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In memory of all those who have passed due to distracted driving. Let's make a change and stand for the safety of our nation. Remember to drive as if your grandmother would approve!

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Enjoy the ride. Don't be distracted and drive.

DRIVERS DIGEST

Local Teen Fatality

Texting and driving?

State Driving Laws

Too rough or not enough?

**-Distracted Driving-
Are you doing it?**

Teens come forward

*What is causing these diversions
while driving?*

What can *YOU* do?

Grandmother's Approval

What can one do in 4.6 seconds?

A quick glance at your phone can alter your future in the snip of a second. It was a late October night when 18 year old Rodney O. Thompson was driving down Dicke Road to go pick up a friend. Diveeta Thompson, Rodney's mother, hugged him before he left and told him she would see him later. Never did it cross her mind that Rodney would not be coming home that night, let alone never again. While Rodney was driving at a fairly increased speed, he went to pick up his phone to look at a text – never thinking anything would happen. Suddenly Rodney crashed his Mercury Sable into a pole and was killed upon impact. Ever since the crash took place, his mother Diveeta Thompson has made it her life work to raise awareness for the dangers of distracted driving by speaking at schools and even speaking on 'The Oprah Winfrey Show'. Rodney was a senior at Homestead High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana. His friends and loved ones took the traumatic experience to heart, but managed to support Rodney's family in their time of need with cards, portraits, and letters. This tragedy has altered the life of many people, locally, statewide, and nationally. Drivers should not be distracted by cell phones on the road because in that one snip of a second, their life as well as others can change or come to a complete end.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, or NHTSA, sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent (at 55 mph) of driving the length of an entire football field, blind. With this being said, the increased concern is on whom this statistic impacts the most. Through national data from NHTSA, they have found that the youngest and most inex-

perienced drivers are most at risk, with 16% of all distracted driving crashes involving drivers less than 20 years of age. This percentage has lingered approximately in the same position for the last several years. However, they do not stand alone in this fragment of a problem. NHTSA has also found that at any given moment during daylight hours, over 800,000 vehicles are being driven by someone using a hand-held cell phone.

"The law that we have... there is no teeth in it—it's just paper."

Quote by Indiana State Police Department Officer Galaviz on Indiana distracted driving laws

All use of cell phone devices greatly increases the risk of a crash and can cause calamitous effects. In fact, distracted drivers are three times more likely to get in a crash compared to those who are not distracted (CAA Distracted Driving).

Indiana State laws for distracted driving are minimal but thankfully still there. The current laws possess the function for the ban on calling with a cell phone – including hands free – and complete ban on texting and driving. Officer Galaviz serving 20 years of the Indiana State Police Department finds that, in his opinion, "The law that we have, there is no teeth in it – it's just paper." Chris Schueman, a representative of Indiana's Parkview Trauma Center, proceeds to agree with Galaviz when stating, "Indiana driving laws are fairly weak – by the time it's all said and done pieces are being taken out." Officer Galaviz then goes on to inform that these

laws started out as something very compelling, but as they were passed down through each legislature they became, "watered down." Galaviz also explains that for the law enforcers, being police officers, "it becomes very difficult to dictate what people are doing on their phones." For further explanation, Officer Galaviz gives an example that the law does not address emails, games, and other apps specifically, therefore making it more strenuous to classify.

Those abrupt 4.6 seconds are not worth yours or anyone else's life. Unfortunately, Rodney Thompson was a part of these overwhelming statistics. Luckily his family has grown strong even though the pain of loss is eternal. However, you are able to take the necessary steps in order to prevent the same to happen to you and your family. Officer Galaviz openly states that, "Distracted driving is an increasing issue; it is an epidemic." Both

Galaviz and Schueman have worked with Diveeta Thompson in the last several years after Rodney's heartbreaking fatality. All three attend interviews, school assemblies, and even drivers education programs to inform others of the dangers of distracted driving. Officer Galaviz closes with a life-long motto, "When you are on the road, treat everyone out there as if they were someone you know and love. Drive as if your grandmother would approve." - by Kara Lilly

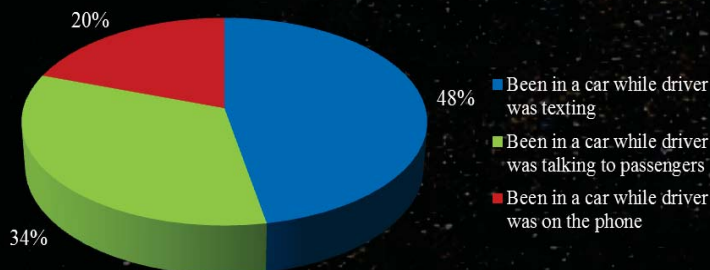
QUICK TIPS

By Kara Lilly

- *Always buckle up
- *Defensive driving is key
- *DO NOT touch your phone!
- *Keep your mind focused
- *Keep your hands on the wheel

