

Farmington crash brings worries about elderly drivers

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FARMINGTON, CT (WFSB) - Police have yet to release the official cause of a tragic crash in Farmington that left a pregnant woman and unborn child dead, along with a woman in a second vehicle, and the crash is raising questions among some about elderly drivers.



The pregnant mother of three, identified as Melinda Hart, 27, of Bristol, was driving minivan when the vehicle collided with another car being driven by 85-year-old Robert Carroll.

Carroll's 86-year-old wife, Ruth, also died in the crash.

It's no secret we live in a car-dominated culture, and driving provides a sense of freedom.

Micki McBride has been driving for decades.

McBride said she feels just fine on the road. She said she knows someday in the future her children may worry, and bring up that conversation.

"Not yet, I'm sure it will happen," McBride said.

McBride said at some point, she will feel uncomfortable driving.

"Oh sure, definitely, I wouldn't want to hurt anybody," McBride said.

Driving professionals at AAA in West Hartford help all drivers including those who are aging.

"I like the idea of the third party even though I do what I do," said Stephen Rourke of AAA. "I've tried to have the conversation with my parents, but I'm the child. I don't know anything."

Officials with AAA do in-car observations, monitoring driver habits and skills before making recommendations.

Driving school managers said sometimes those elderly participants are reluctant. However, they promise they're not here to tattle or take your license, but to improve driving skills.

Officials with AAA said that includes breaking old, bad habits.

According to Connecticut Department of Transportation data from 2008-2012, it shows there were 41,698 crashes in the state where a driver age 65 and older was at fault. Of those, 147 were fatal.

Triple AAA experts said drivers 60 and older have same crash rate, and over that same course of time, there were more than 400,000 crashes by drivers of all ages.

Source: <http://www.wfsb.com/story/23710119/non-profit-programs-concerned-about-government-sh>