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## NHTSA Urges Families and Caregivers to Talk With Older Drivers About Safe Driving

**[City, State]**  — Older adults (65 and older) account for approximately 18% of the U.S. population. For this demographic, mobility and independence are vital to staying engaged and active in their communities. Age-related changes or medications may impact an older individual’s driving ability. The U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration offers information and guidance to help the families and caregivers of older drivers have open and honest conversations with their older loved ones to encourage roadway safety for years to come.

Between 2014 and 2023, the population of people 65 and older in the United States increased by 28%. During this same time period, the number of older drivers involved in fatal crashes increased 41%, while the number of older licensed drivers increased 38%. In 2023 alone, there were 7,891 people 65 and older killed in traffic crashes in the United States, accounting for 19% of all traffic fatalities. Among the older population, the traffic fatality rate per 100,000 population in 2023 was highest for the 80-to-84-and-older age group.

“The topic of driving may feel sensitive for many older drivers,” said **[Local Official]**. “For this reason, we encourage family members and caregivers to have a conversation about safe driving with the older adults in their lives. Helping older drivers understand how physical and cognitive changes may affect driving abilities can help extend independent driving or determine how best to handle driving scenarios,” **[he/she]** said.

Family members and caregivers may also support an older driver by planning ahead for safe mobility beyond the driver’s seat by exploring alternate transportation options that best meet their needs. Delaying these conversations can make it more difficult and stressful for all involved. Families and caregivers can alleviate negative feelings by showing compassion and empathy during conversations with older drivers. Ultimately, this will make for a more empowering and productive conversation.

Driving is a complex task and it is important to never base driving ability on age. Instead, understand that everyone will experience aging differently, with changes that may include reduced strength, flexibility, vision, and cognition. It is imperative for both older drivers and families to be aware of these changes. Safe driving ability can also be affected by certain medications or medical conditions. Families and caregivers can support an older driver by attending medical appointments and by encouraging them to share any driving-related concerns with their healthcare provider.

For more information on older driver safety, visit [NHTSA.gov/OlderDrivers](https://www.nhtsa.gov/olderdrivers).

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