



Drive Assured

by knowing Distracted Driving Dangers

Parents should share awareness of Distracted Driving Dangers

With area prom and graduation season upon us — as well as summer vacations in our near future — it's important for you to educate yourself and your children on the dangers of distracted driving.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, sending or reading a text message while driving — this involves manual, visual and cognitive distraction simultaneously — takes your eyes off the road for 4.6 seconds. At 55 miles per hour, that is equivalent to driving the length of an entire football field, blindfolded. If you text while you're behind the wheel, you're 20 times more likely to be involved in a crash than a non-distracted driver.

And the youngest and most inexperienced drivers are most at risk for accidents, with 11 percent of all distracted driving crashes involving drivers under 20. Motor-vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teens. Mile for mile, they are involved in three times as many crashes as all other drivers, and one in three teens say they have texted while driving.

Here are some tips to share with your children and to keep in mind now and throughout the year:

- Be a role model for your children by establishing a family policy prohibiting texting or talking on the phone while driving.



- Remember that distracted driving goes beyond talking or texting. Other forms include adjusting a radio, CD player or iPod; using a navigation system; talking to passengers; eating and drinking; watching videos; grooming; and reading.
- Take your awareness of distracted driving to the social media universe, sharing information with your friends, family and coworkers on Facebook, Twitter and other websites.
- Talk with your teens about the risks and responsibilities of driving and the danger of dividing their attention between a phone and the road. Make sure they know the facts and stats related to distracted driving.
- For more information on distracted driving awareness, go to www.distraction.gov.

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