Living Life in the Fast Lane

Without endangering those around you

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And for you survey lovers...
Of the people that we surveyed, we were given these answers. (They all were between the ages of 15 and 25)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you drive while distracted?</th>
<th>Do your parents or legal guardians text while drive?</th>
<th>If you are a passenger and see the driver driving while distracted do you attempt to stop them?</th>
<th>Have you or someone in your family been involved in an accident with a distracted driver?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57% - Never</td>
<td>42% - Never</td>
<td>7% - Never</td>
<td>36% told us yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13% - Rarely</td>
<td>28% - Rarely</td>
<td>14% - Rarely</td>
<td>64% said no.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23% - Sometimes</td>
<td>20% - Sometimes</td>
<td>50% - Sometimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7% - Often</td>
<td>10% - Often</td>
<td>28% - Often</td>
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What does distracted driving do?
Distracted driving kills. In 2011, 3,331 people were killed in crashes involving distracted drivers, and an estimated 387,000 were injured. Nowadays, people can hardly go anywhere without their phone. While driving, it is not uncommon for someone to check their phone, text someone, call someone, or do something that requires them to take their eyes off the road for a short period of time. In 2011, 350 fatal crashes were reported to have involved the use of a cell phone as a distraction. It is for this reason that companies have started campaigns such as Operation Safe Driver and It Can Wait in order to get people to think before they use their cell phone.

Teenagers take up the largest percentage of distracted drivers. 75% of teens say that texting and driving is "common" among their friends. Though phones are a major distraction on the road, they are not the only distraction. Other passengers, radio dials, and multitasking have also contributed to the number of distracted driving crashes. Statistics and campaigns can only do so much though. The biggest lie that anyone can tell themselves when it comes to distracted driving is that it cannot happen to them. It is when the driver is least expecting to get into a crash that it happens. There are countless videos and speakers and articles about distracted driving, but in the end, it comes down to the driver themselves. Are they willing to wait to check their phone? Are they willing to quiet the other passengers down? Are they willing to give their full attention to the road and other cars around them? Driving is a privilege, not a right. Be safe on the road. Just wait.

Some intriguing statistics:
- In December of 2012, 171.3 billion text messages had been sent in the United States.
- 11% of all fatal crashes involving drivers under the age of 20 were related to distracted driving.
- At any given moment, there are 660 thousand people in the United States using electronic devices while driving (included, but not limited to, cell phones).
- While a driver engages in activities such as reaching for a phone, dialing, or texting, the likelihood of a crash occurring is three times as great.
- In 2011, around 421 thousand people were injured in a distracted driving-related auto accident. (Which is a 9% increase from the previous year)
**Why is it important to educate those around us?**

Not many people in the United States realize the importance in educating the general population about the hazards of distracted driving. For example, sending a text message containing around 15 characters would take a person almost ten seconds to type. Now, that may not be an astronomical number in that sense, but ten seconds while going sixty miles per hour on a highway equals about 845 feet driven entirely blind. Hardly anyone realizes this, and, as a result, most people continue to drive while engrossed in other things. But, what is distracted driving? Why is it so urgent to inform people about distracted driving? Well, people don’t realize the hazards it can cause, the lives it has taken and affected, and, most importantly, people don’t realize if they are distracted drivers.

What types of hazards do distracted driving cause? Well, it can cause minor to severe wrecks on any road. Now, some people might argue that the chances for this are very low, and that there is always a chance for an accident to happen, distracted driving or not. They could also say that everyone is a distracted driver, so why would it matter? Well, it does matter. There may always be a chance for an accident to occur, but why would someone want to increase that percentile in any way? Also, there are a lot of very careful drivers out there: drivers that know enough to be wary of his or her surroundings. Why should one person decide to drive sidetracked and possibly endanger the lives of those around them? Realistically speaking, how many lives has it affected?

In 2012, 421,000 were injured in motor accidents related to distracted driving. This means there is less than a 1% chance that you could be injured each time you drive. That chance would be laughed on by some, and they would declare it to be ‘a chance so small, it could never matter’. This could be right in one way, but on the other hand, why should a normal person be subjected to this chance every single time he or she goes for a drive? What about those who don’t even realize they are contributing to the percent of improper drivers in America?

According to a poll, at any given moment, roughly 660,000 people across America are driving while using an electronic device. This accounts for approximately .2% of the total population. Realistically speaking, that would mean that there is always at least 13,000 people driving distracted in each state. So, it’s nearly impossible to avoid meeting one of them. However, this also means that there is a chance that you are one of these 13,000 people. You might tell yourself that there is no possible chance you are one of these individuals, mainly because a majority of people would only consider texting (or going onto social media websites) to be distracted driving. This is not the case. Talking on the phone, listening to music, eating lunch, reaching for things in the passenger seat, shaving, and applying make-up are all forms of distracted driving. So, ask yourself again, are you a distracted driver?

**Survey Results:**

According to the survey we conducted, more than half of the drivers between the ages of 15 and 25 claimed to have never driven while distracted. On the other hand, the rest of them admitted to doing it at least once, if not frequently. This is quite disappointing, because the results would hardly change when placed on a larger scale. Also, some of the people surveyed told us that their parents were also ‘distracted drivers’; in fact, more than half of the drivers informed that their parents text and drive. The one encouraging statistic that we did observe was more that than 80% of the interviewees said they have told others not to text and drive (or something similar) when they are a passenger in the vehicle.
Do you drive while distracted?

- Rarely
- Never
- Sometimes
- Often

Do your parents or legal guardians text while drive?

- Rarely
- Never
- Sometimes
- Often

If you are a passenger and see the driver driving while distracted do you attempt to stop them?

- Rarely
- Never
- Sometimes
- Often

How can you help the distracted driving problem in America today?

- Get the word out: the more people aware of this problem, the better off we all are.
- If you see a friend doing it, tell them to stop. In this case, ignorance is not bliss.
- If your parents do it, tell them to stop. They may not even be aware that they are doing it.
- If you are a distracted driver, try doing the following:
  - Keep whatever is occupying you away while you drive
  - Focus on the task at hand
  - Drive more aware and cautious of your surroundings.