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It’s a big goal, and as you’ll learn in this report, through focused effort and continuous improvement, we are pursuing a robust agenda designed to truly make a difference.

In 2011, we completed 10 research studies and major projects, all of which expand the body of knowledge about traffic safety and feed advocacy and public education efforts.

Our work to educate road users transforms new findings into practical applications and solutions. Working closely with AAA National and AAA Clubs, we reached millions of AAA members and other motorists through online tools, monthly columns and features, media support, and other efforts.

Working with national media and other communication outlets, we garnered 1.2B media impressions in 2011, building our reputation — and that of the entire AAA family — as a leader in the field of traffic safety.

This year, we will continue our research and education programs, increase the scope and number of research projects, and work with our AAA partners on programs that will reduce the number of crashes and traffic-related deaths we see each year.

Thanks to all of you who support the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety’s work. Your support makes our mission of “saving lives through research and education” possible.
Traffic safety involves managing many factors, including vehicles, roadways, environmental conditions, drivers, and other road users. Finding opportunities where change and knowledge can lead to safety gains and risk reduction for each of these focus areas is fundamental to the AAA Foundation’s mission.

Centers of Excellence

Through its Centers of Excellence, the AAA Foundation focuses on four key areas where new research and innovative approaches can lead to safer roads.

**SAFETY CULTURE**
Fostering a social climate where traffic safety is highly valued and rigorously pursued.

**SENIOR SAFETY AND MOBILITY**
Keeping seniors on the road as long as they can drive safely, and developing transportation options to keep them mobile when driving is no longer appropriate.

**TEEN DRIVER SAFETY**
Finding new ways to help teens manage risks and develop into safe, responsible drivers.

**ROAD SAFETY**
Using innovative safety management tools to inform state and local road authorities, guide road safety investments, and provide motorists with guidance on the safest possible routes.

Although we continue to work on issues related to all aspects of traffic safety, our Centers of Excellence concentrate resources in each focus area. By fostering a collaborative, visionary research agenda, the Foundation develops insightful analyses of critical traffic safety issues, as well as practical tools and approaches for managing risk. And through collaboration with AAA, our research fuels real world accomplishments.
Would crash rates be lower if people put a higher priority on staying engaged while driving than they do on "multitasking" as they drive?

The answer is yes. Crash rates would be lower — possibly 50 percent lower, according to some experts. But, getting there requires a fundamental change in how society perceives and values safety.

The AAA Foundation believes that building a positive traffic safety culture, where all road users perceive safety as a “virtue” that cannot be compromised, is critical to reaching our goal of zero crash-related fatalities. In fact, we’ve become a national leader in promoting an enhanced traffic safety culture.

The Foundation’s annual Traffic Safety Culture Index assesses and benchmarks drivers’ beliefs, values and attitudes about safety issues. As such, it helps us assess the public’s perception of safety issues.

In recent years, for example, we’ve seen growing concern about driving while distracted. Behaviors such as texting and cell phone use behind the wheel have surpassed issues like aggressive driving and drunk driving as a top-of-mind concern for most people. But, the Index also shows that people continue to embrace a “do as I say, not as I do” attitude about traffic safety.

For example, in the 2011 Index, 94 percent of participants said they find typing texts or emails while driving “unacceptable,” yet a quarter of the same group said they have texted behind the wheel in the last 30 days.

Generating media coverage about why people persist in risky behaviors when they “know better” helps the Foundation build awareness and work to build a safer driving society. Often, we leverage new research or data to provide the “hook” for media coverage of important traffic safety issues. This expands public knowledge about safety issues and strengthens our voice as a national traffic safety expert.

Other times, we disseminate educational and informational materials to the public through our work with AAA National, AAA Clubs, and other organizations. Last year, for instance, we released the Traffic Safety Culture Index as part of Heads-Up Driving Week, a collaborative effort with the Foundation, AAA National, and AAA Clubs around the country. This campaign was covered by major networks and newspapers, as well as Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood’s blog. In that single week, millions of Americans learned more about AAA’s dedication to traffic safety — and, how they can reduce risks on the road.

To create greater public awareness, Audi rolled-out a “safe driver pledge” campaign to urge people to give up texting and other distractions. As the program reached a goal of signing up over 30,000 drivers, Audi made a financial contribution to the Foundation that will support new research and education efforts.

We intend to continue tracking public attitudes about traffic safety and finding new tools and partners to expand our reach and support our mission of saving lives and reducing crashes. Through our Safety Culture Center of Excellence, we can begin to change how society perceives traffic safety.
The AAA Foundation believes that while driving is a privilege, mobility is a right. Our goal is to ensure that seniors who are driving do so safely, and that those who can no longer drive safely have good transportation alternatives.

With almost 80 million Americans turning 65 between now and 2030, addressing senior driving is an urgent matter. Anticipating this need, the Foundation established a Center of Excellence on Senior Safety and Mobility to expand and strengthen our focus on issues facing seniors.

