



American  
Occupational Therapy  
Association

# Driving and Community Mobility

Focusing on Older Driver Safety and  
Community Mobility

**Education: OT Faculty Resources &  
Speaker Toolkits for Practitioners**

This activity is supported by a contract from the National Highway Traffic  
Safety Administration and the United States Department of Transportation.



# Resources for OT Faculty

## Introduction

### Online Education Modules on Driving and Community Mobility

The Education Modules, *AOTA OT's Role in Addressing Driving & Community Mobility*, were developed as a resource for faculty for student education. They were developed as a project of the AOTA Older Driver Initiative funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and are available free of charge for use without restriction. Dr. Jennifer Radloff, OTD, OTR/L, CDRS, who is both a faculty member and a driving rehabilitation specialist, was contracted to author these modules to support occupational therapy (OT) faculty.

The modules are currently housed on the AOTA educational portal.

### Accessing the Course

Users can access the course by [following this link](https://myaota.aota.org/InstitutionUserRegistration.aspx?id=000004594335) to access the course, or copy and paste the link below:

- <https://myaota.aota.org/InstitutionUserRegistration.aspx?id=000004594335>
- Use the link above to **REGISTER**.
- Once registered, go to **learn.aota.org** and look to the left column of options to find **My Select Courses**.
- Select **AOTA OT Role in Addressing Driving and Community Mobility** from the dropdown menu.

The screenshot shows the AOTA Learning Portal interface. On the left is a blue navigation sidebar with the following items: Learning Portal, Home, CE Catalog, My CE Courses, Conference Transcript, My Select Courses (circled in red), Facebook, AOTA, and CommunOT. The main content area shows a user profile for Elin Schold Davis with a 'Log Out' button. Below the profile is a 'Select Institute' dropdown menu (circled in red) with the selected option 'AOTA OT's Role In Addressing Driving and Community Mobility'. Below this is a table with two columns: 'Title' and 'Completion'. The table contains one row with the title 'The Role of Occupational Therapy in Addressing Driving And Community Mobility' and a 'Launch' button, with the completion status 'Incomplete'.

## Resource Sections

When accessing the course, the following resources are available.

- AOTA Online Course Instructions
- Instructions for Using Educational Module
- Learning Activities for Educational Module
- OT's Role in Community Mobility and Driving PowerPoint Handout
- Algorithm Handout
- Spectrum of Driving Services (PDF)
- OT Driving Webcast
- Teacher resource: Exam questions



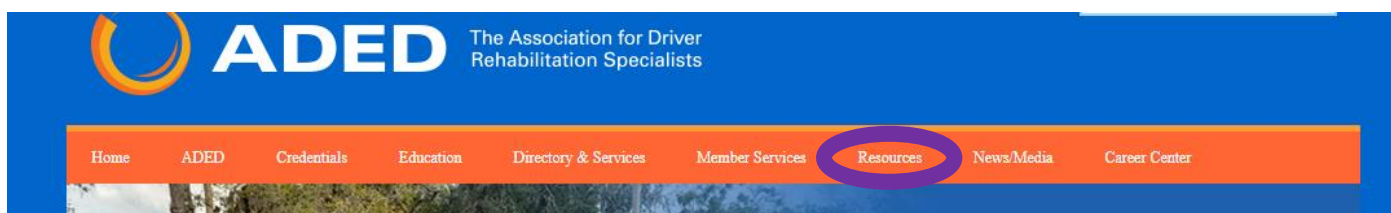
**Speaker  
Support**

## Supporting materials for invited guest speakers for academic programs, occupational therapy state conferences, or other venues.

To improve the consistency and scope of education provided by guest speakers on the topic of driving and community mobility, a speaker's toolkit was developed as a project of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Older Driver Initiative, with funding support from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). These resources were developed by experts in driving rehabilitation who were members of both AOTA and the Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (ADED).

The speaker's toolkit encourages a joint presentation representing the role of the occupational therapy practitioner who addresses driving risk, and a specialist in driving rehabilitation who would be prepared to delve more deeply into this specialized field and associated resources. This speaker's toolkit is available to members and nonmembers and is available for use without charge. An application process is involved to allow the core team to provide the needed support an individual speaker may require to develop a presentation.

To locate the speaker's toolkit, please go to [www.aded.net](http://www.aded.net) and select **AOTA/ADED Curriculum** from the Resources tab.



