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Parents' bad driving behaviour rubs off on young drivers

An increasing number of young drivers have admitted to unsafe driving behaviour while behind the wheel with many of their bad habits being picked up from their parents

RACQ's Young Drivers Survey found drivers, aged 24 or under, who witness their parents' unsafe driving behaviours are far more likely to carry out those same behaviours themselves.

Of the young drivers who reported seeing their parents driving tired, 65% admitted to driving tired themselves, compared with only 22% of those whose parents did not drive when tired.

RACQ Education Officer Dave Webber said parents should be aware that they are always role models for their children.

"Parents should not underestimate the importance of their influence when it comes to the habits and behaviours of our young drivers," Mr Webber said.

"Your kids are watching you the whole time, whether you are conscious of it or not."

The survey found 65% of young drivers who reported seeing their parents speed, admitted to speeding themselves, compared with 24% of those whose parents did not speed.

Another concerning find was 43% of young drivers who reported seeing their parents driving while not wearing a seatbelt also did the same, compared to just 1% who had taken this risk after not seeing their parents drive without a seatbelt.

Mr Webber said speed, fatigue and driving without a seatbelt were major factors in serious and fatal traffic crashes.

"Speeding is one of the Fatal Five and driving just 5km/hr above the speed limit is enough to double the risk of crash," he said.

"The decisions that young drivers make behind the wheel have serious, real-world consequences and parents need to be aware that their driving behaviour has a significant impact on how their children behave on the road."

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RACQ is Queensland's largest club and peak independent motoring organisation. We were formed in 1905 to represent the interests of the State's first motorists and today campaign for safer drivers, vehicles and roads on behalf of more than 1.7 million members who own the Club. We offer those members a vast range of motoring, insurance, banking, entertainment and travel services and benefits, and each year respond to more than a million calls for roadside assistance.