



## Facts and Figures about Distracted Driving

When your mind or attention is not focused solely on driving, you're a distracted driver. While cell phones are a major culprit, anything that takes your mind and attention away from your driving is a distraction. There are three main types of distractions:

- Visual — taking your eyes off the road
- Manual — taking your hands off the wheel
- Cognitive — taking your mind off what you're doing

The 2011 National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) released in April 2013 shows that at any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010. According to separate National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration data, more than 3,300 people were killed in 2011 and 387,000 were injured in crashes involving a distracted driver.

Those who text and drive are 23 times more likely to be in a motor vehicle crash, according to the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute.

The days between Memorial Day and Labor Day mark the "100 deadliest days" for teen drivers on the road.

In 2010, texting while driving increased 50 percent in one year, and two out of 10 drivers say they've sent text messages or emails while behind the wheel – despite a rush by states to ban the practice.

When drivers read or send a text message, their reaction time is doubled. When asked to respond to a flashing light while texting behind the wheel, drivers were more than 11 times more likely to miss the light altogether.

According to research conducted as part of AT&T's "It Can Wait" campaign:

- ▶ A whopping 97 percent of teens say texting while driving is dangerous, but 43 percent admit to doing so.
- ▶ Of the 97 percent of teens who recognize the dangers of texting while driving, 75 percent say it is *very dangerous*; however, only 70 percent of teens say that texting while stopped at a red light is dangerous, with only 33 percent saying it is *very dangerous*.
- ▶ Almost all teens (nine in 10) expect a reply to a text or email within five minutes or less, which puts pressure on them to respond while driving.
- ▶ According to 77 percent of teens, adults tell kids not to text or email while driving – yet adults do it themselves "all the time."

- ▶ Teenage behavior behind the wheel reflects this soften attitude towards texting while stopped at a red light or glancing at their phone while driving/stopped at a red light:
  - ▶ 43 percent of teens admit to texting while driving
  - ▶ 60 percent of teens admit to texting at a red light
  - ▶ 61 percent of teens admit to glancing at their phone while driving
  - ▶ 73 percent of teens admit to glancing at their phone while stopped at a red light.

According to Teens in the Driver Seat®:

- ▶ Crashes kill more young people than any other cause, accounting for nearly half of all teen deaths in America each year. Most teens and parents are unaware of the top five dangers of teen driving: driving at night; speeding and street racing; distractions, such as cell phones/texting and too many teen passengers; low seat belt use; and alcohol use.
- ▶ More than 3,000 U.S. teens die each year in car crashes; that's the equivalent of a commercial jet loaded with teenagers crashing once every other week for an entire year.
- ▶ For every American teen killed in a car crash, about 100 more are injured. Every 15 minutes, another teenager becomes a statistic.
- ▶ Nationally, car crashes involving teenage drivers cost more than \$40 billion every year; the annual cost in Texas is more than \$3.5 billion.
- ▶ Alcohol is a factor in only 13 percent of the crashes involving the youngest drivers on the road.
- ▶ Started in 2002, Teens in the Driver Seat® is the first peer-to-peer program for teens that focuses solely on traffic safety and addresses all major risks for this age group. More than [500 schools](#) in Texas now have implemented Teens in the Driver Seat® programs, reaching more than 500,000 teens per year.
- ▶ Teens in the Driver Seat® program assessments show risk awareness levels increasing by up to 200 percent. Cell phone use at some Teens in the Driver Seat® program schools has been shown to drop by 30 percent, and seat belt use has gone up by over 14 percent.

According to Drowsydriving.org:

- Being awake for 20 hours has the same effect as being legally drunk, and young drivers have a higher risk of falling asleep behind the wheel because teens typically get 7.4 hours of sleep per night instead of the recommended nine to 10 hours.
- Sleepiness or fatigue causes the following:
  - Impaired reaction time, judgment, and vision
  - Problems with information processing and short-term memory
  - Decreased performance, vigilance, and motivation
  - Increased moodiness and aggressive behaviors
- Just like drugs or alcohol, sleepiness slows reaction time, decreases awareness and impairs judgment. Just like alcohol, sleepiness can be fatal when driving, according to the National Safety Council.

