

# fact sheet

Austin, TX 78701 Mobile Clinic 512-689-0236 safedrivingrehab.com

## Driving “Readiness” Program

### Driver Rehabilitation For Teens & Young Adults

Driving for any new student is dangerous enough but when faced with an additional challenge such as a physical, sensory, cognitive, social or other limitation, the risk is exponentially greater. With any known medical condition, the skills required for safe driving may be affected and should be evaluated before advancing behind the wheel skills. The Occupational Therapy Driving Rehabilitation Specialist with extensive experience is the best professional to assist these individuals and families.

Missy Bell, OTR, DRS has over 25 years working with diverse populations, primarily adolescents and transitional ages. Her driving rehab experience began in 2001. She started a driving readiness program for teens in 2013 which has evolved to include more ages, stages, and disability needs over time. Here is a summary of the DRT program, which is completely individualized to meet client needs and goals.

#### Pre-Screening

- Complete Readiness-to-Drive-Safe (RTDS) Screener and (if applicable) the Adolescent-Fitness-to-Drive-Screener
- Determine if minimum state requirements and Medical Advisory Board guidelines are met

#### Student/Family Interview

- Obtain pertinent medical history and occupational client profile (driving goals, concerns, supports)
- Obtain past therapy and driving history if relevant
- Initiate adaptive behavioral & driver insight Q & A

#### Driving Readiness Screening

- Complete screening of functional vision, hearing, sensorimotor skills, cognition, attention/perception
- Begin Individualized Home Education Program or advance to OT Driver Assessment if appropriate

#### Clinical Driver Assessment

##### -Evaluation of Vision

- Acuity, visual fields, perception, ability to move eyes, visual processing, contrast sensitivity, color recognition, visual motor skills, visual thinking skills

##### -Evaluation of Movement, Sensation, & Reflexes

- Range of motion, strength, tone, reflexes, endurance, grip, coordination, reaction time, endurance, walking speed, balance, transfers, sensation



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#### Evaluation of Cognition & Driving Rules

- Memory, attention, executive function (sequencing, planning, judgment, decision-making), non-verbal or social language/responses, hearing/filtering.
- Sense of direction (or geographic/community orientation) and following of basic driving directions
- Working knowledge of road signs, laws, traffic and pedestrian/biker or peace officer safety guidelines.

#### In The Vehicle/\*Behind The Wheel

- Passenger Level training
- Observational “on road” Assessment
- Driver Ed. collaboration & Caregiver Education

Lastly, an IDP or Individualized Driver Plan (*similar to an Individualized Education Plan*) can be developed for best outcomes with driver training. It may include home program supports and consultation. Driving simulators and in-clinic training is no longer a part of this specialized program. From years of research, we found that students completing in-car functional training with IDPs had better results and higher satisfaction. This also saves valuable resources: time & money. To further make services more accessible, we use a fully mobile clinic (*an adapted hybrid sedan*), have flexible hours, and offer supplementary support service options beyond direct Occupational therapy. To learn more about these options contact Safe Driving & Rehabilitation, LLC and check out: <https://safedrivingrehab.com/blog/drt-then-to-now/>

#### Appropriate Referrals

- High Functioning Autism/Asperger’s or Spectrum Issue
- Attention/Sensory/Anxiety/Mood or related concern
- Learning Difference, Dyslexia, TBI, Stroke or MCI
- Visual, Hearing, or Communication challenge
- Physical limitation, limb loss, short stature
- Other (Cancer, JRA, Diabetes, and more)

If you know of any young person who has a medical or learning difference but wants to drive please let us help. A permit or license is only needed for Behind the Wheel Eval/training. \*A physician’s prescription is required to complete on-road driver evaluation and for any OT adaptive driver training. We also offer full driving rehabilitation and supplemental services for adults of central Texas. (*Please refer to the fact sheet for adult drivers.*)