



GEARED 2DRIVE

District Council of

Grant



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GROUP



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Geared2Drive

Making Drivers Licences More Accessible to Disadvantaged Young People

Geared2Drive is a pilot program developed to support young people to gain their provisional driver's licence, which they are unable to gain through their own means. The Geared2Drive program aims to:

- Support young disadvantaged drivers to become licensed by allowing them use of a vehicle on road practise while a volunteer mentor supervises them to meet the needs of learner drivers who require 75 hours of supervised driving experience in various conditions prior to applying for a provisional licence.
- Assist learner drivers who do not have ready access to a suitable supervising driver or vehicle
- Set a foundation for driving through developing basic skills in operating a motor vehicle and getting familiar with vehicle controls
- Develop traffic skills
- Developing low risk driving skills, such as road management, road positioning, decision making and responding to hazards
- Reduce risk of injury and fatalities
- Reduce isolation
- Reduce financial and family barriers to obtaining a vehicle license
- Improve mental and physical well- being of youth by allowing them to travel to network, join in recreational and sporting activities
- Increase the independence and transport options for young people in regional and rural areas to access education, employment and social activities

Geared 2 Drive is based on a successful metropolitan program operated by Helping Young People Achieve (HYPA) and has been revised to reflect the needs of regional and rural young people.

The District Council of Grant was able to attract funding support of \$40,380 from the Community Benefit SA program for a 12 month pilot program. Sponsorship has also been secured from Barry Maney Group for discounted cost of purchasing and maintaining the vehicle, and Scott Group of Companies for discounted fuel.

The project has been developed and is currently 8 months into the 12 month pilot program. As part of the establishment process, the Program purchased a vehicle and developed policies and procedures for the training and induction of volunteer mentors and coordination and induction of the youth to enable access to the vehicle.

In addition, the Geared 2 Drive program focuses on training in safe driving, risk management, communication and managing peer relationships, to minimise the risks young drivers face on our road.

Geared2Drive program outcomes include:

- Setting a foundation for driving through developing basic skills in operating a motor vehicle, and getting familiar with vehicle controls, steering, braking, scanning and reversing
- Develop traffic skills, progressing from simple to more complex environments
- Develop low-risk driving skills, such as speed management, road positioning, decision-making and responding to hazards
- Build on experience in different conditions, such as rain, country roads, motorways and night time
- Increase engagement of youth within the community by providing safe access to services and programs (including community services, employment and education), support social interaction, physical and mental wellbeing

How the program works

Young people aged 16 to 25 years and hold a valid learner's permit are eligible to participate in the Geared 2 Drive Program. Young people can be referred by a school, professional driving instructors, government services, family or self referral.

Referrals are welcome at any time; however time of entry into the program is dependent on volunteer availability.

Participants attend 2 x 1 hour driving sessions per week with volunteer mentors in the new automatic Hyundai i20 which have been fitted with dual brakes for safety. A cost of \$5 per session is applied to encourage ownership and responsibility by participants and to contribute to ongoing program costs.

Volunteers and participants are covered by the District Council of Grant's compulsory third party and fully comprehensive car insurance.

How Young People Get A Licence

As part of the Program, it is important to understand the process and conditions of how young people get their Provisional Licence.

There are 3 levels of accreditation for professional driving instructors, each level determines the extent in which they can sign off on learners Logs Books:

1. Motor driving instructor (driving lessons only)
2. Accredited motor driving instructor
3. Authorised motor driving instructor/examiner (can conduct VORT)

A private supervising adult and any of the above can mentor learners in an effort to achieve their 75 hours of required driving experience, (including 15 hours night driving)

There are 2 ways in which a learner driver can obtain their P1 licence:

1. Competency Based Training – conducted by an accredited or an authorised motor driving instructor/examiner (tasks can be signed off at back of log book – no on road test required)
2. Vehicle On Road Test (VORT) – a motor driving instructor can only provide driving lessons in preparation for a VORT test which needs to be conducted by an authorised motor driving instructor/examiner.