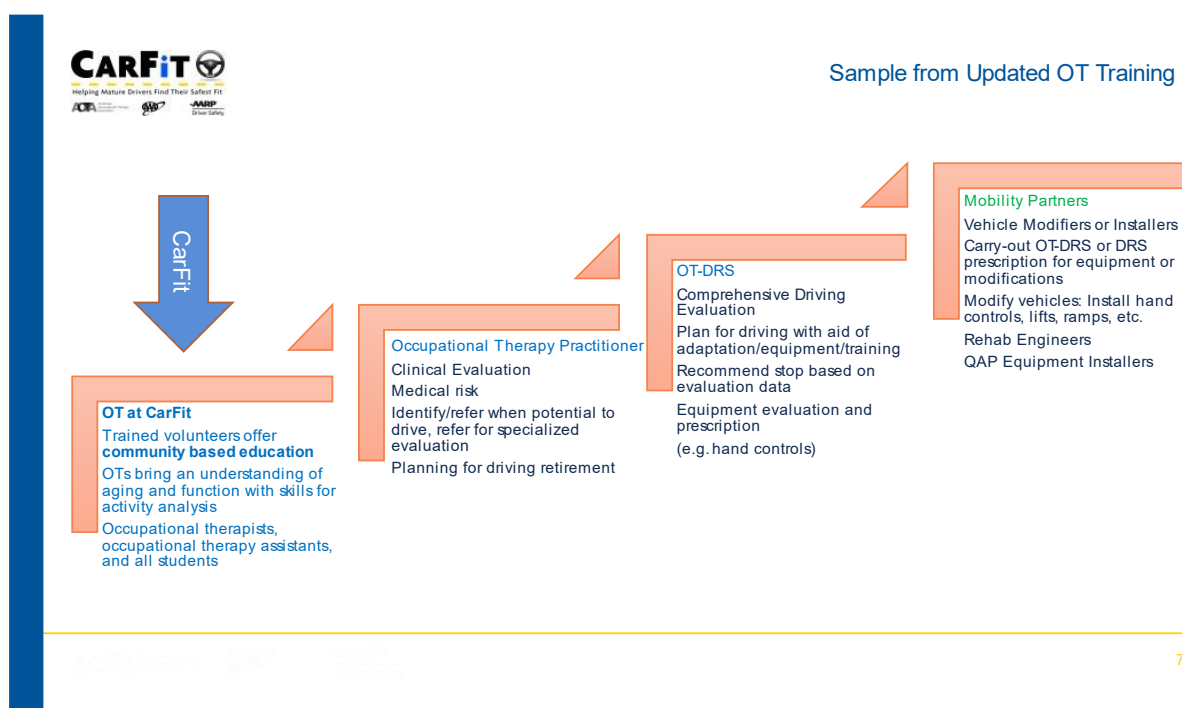
Please complete the application, then you will be contacted by a member of the team who will assist you in preparing your presentation. The toolkit offers a flexible curriculum that can be tailored to speaking opportunities that may range from 30 minutes to 2 hours.



