

# GREATER FOR



Evidence that is available indicates that the young inexperienced drivers have more than their share of accidents. In an analysis of several thousand records, persons aged 16 to 19, inclusive, drove one-fifth as far per fatal accident as did the drivers in the safest age group, 45 to 49, inclusive. Beginning at 16 years of age, the driving record continues to improve until the age of about 50. After 50 years of age, the fatal accident record again becomes worse with increasing age.

The graph at left shows that persons 16 years of age are involved in 33 fatal accidents per 100 million miles of driving while drivers in the 45 to 49 year age group are involved in a comparatively low number---four.

The steady improvement in the fatality record from 16 to 50 years of age is due to a number of factors. There is a high correlation between age and experience so that the older drivers also have

more miles of driving experience. This experience has resulted in better judgment, greater skill through practice and the development of greater caution through many narrow escapes and, in some cases, one or more accidents. A person's attitude toward driving and toward traffic problems in general also undergoes changes as he grows older and assumes greater social responsibilities.

Studies that have been made of mental and physical characteristics of drivers indicate that peak abilities are generally reached between 25 and 30 years of age. After 30 years of age, these physical and mental abilities begin to decline slowly, but the driving experience more than compensates for these deficiencies so that driving performance continues to improve. However, after 50 years of age, mental and physical abilities decline more rapidly so that experience is no longer able to compensate for these deficiencies and the accident record becomes worse.