

PLANNING AHEAD

➤ HELPFUL HINTS FROM EXPERTS ➤

Talking With Older Family Members About Driving

(NAPSA)—If you are concerned that an older driver in your family is no longer safe behind the wheel, it may be time to have a conversation about driving.

While it may be an uncomfortable subject, the good news is that with a little thought and preparation you can make that conversation more productive.

Start by doing your homework:

- Get the facts. Learn about the warning signs of driving problems, observe your relative's driving and look for patterns of warning signs.

- Discuss your concerns with a doctor.

- Investigate and be prepared to offer alternative means of transportation.

To help with the conversation, experts on older drivers at The Hartford Financial Services Group and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's AgeLab suggest the following:

- Use a loved one's change in health or medication as the trigger to start the conversation. According to a recent study, older drivers said that a significant change in their health was a legitimate reason to have a discussion about driving.

- Be supportive of your older driver's voluntary efforts to modify or cut back on his or her driving.

- Discuss how driving has changed and acknowledge that road conditions and faster, heavier traffic can make driving more stressful.

- Use news reports about accidents that involve older and younger drivers as a way to start a



Studies show that the majority of older drivers respond well to conversations about their driving and their safety.

conversation about what it means to be fit to drive.

- Use a recent event, such as a near accident or getting lost while driving, as a way to start the conversation about restricting or giving up driving.

According to Maureen Mohyde, The Hartford's director of corporate gerontology, "The good news is that talking to an older person about driving usually works." She says to expect to have several conversations.

The Hartford and MIT's AgeLab have created a free 24-page guide called "We Need to Talk: Family Conversations with Older Drivers."

The guide offers practical information that can help family members advise a loved one on whether it is time to limit—or even give up—driving.

To learn more, or to order a copy of the guide, visit the Web site at www.thehartford.com/talkwitholderdrivers.