



American
Occupational Therapy
Association

Driving and Community Mobility

Focusing on Older Driver Safety and
Community Mobility

Media Toolkit

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Safety Administration and the United States Department of Transportation.

Table of Contents

Introduction
Promoting Driving and Community Mobility
Relevant Hashtags for Social Media Content
Social Media Content Library
Sample Social Media Posts
Sample Tweets
Sample Facebook/LinkedIn Posts
Shareable Graphics
Shareable Videos
Social Media Insight
Social Media Tips
Media Tips and Resources
Communication Tips and Resources
How to Give a Presentation
How to Secure an Interview
Pitching a Story
Interviewing Tips
Storytelling
CarFit Program Communication Tools
Suggested Resources for Exhibitor Displays
References

Introduction

Occupational Therapy in Driving and Community Mobility

Occupational therapy practitioners are experts in addressing the essential and everyday activities of daily living. By including driving and community mobility, practitioners support clients and patients in their goals of participation and engagement in their community.



All occupational therapy practitioners address driving and community mobility in the context of an instrumental activity of daily living (IADL). Interventions build awareness and the initiation of transportation planning by focusing on resources and support services, along with strategies to access safe transportation options as a passenger.

Occupational therapy practitioners have the science-based knowledge to understand progressive conditions and life changes that can affect driving.

The AOTA, with support from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the United States Department of Transportation, continues to emphasize the need for occupational therapy's presence in injury prevention, the prevention of driving disability and driving safety. The Driving and Community Mobility initiative seeks to provide tools and resources that promote the growth of occupational therapy programs and services to address safe mobility and participation in the community as drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and transit users.

Social Media: A Way to Promote Driving

Social media provides an opportunity to expand the message of participation, social engagement, and independence through mobility by building awareness of the role and the importance of occupational therapy's role in older driver safety and community mobility.

This social media toolkit provides content, graphics, videos, and resources that can be shared to promote a driving program in your practice and educate clients, the public, and health care professionals on driving and community mobility.



[Back to top](#)

Promoting Driving and Community Mobility

You can promote driving and community mobility in the following ways:



Share videos on older driver safety and mobility and ways occupational therapy supports community mobility.



Follow AOTA on its various social medial channels.

- Facebook (FB): @AmericanOccupationalTherapyAssociationAOTA
- Twitter: @AOTAInc
- Instagram: @AOTAInc
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/aota>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/AOTAInc>



Follow AOTA partner organizations that actively promote and raise awareness about senior driver safety, disability, driving, or mobility.

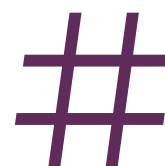
Name of Organization	Social Media Channel	Username
Administration for Community Living	FB, Twitter	@aclgov
American Geriatrics Society (AGS)	Facebook Twitter	@AmericanGeriatricsSociety @AmerGeriatrics
Clearinghouse for Older Road User Safety (ChORUS)	FB, Twitter, LinkedIn	@roadsafeseniors linkedin.com/company/clearinghouse-for-older-road-user-safety
National Disability Institute	Facebook Twitter	@nationaldisability @natdisability
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)	FB, Twitter Instagram	@NHSTAgov
National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association	FB, Twitter LinkedIn	@NMEDAcom linkedin.com/company/nmeda/
Plan for the Road Ahead	Facebook	@planfortheroadahead



Share posts from AOTA and partner organizations that highlight driving, driver safety, mobility, and senior independence.

Relevant Hashtags for Social Media Content

Including hashtags to your messages broadens your reach and audience.



#AOTADriverSafety

#CommunityMobility

#DriverSafety

#OlderDrivers

#OTDriverRehabSpecialist

#SeniorDrivers

Event-Specific Hashtags to Raise Awareness and Increase Exposure

Observed Month	Hashtag
February	#NationalSeniorIndependenceMonth
March	#disabilityawarenessmonth
May	#OlderAmericansMonth ([supported by the Administration for Community Living]) #NationalMobilityAwarenessMonth
August	8/21: #SeniorCitizensDay 8/21: #WorldSeniorCitizensDay
October	10/1: #InternationalDayofOlderPersons
December	#AOTAOlderDriverSafetyAwarenessWeek #ODSAW21 (First week in December) Note: Change the two-digit year to reflect the current hashtag

[Back to top](#)



The social media content library provides sample posts, graphics, and resources for occupational therapy practitioners and other health professionals to share on social media in support of older driver safety and the independence that comes with community mobility.

