

# Bad driving habits start early

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A new study will investigate whether children learn driving habits from their parents, years before they get behind the wheel.

Dr Mark Sullman from the Department of Human Resource Management says the research involves sending out questionnaires to 13 and 14 year olds throughout New Zealand. He plans to follow up with the same children in two years' time when they have started driving. Dr Sullman is working with researchers at the Herriot-Watt University in Edinburgh and the driver Education Foundation.

He says the aim is to find out whether drivers develop their attitudes to driving before they start driving – with a focus on what they may learn from their parents.

“There’s some evidence to suggest that children learn their attitudes to speeding and dangerous driving from their parents.

“If your father drives like a maniac, it’s more than likely you’re going to drive like a maniac yourself,” he says.

Recent research by the Australian Institute of Family Studies in Victoria found that children who are hyperactive, aggressive and uncooperative are more likely to grow up to be dangerous drivers.

Source: Massey University

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