Outcomes for first 8 months (from 1/1/13-11/9/13)

Volunteers

- 17 expressions of interest
- 5 fully trained:
 - 2 retirees
 - 1 farm manager
 - 1 semi retired
 - 1 part time employed

Participants

- 24 expressions of interest:
 - 2 referrals from Families SA
 - 3 referrals from professional driving schools
 - 5 referrals from DEEWA for migrant students
 - 9 self referrals
 - 6 young people who self referred have made no further contact
- 5 ongoing participants
- 3 participants completed program, achieved required driving hours, and have obtained P1 Licence

Volunteers

Council undertakes screening and training for suitable volunteers involved in mentoring. It is preferred that Volunteers in Geared 2 Drive be available for at least 2 x 1 hour block of time on a weekday per week for a minimum of 6 months. This enables the volunteer mentors and participants to develop a confident and productive relationship.

As part of our Risk Management Plan, Council has determined that the legal requirements of a supervising driver will be:

- 25 years and over
- held a full (non-probationary) car licence for the past 2 years
- not be subject to any good behaviour conditions
- Cannot have a Blood Alcohol Concentration of 0.5 or above (0.00 required for Geared 2 Drive, and breath testing is completed prior to each driving session)

Council provides the following Screening and Training for Geared 2 Drive Volunteers:

- Complete an application form
- Attend an interview
- National Police Clearance
- Department for Communities and Social Inclusion Clearance
- Attend all components of G2D Volunteer Training (includes an “in-class” road rules refresher, child safe environments and an introduction to DCG and G2D specifics)
- Achieve competency in an on-road driving assessment

Participants

Geared 2Drive provides an opportunity for young people aged 16 to 25 with a current Learner’s permit, who otherwise lack the support to do so, to achieve the required supervised driving hours in order to be eligible to attain a provisional driving licence.

Eligibility for Participants:

- Aged 16 to 25 years (inclusive)
- Hold a current Learners Driving Licence
- Have limited access to a road worthy vehicle or suitable supervising driver
- Have completed a sufficient number of professional driving lessons to be declared competent as safely operating a vehicle under volunteer supervision

The Program recommends that participants have a minimum of 3 professional driving lessons, however less will be considered where the participant has significant driving experience (in excess of 20 hours logged) and has a successful participates in at least one professional lesson and obtains a competency report.

The Program also encourages professional driving lessons continue in conjunction with the mentor lessons. This supports the learner driving experience and ensures great outcomes for our young people. Once a young person is accepted into the program, they will be required to attend a free pre-entry workshop which covers road safety, communication, dealing with peer influence, cooperation and decision making.

Barriers Identified By the Program

- Cost and access to professional driving lessons to be eligible for the Geared 2 Drive program and to prepare for P1 Licence CBT and VORT is prohibitive at \$80-\$100 per 1 hour lesson, with an average of 8-12 lessons required to prepare a learner driver to progress to P1
- Cost of obtaining a Learners Permit can be around \$100
- Some instructors not informing young people that they are unable to sign off on Competency Based Training driving tasks in the back of the log book
- Cost of a VORT test can be a barrier at \$120+ for each test, over and above professional driving lessons at \$80-\$100
- Driving instructors are not required to have a DCSI check or to have a Child Safe environment certificate
- There is no requirement for learner drivers (or any licence renewals) to have eye tests, which is proving to be a safety issue when some young people have either never had or not had a recent eye sight test to determine sight quality.
- Motor driving instructors, who conduct driving lessons only, are not regularly checked or audited as the other two tiers of driving instructors to maintain a benchmark level of quality service.

Current Activities

- The management working party have received grant funding from District Council of Grant and City of Mount Gambier staff fundraising, Stand Like Stone Foundation and the Motor Accident Commission to establish a fund to support professional driving lessons, licence fees and driving tests to enable disadvantaged and disengaged learner driver to LINK into the Geared 2 Drive and prepare for their P1 licence
- Actively seeking volunteer mentors and participants to link into the program is difficult with financial barriers.
- Council has committed to support the program after the initial 12 month pilot ending 31 December 2013 for an additional 6 months
- Preparing a business plan, to address sustainability, and a sponsorship package to target potential funding partners for the continuation of the program after 30 June 2014

“Being a part of the Geared 2 Drive program has not only given me the opportunity to give back to my community by helping our young people, but has helped me update my driving skills as well”

Geared 2 Drive Volunteer