You are encouraged to personalize the message to direct your audience back to your own websites, driving programs, social media channels. Remember to include your contact information.

[Back to top](#)

Sample Social Media Posts

Sample Tweets

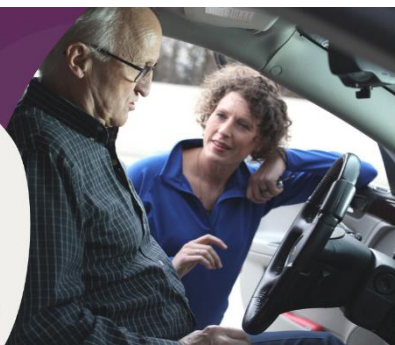
- Driving towards independence means providing the care and solutions needed to keep **#olderdrivers** mobile.
- **#Occupationaltherapy** can benefit **#seniordrivers** in maintaining a safe driving environment, encouraging overall **#communitymobility**, and promoting continued quality of life.
- Driving provides freedom and independence, adds to quality of life, and encourages **#communitymobility**.
- Being independent means doing what you love to do when you want to do it. Occupational therapy can help keep older drivers safely on the road and do the things they love to do. Learn more about community mobility and occupational therapy. <https://youtu.be/tfyeMorMIDQ>
- **#NationalSeniorIndependenceMonth**, promotes the importance of **#olderdrivers** to maintain **#mobility** and **#driverindependence**. Check out this video to learn ways **#occupationaltherapy** can help seniors drive toward independence. <https://youtu.be/tfyeMorMIDQ>
- Occupational therapy practitioners take the time to understand the role that driving plays in your life. They can help individuals make a smoother transition from driving to using other forms of transportation. <https://youtu.be/tfyeMorMIDQ>
- The **#medical** community and **#olderdrivers** can turn to **#occupationaltherapy** to support medically related functional changes and address **#communitymobility**. <https://youtu.be/DBDzO91Ld4o>

Sample Facebook/LinkedIn Posts

- Occupational therapy practitioners take the time to understand the role that driving plays in your life. They can help individuals make a smoother transition from driving to using other forms of transportation.
- As drivers age, the risk of injury from crashes also increases, making the need for a safe driving experience critical. Occupational therapy can consult, evaluate, and recommend steps for older driver safety.
- Getting older or facing changes due to medical conditions does not have to mean losing your independence or activities you love and need to do, like driving. Occupational therapy can help you stay safe and mobile through professional evaluation, functional assessment, and a plan that may include strategies, adaptive equipment, or a way to transition when the time is right. The priority is to keep you on the road as long and as safely as possible. Speak with your medical provider about ways occupational therapy can support you driving towards independence.
- Living your best life means doing the things you love, including driving. Age-related illness and chronic conditions can sometimes impair how you drive. That doesn't mean giving up your independence or the car keys! Occupational therapy practitioners can work with you to make recommendations on ways to help you stay safe behind the wheel and keep you mobile longer. When the times comes for alternate modes of transportation, we can help with those recommendations too. Talk to your physician today about seeing an occupational therapy practitioner.

[Back to top](#)

Sample Graphics - Images for social media channels can be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/dcmimages>.



When the time is right.

We're Here.

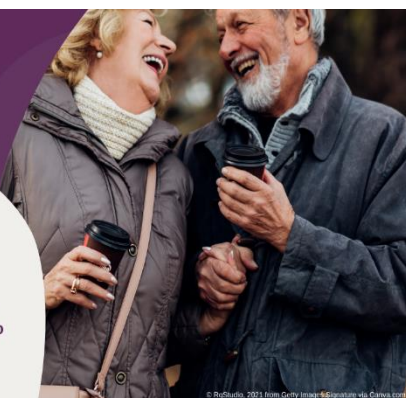
Find an occupational therapy practitioner to address driving concerns today!