Our current work ranges from emerging concerns, such as challenges in managing in-vehicle technologies, to perennial issues, such as making sure that state licensing provisions are fair, scientifically based, and effective. We also support efforts to provide seniors and their families with the tools and information they need to identify and manage risky situations.

One of the Foundation’s key initiatives in the past year has been working to finalize Roadwise Rx, an interactive online tool where visitors can check their prescription and over-the-counter medications for possible side effects or drug interactions. The program is unique in offering information about drug-related impairments that affect driving, such as drowsiness or confusion. According to a recent AAA Foundation study, more than 95 percent of people over 55 regularly take one or more medications that could affect driving, so encouraging seniors to use Roadwise Rx — and talk to their doctors about their medications — provides an important tool that can help millions manage a major risk better.

The Foundation also continues to recommend DriveSharp, an interactive senior-driver brain re-training program developed with Posit Science. Studies suggest that DriveSharp’s unique techniques could help seniors extend their safe-driving careers, while cutting their at-fault crash risk in half.

The Foundation intends to continue with these efforts, and will be working with AAA on programs like Roadwise Rx, Roadwise Review, DriveSharp, and other tools available at SeniorDriving.AAA.com.
They are also particularly susceptible to distractions from passengers in the car and the technologies they love. Through the Teen Driver Safety Center of Excellence, the Foundation looks at how licensing policies and practice behind the wheel can affect teen crash rates. We have also developed tools and strategies for educating and informing young drivers about how they can reduce risks and avoid crashes.

AAA Foundation research continues to expand our understanding of teen driver risks. For example, after a recent study suggested that teens don’t get enough practice in challenging conditions during the supervised phase of licensing, a companion study demonstrated the impact of that lack of experience: Teens are almost 50 percent more likely to crash in the first month of driving than they are after a full year of experience driving on their own, and are nearly twice as likely to crash in those first 30 days than they are after two full years of experience. Additionally, we are working with AAA, NHTSA, CDC, and other organizations to complete a comprehensive real-world evaluation of novice driver education, while promoting state standards to improve the scope and quality of driver education and training.

Reaching teens demands a deep understanding of how messages resonate with young drivers. Recent Foundation research demonstrates that young drivers know and understand the risks associated with texting while driving and respond best to messages that confront them with the consequences of ignoring that knowledge. This has helped AAA identify a values-based message strategy for young drivers that taps into their desire to avoid “looking stupid” by behaving in a way they know is risky.

Finding the right medium for messages is important, too. We work closely with AAA and other traffic safety organizations to support special efforts, such as National Teen Driver Safety Week. Last year, Foundation outreach that week led to national media attention from ABC, CBS, NBC, USA Today, and the Washington Post on key safety priorities.

By leveraging these opportunities, we strengthen our reputation — and that of the larger AAA brand — as an advocate for teen driver safety. Many Foundation tools, including the award-winning Driver-ZED online risk management program, are available through TeenDriving.AAA.com.
No matter how attentive and careful drivers are, everyone makes mistakes. Designing and maintaining roads with safety features that can help drivers minimize or avoid these errors can reduce crash rates and save lives. But, with many different public works projects competing for scarce funding, jurisdictions at all levels need tools to prioritize their road-related resources to address safety issues.

The Road Safety Center of Excellence provides a tool that offers risk-based guidance for these road safety investments. And, through the AAA Foundation-created United States Road Assessment Program (usRAP), the Foundation benchmarks the relative safety of the nation’s roadways. This program has the potential to contribute substantially to enhancing the safety of the U.S. highway network, thus reducing crashes, injuries and insurance claims associated with road risks.

In the past year, usRAP took a major step forward in developing a partnership with the Utah Department of Transportation that will lead to that state being certificated as the first official usRAP member. In Michigan, we are developing a “safety investment plan” with local officials to guide safety investments. In Illinois, usRAP is providing risk-mapping findings to guide the development of county-level strategic highway safety plans. These projects utilize a unique usRAP protocol that can be implemented even when adequate crash data isn’t available, and will ensure that risk assessment informs strategic decisions about road safety improvements, route guidance and road safety management.

Teaching drivers how to manage road conditions is also an important effort. Our past research into engineering concerns like pavement edge drop-offs helps us develop recommendations for how drivers should manage risky conditions and avoid crashes.
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( ) Signifies the year term ends

( ) Signifies first year of service
The AAA Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, supported by tax-deductible contributions from individuals, AAA Clubs, corporations and foundations to continue its important work.

We consistently earn the highest rating from Charity Navigator, and our research and education efforts are making a measurable impact that supports our mission of saving lives.

2011 Operational Revenue
$3,392,000

2011 Expenses
$3,262,000

Voluntary Contributions (61%)
Investments (21%)
Temporarily Restricted (8%)
In-Kind (7%)
Sales (3%)
Research (57%)
Education (23%)
Administration (12%)
Sales (5%)
Fundraising (3%)