

Crossing the Line

focus on the wheel it's the best way to deal.

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Zachary Chadwick

Why is it important to pay attention to the road?

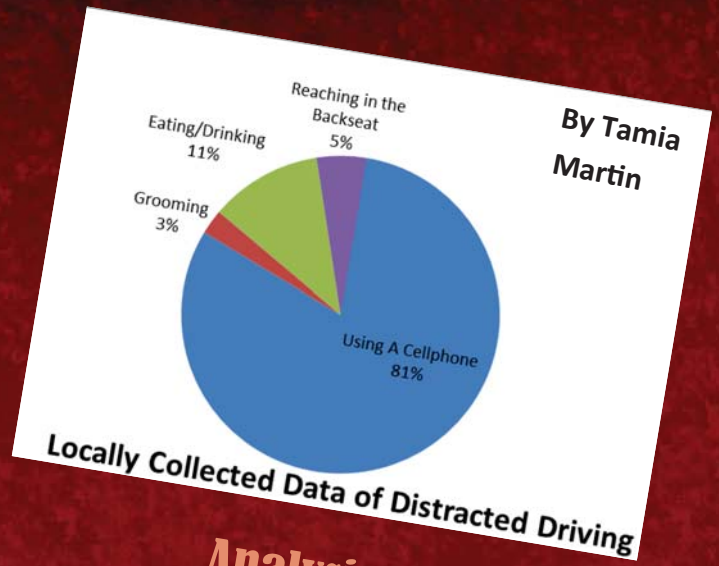
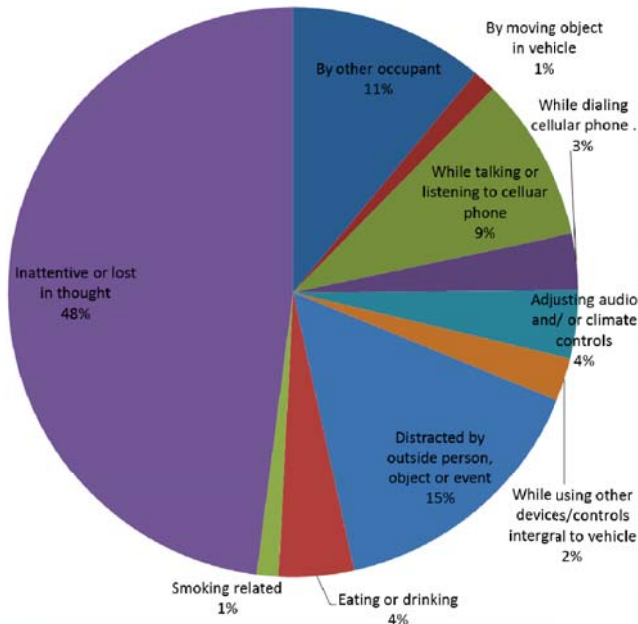
EXTRA! EXTRA!

Read All About It

Texting and Driving Your life could be next!!

Frequency of Driver Distraction

By Tamia Martin



Analysis

By Tamia Martin

Distracted Driving describes anything that takes someone's attention off the road, such as texting, grooming, eating and drinking and reaching for items around the car. New Tech Academy @Wayne High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana surveyed drivers and their focus on the road. The students observed 79 cars. Sixty-four of the drivers were observed using a cellphone. The data shows that about 81% of people were distracted by using cellphones. Nationally, there are more ways of describing the number of distracted drivers in the year of 2011. The survey shows that 48% of the drivers were inattentive or lost in thought. Students compared both types of surveys and found that these surveys were very similar. We found that nationally about 12% of drivers were distracted by a cellphone.

Throughout the Years

By: Zachary Chadwick

Throughout the years, the number of car accidents has been increasing. About 10 percent of those accidents were accounted as preventable, as they were a result of distracted driving. Although hands-free communication connected devices have been developed for the car, several million accidents have still arose. Why you may ask. You are still distracted while driving, even if your hands are on the wheel. If not all of your attention is on the wheel of the car you are driving, you are driving distracted.

Thousands upon thousands of Americans have been victims of *distracted driving*. Most times, drivers do not have the thought of what could possibly happen on mind. They might think that if they are only distracted for a few seconds, that it will not matter. But in reality, it is those

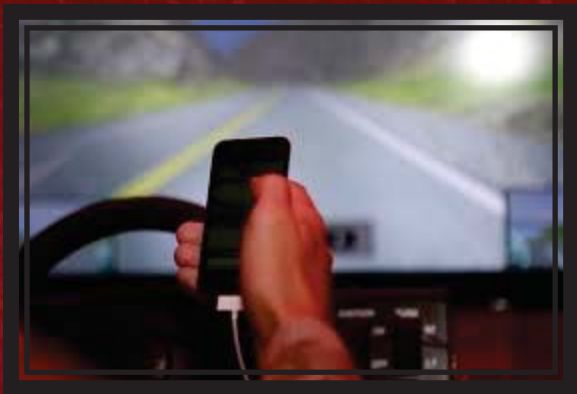
few crucial seconds that the driver was distracted, that could more than likely cause a tragic accident. Those around you are in great risk.