Independence

Don't lose it.


Driving towards independence means providing the care and solutions needed to keep seniors moving. Occupational therapy can recommend ways to maintain your independence.



Do what you love.

Everyday.

Driving provides freedom and independence, adds to quality of life, and encourages community mobility.



Grab your keys.

Stay mobile.


Getting older doesn't mean giving up your keys. Find out ways occupational therapy promotes driver safety and mobility!



DRIVER TIP

Avoiding falls prevents injury

- Some of these falls occur while getting in and out of cars.
- Devices like these help with prevention.
- Occupational therapy practitioners can help identify devices that may work for you.



DRIVER TIP

Consider equipment solutions

- Physical changes can make driving feel uncomfortable or impossible.
- Loss of control can place self or others at risk.
- There are many designs to fit your needs and your vehicle.

[Back to top](#)

Shareable Videos

This series of videos are available to occupational therapy programs to increase efforts in building provider and practitioner awareness of occupational therapy's role in addressing driving as an instrumental activity of daily living. The videos are offered to incorporate descriptions of services or educational resources, such as websites, social media, PowerPoint presentations, or community outreach efforts. If further assistance is required, please contact driverhelp@aota.org for additional information.

Driving and Community Mobility

- [Driving and Community Mobility—Overcome Senior Drivers Concerns](#)
- [Driving and Community Mobility—Keeping Seniors Independent with Interprofessional Approach](#)

Social Media Insight

Social Media Tips

Select the right social media channel.

- **Facebook**—Reach older drivers, adult children of older drivers, physicians; good for longer text and storytelling.
- **Instagram**—Reach occupational therapy practitioners and OT students; good for pictures and video; use hashtags in your captions to generate interest and engagement.
- **Twitter**—Reach occupational therapy practitioners, OT students, members of the public; ideal for sharing thoughts, asking questions, and promoting events; good for short messages and linking into organizations' followers by tagging (using @username) and using a hashtag (#) to funnel your message under the social media hashtag.
- **LinkedIn**—Reach occupational therapist practitioners on social network for professionals; connect medical community; share updates through posts and articles.

Choose the best times to post.

- **Facebook**
 - Best times: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00 am–1:00 pm
 - Best days: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
 - Worst day: Saturday
- **Instagram**
 - Best times: Tuesday 11:00 am–2:00 pm, Monday through Friday 11:00 am
 - Best day: Tuesday
 - Worst day: Sunday
- **Twitter**
 - Best times: Tuesday 11:00 am–2:00 pm, Monday through Friday 11:00 am
 - Best day: Tuesday
 - Worst day: Sunday
- **LinkedIn**
 - Best times: Tuesday 11:00 am–2:00 pm, Monday through Friday 11:00 am
 - Best day: Tuesday
 - Worst day: Sunday (Arens, 2021)

Make your message clear and concise.

- Grab your audience.
- Use hashtags to expand your message.

[Back to top](#)



Media Tips & Resources

In this section, media tips and resources are provided to practitioners on suggested guidelines for securing and conducting an interview, pitching a story, and offering additional media tools on the CarFit program.

[Back to top](#)

Communication Tips and Resources

How to Give a Presentation

- Presentations at a senior center or community meeting should be focused and brief, allowing ample time for questions and discussion.
 - Start strong and clear, showing your interest in the topic and the audience with passion and connection.
 - Tailor core speaking points to the audience needs and note local references and resources.
 - Be factual, with care to avoid terms or implications that may appear agist or discounting.
 - Balance focus on strategies for continued driving with considerations on when to stop.
 - Offer usable guidance and tips the audience can use, such as encouraging early awareness and planning.
 - Tell stories.
 - Offer handout or materials that welcome further review or discussion with family and friends.
 - The [We Need To Talk](#) is a free online seminar to help family members assess loved one's driving skills and provide tools for this conversation. [Resources](#) are also available online at www.aarp.org.
- Presentations at occupational therapy state association conferences or professional meetings offers an excellent opportunity to get the word out about occupational therapy's role in driving and community mobility safety and the specialized field of driver rehabilitation.
 - A [speaker toolkit](#) was developed as a cooperative project between AOTA and the Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (ADED) and can be accessed at no charge on the ADED website. An application is required with the intended purpose of determining the level of support you may desire as you prepare your presentation. The toolkit offers a toolkit flexible to design a presentation from 3 minutes to 2 hours in length. Additional resources are provided if presenting to occupational therapy students.

