

INSPIRED

To Make Healthy Choices

Do you ever text while driving? Did you know that five seconds is the average time your eyes are off the road while texting? When traveling at 55 mph, that's enough time to cover the length of a football field blindfolded.

In 2013, **3,154 people were killed** in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers and approximately **424,000 people were injured**. **Distracted driving is defined as any activity that diverts the driver's attention away from driving.** Text messaging requires visual, manual and cognitive attention from the driver, making it the most alarming distraction. If you choose to text while driving, you double your risk of having a crash or near-crash.

Examples of other distractions include:

- Using a cell phone or smartphone
- Eating, drinking or smoking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a navigation system
- Watching a video
- Adjusting a radio, CD player or temperature setting

Consider the following facts:

- ▶ 10% of all drivers under the age of 20 involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the crash.
- ▶ Drivers in their 20s make up 27% of the distracted drivers in fatal crashes.
- ▶ Text messaging, browsing and dialing result in the longest duration of drivers taking their eyes off the road.

- ▶ Headset cell phone use is not substantially safer than hand-held use.
- ▶ 25% of teens respond to a text message once or more every time they drive.
- ▶ 20% of teens and 10% of parents admit that they have had extended, multi-message text conversations while driving.
- ▶ Roughly 1 out of 5 young drivers think that texting makes no difference to their driving performance.
- ▶ 68% of young drivers ages 18 to 20 are willing to answer incoming phone calls on some, most or all driving trips.

Distraction.gov is a website dedicated to educating people to prevent distracted driving. Parents play a critical role in preventing distracted driving. The CDC campaign, Parents Are The Key, includes numerous resources to assist parents in the education of their teens when they begin driving, such as The Eight Danger Zones and the Parent-Teen Driving Agreement.

It is obvious though, that **ALL of us need to become more aware of the dangers of distracted driving** and fight the urge to look at our phone, eat our breakfast, talk to someone or reach for objects in the car while we are driving.

We need to be more intentional about focusing on driving, especially since the roads are becoming more congested with everyone trying to get to their destination as fast as they can.

If we focus on driving, we can save lives and prevent crashes and injuries!

For more information:
DISTRACTED DRIVING
www.guideinc.org

Distractions reduce the driver's reaction time, which can cause accidents.

Preventing distractions will save lives and prevent crashes.

In Georgia, you may get a ticket for texting even if your vehicle is stopped while you are doing it.

Adults need to role model positive driving habits.