## CarFit

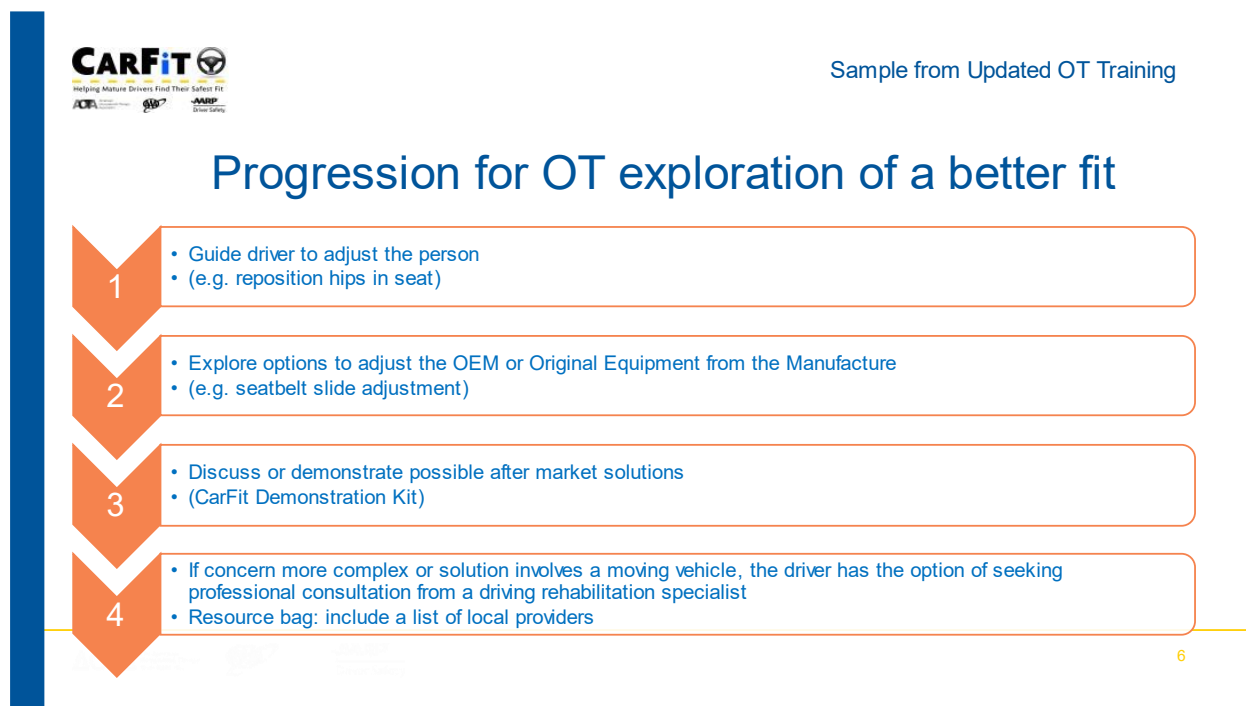
CarFit is a community-based education program developed as a collaborative project between AOTA, AARP, and AAA. The program provides occupational therapy practitioners and students the opportunity to interact with community partners and driving seniors in community. The focus of CarFit is not on behavior (aka the ability to drive safely) but on the specific person-vehicle fit. All occupational therapy providers and students are welcome to participate after completing the training provided by the CarFit program. There are multiple levels of participation available, beginning with the technician level where the occupational therapy volunteers to complete the 12-point safety checklist under the supervision of a trained CarFit Event Coordinator. The levels progress with training provided for each, from CarFit 1:1, to Event Coordinator to CarFit Instructor.

CarFit should not be confused with driving rehabilitation. CarFit offers an entry point to interaction with seniors in the community, the meaningful role of education and prevention, and the introduction of low-tech solutions (not involving a moving vehicle). The distinction between providers is described in the following diagram and is explained in detail in the CarFit OT Module available through the CarFit program. For more information, go to [www.Car-Fit.org](http://www.Car-Fit.org).





The diagram below describes an occupational therapy process of exploration of a better person-vehicle fit. The first step is always to optimize the person’s position and capabilities, whether it is an assessment for a rocker knife in the kitchen, a grab bar in the bathroom, or an adaptive device to assist with entering and exiting the vehicle. The following progression is used in the CarFit education as a guide for all occupational therapy practitioners. The information below is described in detail as a part of the OT CarFit Training.



# Solutions for Drivers

**Education. Recovery & Rehabilitation. Adaptive Solutions. Devices & Vehicle Changes**

*Amazing! Raising my seat gives me that 3 inches of visibility above the steering wheel!*

*Wow! Using this adaptive device, I can turn & reach my seatbelt without pain.*

## What's YOUR Solution? Occupational therapy can help!

### Cannot Clearly See the Road

OT can...

- Check seat height and position, adjust as needed (hips centered and fully back in seat)
- Review seat cushion options

### Discomfort Managing Pedals

OT can...

- Recommend shoe styles that allow for better feel of pedals.
- Educate on the pros and cons of using a firm cushion behind the back.

OT Specialist can...

- Educate on equipment solutions.
- Explore driving using hands in cases of amputation or poor sensation.

### Hip or Back Pain

OT can...

- Educate on seat-base height adjustment.
- Explore modified positions of hips, knees, and feet.

### Pain When Twisting to Reach Seatbelt

OT can...

- Suggest a simple ribbon or seatbelt pull.
- Educate on therapy options to address the underlying source of pain.

OT Specialist can...