Those who are closer to you, are more affected if it just so happens that you cease to exist. You will no longer have friends to ask for pencils from. You will no longer be able to attend parties. You will no longer see your mother anymore. Is that something you want?

When you are behind the wheel, you could cause more than you think. You could injure yourself, and so many more people. Put that phone down and stop eating at the wheel. Focus, and save a life. Your life comes first, Save Yourself.

Why Teens Need to Educate Themselves

By Sierra Lehman



Alex Brown, a smart young girl with a bright future, is the face of one of the numerous stories of distracted driving among teens. She was 17 years old, and attending college classes in high school, so on the morning of November 10, 2009, she said goodbye to her parents and went on her way to her class. Later in the day, her parents were notified that she never made it to school. Her mother suspected that Alex had taken a back road that she believed was extremely dangerous. Upon investigation, she saw her daughter's truck beaten up on the side of the road and she could tell that something awful had happened. During the crash, Alex had been sent flying through the windshield of her truck and the truck then rolled over, crushing her body beneath it. At the hospital, the doctors tried to save her but they struggled to keep her alive. Her parents were faced with a tough decision, and they chose to let Alex go. Alex leaves behind two loving parents and a younger sister who misses her greatly. Later during the week of the crash, Alex's mother checked her phone records and discovered Alex was texting at the time of her accident. Her mother said, "I was supposed to be able to visit her in college right now, and embarrass her in front of all of her friends. I can't. It's just another part of my life that's gone now" (US Department of Transportation). After seeing Alex's story, it is clear that it is crucial for teens to educate themselves on the dangers of reckless driving in order to ensure public safety and prevent the loss of young lives.

Since teens are new at driving, they need to be taught the laws on driving in their area and the consequences of distracted driving. More and more states are strongly suggesting that teens go through drivers training courses, where professionals teach them how to practice driving the correct way shortly after obtaining their permits. Approximately 29 states have required new drivers to take such courses. Although driving courses can be helpful to learn the right way to drive, teens can also learn from their parents or research laws of driving and driving tips on their own. Regardless of how teens learn to drive correctly, it is critical that they learn the correct habits when they first begin to drive. Some may say that adults are in need of education as well. However, it has been proven that teens are the most distracted drivers and this issue needs to be solved.

Young drivers need to be aware of the consequences of distracted driving because they are the age group that has caused the most injury and fatalities by their distracted driving. According to distracted.gov, the US government's website on distracted driving, 16% of drivers under 20 who were involved in fatal crashes were distracted at the time of the accident. This was the highest percentage of any age group. Every year, distracted driving rates go up and more lives are lost. It is devastating when families are torn apart by the cruel effects of reckless driving. Families of victims of dangerous driving will live with

that pain for the rest of their lives. Therefore, teens need to know the consequences of distracted driving in order to keep themselves safe as well as everyone else on the road.

In addition to the reasons discussed above, teens also need to be informed about distracted driving because they can be faced with criminal charges if they harm anyone on the road. For example, in the state of Indiana, it is illegal for drivers under the age of 18 to text while driving. Violators of this law can receive fines of up to 500 dollars. This is not including the charges they can be faced with if they harm someone else while driving distracted. If Indiana teens cause death by texting and driving, they can receive criminal charges and possible jail time, not to mention the guilt that they will live with for the rest of their lives. Many like to think that they can text and drive and be perfectly safe, but this is not always the case. Texting and driving harms people all the time, even the ones that think it will not happen to them, and its consequences linger forever for the offender and the family of the victims.

It is crucial for teens to educate themselves on the dangers of distracted driving in order to ensure public safety and to prevent the loss of young lives. Driver's education classes are readily available at many schools across the nation, not to mention other programs out there for teens. If driver's education classes are too expensive for a teenager to afford, they can always research driving tips on their own. There is no excuse to not be informed about the dangers of reckless driving. A large number of teens see stories of distracted driving and think that it cannot happen to them, but it is a real issue and it impacts teens daily. No one is an exception to the rule. It is unjust for anyone to take their eyes off the road to read a text, send an email, use a GPS, etc. Teens need to get educated about distracted driving. In the end, it could save their lives.



Tips to Avoid Distracted Driving

Keep both hands on the steering wheel at all times when driving.

- Do not use your cell phone while your vehicle is in motion. Even if you are not using your hands to use your phone, your mind is still not completely focused on the road.
- Get a good night of rest before driving. Driving while fatigued is never a good idea.
- Make time for grooming before getting in your car to go somewhere.
- Know how you're getting somewhere before you leave so you do not need a map. If you are using a GPS, set it up before leaving.
- Avoid communicating with passengers if the conversation is a distraction from the road.
- Ask passengers to read your texts to you or adjust the radio while the vehicle is in motion so you can focus.
- Adjust your seat and mirrors before leaving so you do not have to change anything while driving.

By: Zachary Chadwick, Sierra Lehman



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Observation

By: Teshlynn Shuttleworth

Collecting data was quite simple for Zach. He sat near by in his vehicle and as cars drove by he wrote what they were doing. As you can see from the data the cellular devices were in use the most on Bluffton Road. He also noticed that there was little activity in grooming while driving.