How to Secure an Interview

- Consider local media outlets.
- Keep it focused to one issue and give the facts.
- Write a press release to provide a snapshot of the story.
 - [Press Release Example](#)
- Contact radio/television station to confirm appropriate shows and the producer of each show.
- Make a brief personal contact with each producer, secretary, or assistant to confirm what is needed to process an appearance request.
- Sell! You must sell the radio or television show on what the public may find interesting.
- Develop a strategy, as everyone is competing for time. (Association Press, 2009)

[Back to top](#)

Interviewing Tips

- [The TV & Radio Interview: A Step-by-Step Guide to Prepare for Success](#)
- Respond quickly to a request for an interview.
- Ask about the topic and questions in advance.
- Confirm whether the interview is live or pre-recorded.
- Prepare talking points on the topic (upcoming event, cause, raising awareness).
- Develop short and concise statements or “sound bites” to address your topic.
- Speak slowly and stay on topic.
- Explain what you are doing and what you would like the audience to do. (Fitzgerald, 2016)

Storytelling

- Tell patient stories and provide real-life examples.
- Engage audiences with personal stories and examples.
- Share case scenarios and appropriate statistics.
- Build on experiences and tell stories in a sincere and authentic way.
- Illustrate what drivers or families need to do by highlighting what occupational therapy can do.

CarFit Program

CarFit is an educational program that offers older adults the opportunity to check how well their personal vehicles “fit” them. The CarFit program also provides information and materials on community-specific resources that could enhance their safety as drivers, and/or increase their mobility in the community. For more information, visit carfit.org.

Suggested Resources for Exhibitor Displays

- [Solutions for Drivers](#)
- [Large Tent Card Template](#) (free to download)

[Back to top](#)

Handout: [Choose Safe Driving](#)

CHOOSE SAFE DRIVING

Occupational therapy can assist seniors in maintaining the activities they enjoy most. Concern over changes from medical conditions or aging should be addressed, not ignored for fear that the only solution is turning in the keys. Occupational therapy practitioners can help older drivers stay safe behind the wheel with the priority of safe community mobility.



Here are some steps all drivers can take today to be safer on the road:

- 1 Leave room for airbag deployment by adjusting the driver's seat so that your chest is 10 inches or more from the steering wheel.
- 2 Adjust your sitting posture by moving the steering wheel and adjusting your seat to get your line of sight 3 inches or higher than the top of the steering wheel.
- 3 Always adjust your side-view mirrors to minimize the "blind spot" to the side and rear of the vehicle. Find your safest fit at www.Car-Fit.org.
- 4 Reduce crash exposure by planning a route with more right turns, minimizing or eliminating left turns.
- 5 Busy roads can be extra demanding! Try planning an outing during quieter times, like the mid-afternoon to avoid those doing errands during lunch.



- Do you still have unanswered questions or concerns?
- Are you sitting too low or too close to the steering wheel?
- Are you uncomfortable reaching the vehicle controls?
- Consult with an occupational therapy practitioner to learn about a wide range of solutions to enhance your safety.
- Choose to be the safest driver you can be!

OT Drive Infographic: Spectrum of Decision Indicators for Driving & Community Mobility



[Back to top](#)

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[Back to top](#)

AOTA, founded in 1917 and based in North Bethesda, MD, is the national professional association of approximately 60,000 occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and occupational therapy students. The Association, a 501(c)(6) entity, represents 213,000 U.S. occupational therapy practitioners and students.