



**TRIBAL INJURY
PREVENTION**
RESOURCE CENTER

DRIVE SAFE. DRIVE SMART.

The New Year holiday provides a unique window in which we can look back at the previous year and plan for the upcoming year ahead. The winter season brings several challenges that make safe driving difficult. During this time of year, there can be difficult weather conditions, limited daylight, and drivers in unfamiliar areas. The [Tribal Injury Prevention Resource Center](#) would like to provide **SIX WAYS YOU CAN DRIVE SAFELY, AND SMARTLY**, during the winter to keep our communities safe and protected.

1 PLAN AHEAD

Before you start your trip, make sure your vehicle is in good shape for travel. This is especially important for winter driving conditions. Check the weather before heading out to ensure the roads are safe to drive on. Always use seatbelts.

2 STAY FRESH AND ALERT

Make sure you're well-rested before a long drive. According to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#), from 2013 to 2017, there was 4,111 fatalities in motor vehicle crashes involving drowsy driving, and 91,000 motor vehicle crashes involving drowsy driving in 2017 alone. Plan the trip so you share the driving and take regular breaks to avoid drowsy driving.

3 MIND YOUR SPEED

Give yourself plenty of time and distance to react to the traffic around you. [An Automotive Fleet Magazine article](#) notes that for every one percent increase in speed, a driver's chance of a motor vehicle crash increases by two percent, the chance of serious injury increases by three percent, and the chance of a fatality increases by about four percent.

4 DRIVE DEFENSIVELY

Increased holiday traffic and winter road conditions can be frustrating. Put the safety of everyone in your car first by letting impatient and aggressive drivers pass you or go through the intersection ahead of you so that you control the situation. [National Safety Council](#) offers online defensive driving courses but please check with your local State Department of Transportation if other training options are available.

5 DON'T DRIVE IMPAIRED

If you plan to drink, don't plan to drive. [NHTSA's "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over"](#) campaign has set out to end drunk driving through cutting-edge technology. Using a designated driver when you have a couple of adult refreshments is always the safest choice.

6 AVOID DISTRACTIONS

Distracted driving is dangerous, claiming 2,841 lives in 2018 alone. Among those fatalities: 1,730 drivers, 605 passengers, 400 pedestrians and 77 bicyclists according to [NHTSA](#). Texting is the most alarming distraction. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for 5 seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed. When you're able to do so safely, pull off to the side of the road or find the nearest rest stop when you have to use your cell phone.