- Explore equipment solutions (e.g., modify seat or reposition control moving it within pain-free reach)

### Reaching and Turning Steering Wheel Hurts

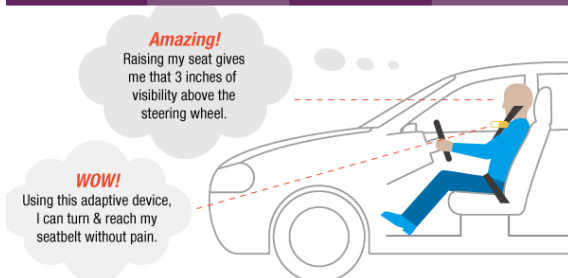
OT Specialist can...

- Recommend changes to the location or design of vehicle controls, so reaching, pulling, and turning are more comfortable.

## **CAUTION!**

Consider pros and cons with any changes to original vehicle equipment.

# SOLUTIONS for Drivers



## What's YOUR Solution?

**Occupational Therapy  
Can Help!**

### Cannot Clearly See the Road

**OT can...**

- Check seat height and position, adjust as needed (hips centered and fully back in seat)
- Review seat cushion options

### Discomfort Managing Pedals

**OT can...**

- Recommend shoe styles that allow for better feel of pedals
- Educate on the pros and cons of using a firm cushion behind the back

**OT Specialist can...**

- ✓ Educate on equipment solutions
- ✓ Explore driving using hands in cases of amputation or poor sensation

### Hip or Back Pain

**OT can...**

- Educate on seat-base height adjustment
- Explore modified positions of hips, knees and feet

### Pain When Twisting to Reach Seatbelt

**OT can...**

- Suggest a simple ribbon or seatbelt pull
- Educate on therapy options to address the underlying source of pain

**OT Specialist can...**

- ✓ Explore equipment solutions (e.g., modify seat or reposition control moving it within painfree reach)

### Reaching and Turning Steering Wheel Hurts

**OT Specialist can...**

- ✓ Recommend changes to the location or design of vehicle controls, so managing, reaching, pulling, and turning are more comfortable



**Consider Pros & Cons with any changes to original vehicle equipment.**



Helping Mature Drivers Find Their Safest Fit



# Partner Resources



Several partners in senior safe mobility have developed talking points and resources to consider integrating into an individual education session with patients, with families, or as a part of a broader community presentation. Several are identified in other sections of [this guide](#) under resources. Two speaker toolkits offer both scripts and resources that are ready for distribution.

## We Need to Talk

AARP has provided an online tutorial to prepare you to speak with community-dwelling seniors on the topic of driving, driving safety, and exploring questions about when it might be time to stop. Occupational therapy practitioners can access this free module to brush up on their presentation skills for speaking with seniors and can explore how to add content that will introduce resources and tools occupational therapy may provide. [The course may be accessed with this link](#). The online resource also provides links to order free guidebooks (mailed upon request) or to download worksheets applicable both in therapy sessions and as a [handout](#) to accompany a public presentation.

The image shows three guidebook covers. The first, 'Your Road Ahead', features a woman driving. The second, 'Home for a Lifetime', shows two women in a kitchen. The third, 'At the Crossroads', shows a man and a woman smiling. Each cover includes the title, subtitle, and the AARP logo.

**Guidebooks**  
Get our helpful publications on topics ranging from family conversations about driving safety to design ideas for making a home easier to live in.

[View Guidebooks >](#)

The free Guidebooks cover a range of topics. [Your Road Ahead: A Guide to Comprehensive Driving Evaluations](#) was developed in collaboration with AOTA.

## Guidebook

[Your Road Ahead: A Guide to Comprehensive Driving Evaluations](#)

---

The [At the Crossroads Guidebook](#) and associated content addresses dementia and the process of identifying the warning signs and resources essential to a safe and meaningful transition to non-driver. This website offers a wealth of resources that may be incorporated into work with clients and/or provided to audiences as handouts. These resources are available to use at no cost.

---

## Worksheets Excerpted From At the Crossroads Guidebook

 [Agreement With My Family Worksheet](#)

 [Conversation Planner Worksheet](#)

 [Driving Activities Worksheet](#)

 [Getting There Worksheet](#)

 [Not Going It Alone Worksheet](#)

 [Warning Signs Worksheet](#)

---

### About AOTA

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.