



## Safety Culture Fact Sheet

Culture can be defined in hundreds of ways, but most definitions make reference to “shared ideas, meanings, and values that are socially learned” and “patterns of behavior that are guided by those shared ideas, meanings and values” (Institute of Medicine, 2002).

**Traffic Safety Culture** describes the social and cultural environment influencing crashes.

The application of scientific analysis to traffic safety culture as a system holds promise to reveal transforming safety mitigations.

### Traffic Safety Culture: A Systems Approach – Epidemiology and the Haddon Matrix

Decades ago, the science of epidemiology applied the Haddon Matrix to the difficult study of causal actors behind motor vehicle crashes.

Using the Haddon Matrix epidemiology tool has helped safety professionals address elements of crash causes. Many lives have been saved as a result of success in implementing traffic laws and education campaigns addressing speed, impairment and occupant protection.

	A scientific approach		“ENVIRONMENT”		
CRASH	Driver	Vehicle	Road	Social/ Culture	
Before					
During					
After					

### Traffic Safety Culture: A Systems Approach – Socio-Ecological Models

With the development of strategic highway safety plans, “Toward Zero Deaths” has become the phrase representing a different way of thinking about transformational change in highway safety.



It is based on a long term view of facilitating driving behavior and social value change that builds on past progress in changing driver behavior and strengthens accepted and normal choices.

***“We are moving in the right direction when it comes to safety on our roads but we need to do much more. Changing driver behaviors is not rocket science ... it’s harder.***

***Take the first step and make a personal goal to be a safe driver in 2012,”***

*– Peter Kissinger, AAA*



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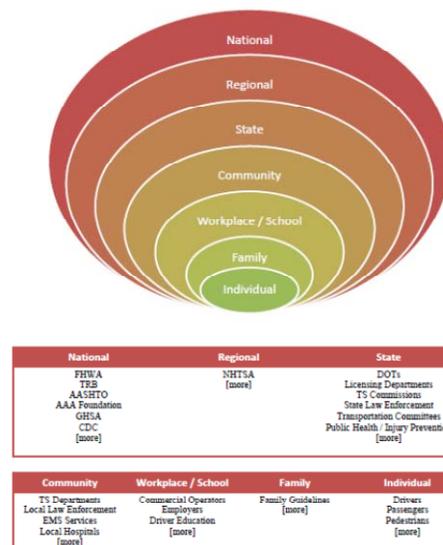
### Traffic Safety Culture: A Systems Approach – Socio-Ecological

Excerpts here are from a newly revised model: “An Action Plan for Transforming Traffic Safety Culture”

- Viewing traffic safety as a system provides a powerful way to operationalize the work of transforming culture. **Our traffic safety culture includes the values, beliefs and behaviors of all these many systems.**
- Traffic safety in the United States involves many different entities including those at the national level all the way to individual drivers, passengers and pedestrians (see Figure 1).
- Each component of the system has a unique sub-culture with unique opportunities and common values and beliefs with other sub-cultures across the system. **Culture is a simple label for a very complex set of interactions.**
- A critical aspect of this process is to gain an accurate understanding of the existing traffic safety culture before prescribing solutions. Attempts at offering solutions without an accurate understanding of the current values, beliefs and behaviors of the existing traffic safety system may result in wasteful deployment of limited resources.**

- Efforts must not only focus on drivers, but focus on all levels of the traffic safety system including individuals, families, organizations, governmental bodies and national leaders. This approach requires a transformation of traffic safety culture to foster a much broader sense of collective responsibility.
- The work to foster cultural transformation is not a program. It is not a media campaign or a new single strategy. Cultural transformation is a process – a process which is cyclical and repeated.

Figure 1. Various Levels of the Traffic Safety System



ACTION Framework for Traffic Safety Culture Center for Health and Safety Culture page 7

Jeff Linkenbach, Ed. D. Nicholas Ward, Ph. D. Jay Otto, M.S.  
The Center for Health and Safety Culture, Western Transportation Institute, Montana State University  
<http://www.westerntransportationinstitute.org/centers/culture>

# Iowa's Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Join the plan to save more lives...



## Safety Culture – Possible Strategies and Resources

Category	Strategies and Resources	Source
Set Goals to help focus and motivate	Define a vision for a state traffic safety culture with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short term goals (1-5 years)</li> <li>• mid-term goals and; (5-15 years)</li> <li>• long terms goals (15 years or more)</li> </ul>	TZD framework
Toward Zero Deaths National Strategy	Assess and implement transformational traffic safety culture as a system and sets of sub-systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify an entity to lead planning and assemble stakeholders</li> </ul>	Draft National Strategy and TR news
Action Framework for Traffic Safety Culture 12/31/2012	7- Steps in a repeated implementation process <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plan and Advocate</li> <li>2. Assess cultures</li> <li>3. Establish a common frame and prioritize opportunities</li> <li>4. Develop a portfolio of strategies</li> <li>5. Pilot test and refine</li> <li>6. Implement portfolio strategies</li> <li>7. Evaluate effectiveness and needs</li> </ol>	Center for Health and Safety Culture, Montana-
Public information and Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a statewide strategic communications team to provide support and consistency in messages that feed the TZD transformation</li> <li>• Include the common language in state and local agency transportation, public health and public safety plans</li> </ul>	State best practices
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize or initiate public opinion surveys and other tools to explore sociological elements, social norms, artifacts, demo-graphics etc. of state and local safety culture.</li> <li>• Iowa research is underway. ISU, UNI, U of I</li> </ul>	AAA Annual TSC Index
Injury Prevention and CDC models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore CDC models for injury prevention and epidemiology that transfers to traffic safety</li> </ul>	CDC
Paradigm shift =positive not punitive approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amplify rewards and positive norms</li> <li>• Make safety a personal choice with reward rather than an imposed behavior</li> </ul>	
Change the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify work and school cultures that promote and achieve high safety norms and explore ways to replicate those</li> </ul>	OSHA the National Safety Council
Workplace and agency culture be a model for “do as we do”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review agency policies for driving and distraction</li> <li>• Review other policies or expectations that result in unintended consequences (drowsy driving, speeding, distraction)</li> </ul>	
Economic Benefits: Engage Business and industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize positive insurance company policies</li> <li>• Support workplace safety standards for personal safety decisions / behavior in wellness programs</li> </ul>	