discussion after each statement is read. Five to seven questions is a better number. A silly question (type or color of vehicle) at the beginning will make the exercise more fun and help the participants understand the process. Gradually increase the complexity of the questions. Have statements worded both positively and negatively.

During the discussion address issues such as:

- ▶ Which of the statements refer to an attitude and which refer to a behavior
- ▶ Make a connection between one of the attitude statements and one of the behavior statements (Example: Wearing a seat belt (behavior) is dependent upon whether my parents are in the vehicle (attitude).
- ▶ Items out of the driver's control (examples: laws, other vehicles sharing the road, etc.)
- ▶ Items within the driver's control (examples: allowing passengers, following laws, etc.)



Students at an Iowa high school demonstrate the Attitude Behavior Continuum with middle school students. Video of this demonstration is available on YouTube. Search for "Farm Safety For Just Kids."