For more information, please visit <http://www.distraction.gov/content/get-the-facts/facts-and-statistics.html>

Distracted Drivers with Teens



*The pie graph to the left shows the percentages of distracted drivers with teens. This graph mainly displays the percentage of teens that drive with distracted drivers. It is evident that teens being in a car with a distracted driver that was texting is the most prominent of the three. This evidence was recorded to be 48% of driver's texting with a teen in the vehicle. The next distraction, at 34%, is teens being in a vehicle with someone who was talking to other passengers. The distraction that teens answered to be the least of the three is being in a car while the driver was on the phone. This was recorded to be 20% of drivers talking on the phone.

Distracted Driver Stats

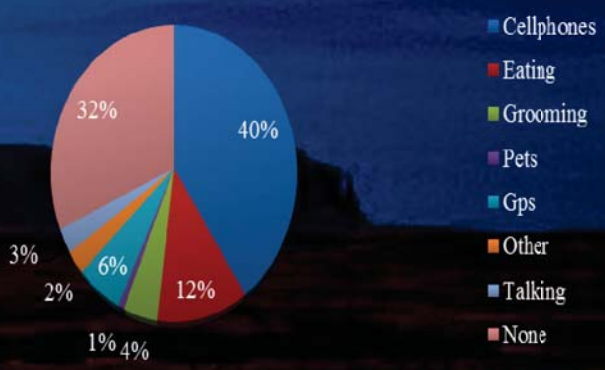
*The pie chart below displays the percentage of local driving activities that are distractions to drivers. Cell phones, eating, grooming, pets, GPS navigation systems, talking and other diversions listed can not only be harmful to the person driving, but to other vehicles around them. The data in the graph was collected by a group of students in Fort Wayne, Indiana. We can conclude from this graph that 40% of drivers use cell phones while driving, 30% of drivers didn't have any distractions while driving, and only 12% of people eat and drink while driving. Some other activities were using GPS, grooming and talking these were documented to be about 4% or less.

Annual Number of Indiana Highway Fatalities



*The graph above displays the of the number of people killed from the years 2008 through 2013. Every year there would be approximately more than 500 deaths. 4,467 deaths happened on the Indiana Highways since the beginning of 2008 through October 21st, 2013 (Officer Galaviz). But, as you can see from the year 2012 to 2013 the number decreased with 114 people killed.

Percent of Local Driving Distractions



The Underestimated Killer

“Eight people will die today in a car crash due to cell phone distractions” (2002 Harvard Center for Risk Analysis). Distracted driving is an increasing epidemic that has caused calamitous disasters across our nation. Over the last several years states have been cracking down and banning texting as well as cell phone use. Some states have different driving laws depending on where they are and how big of a problem distracted driving is. Numerous organizations have begun to promote safe driving locally and nationally so that our nation is a safer place for everyone. There are many distinctive forms of distracted driving, but over all they are causing turmoil and increasing hazards across the nation.

“3,331 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver in 2011.”
Statistic from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

tractions while driving are texting and driving and reaching for something in your car. Each and every one of these distraction cause danger to the driver, passenger, and even pedestrians outside. There are many subcategories within the three forms of diversions including: eating, drinking, texting, talking, talking on phone, grooming, reading, using as GPS, watching a video, and even adjusting something simple like your radio. These diversions are the cause of death of a monumental amount of people across the nation. According to NHTSA, 3,331 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver in 2011 compared to the 3,267 in 2010. In addition, 387,000 people were injured in crashes involving a distracted driver in 2011 compared to 416,000 injured in

According to distraction.gov, there are three forms of distracted driving that could divert a person's attention away from simply driving. The three forms include cognitive (taking mind off road), visual (taking eyes off road), and manual (taking hands off wheel). By far the most dangerous is manual distractions considering your mind and eyes are off the road as well as your hands off of the wheel. In today's day in age, common examples of manual dis-

2010. For more information and statistics, see Parkview Hospital's www.donttextdrive.com and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's site <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov>. Educate yourself and others to ensure you are the most safe you can be. You could preserve a life, just drive. - by Tristan Tucker & Kara Lilly

Graphs and explanations of graphs by Nicole Wilson and Zoey Woods

Take the pledge for no distracted driving at <http://nophonezonepledge.org/>