



## Step-by-Step Planning Guide For Pledge Drive to Not Drive Distracted

### Why Sponsor a Pledge Drive?

Raising awareness of the dangers of distracted driving is important, and reinforcement of the message must be ongoing. However, to actually reduce distracted driving, individuals must change their behavior. People who commit to make a change are more likely to follow-through, especially when peers are involved and there is some measure of accountability.

Although teen drivers are more likely to text while driving, all drivers face a myriad of distractions that can take their minds and eyes from the road, even for just a few seconds. Having a pledge drive to not drive distracted should target high school students as well as all drivers in the community. Chambers of commerce and major employers/businesses may want to promote safe driving, and your local city council or mayor may want to help promote safe driving to the community.

This kit contains information and materials to assist you in conducting a pledge drive to not drive distracted. The Texas EMS Trauma & Acute-Care Foundation encourages trauma Regional Advisory Councils, their injury prevention committees, hospitals, EMS personnel and EMS agencies to get involved and help reduce distracted driving.

### Plan Now

- **Review the idea sheet included in this online kit** for suggestions on activities you can implement in your local high school (s) and community. TETAF suggests having pledge drives across the state during the week of Sept. 22-26, and will provide some statewide media activities with which local efforts can be coordinated.
- **Designate a campaign coordinator.** Your trauma RAC's injury prevention committee may want to take the lead on this initiative. However, a local community leader probably is needed, and designated trauma facilities may want to spearhead local efforts. The hospital public relations/marketing director could be asked to help with local media and other community relations activities.
- **Select a day during the week of Sept. 22-26 to conduct your pledge drive.** If you can schedule your events on a single day during this week, you can gain synergy from your activities and maximize the opportunity for media coverage. It also will allow you to tie local activities to the statewide initiative.
- **Invite the community to participate.** As soon as your date is set, immediately contact local groups that will help you reach your target audience. For example, contact the high school principal to request participation and ask for specific activities to promote safe driving. *(See sample letter.)* [\(link\)](#) Contact your local chamber of commerce to seek involvement from the business community. An alternative would be to contact large employers and major businesses individually. Consider involving local government, such as your mayor, city council or county commissioners. *(See sample letters.)* [\(link\)](#)

## **Implementation**

- **Work with your high school, business and local government contacts to promote the pledge drive and encourage individuals to take the pledge to “Just Drive.”**
  - Provide promotional messages to your key partners. *(See sample e-mail, social media and memorandum, etc.)*
  - Obtain permission to place promotional posters in high-traffic areas in schools, public buildings (like city hall, public library) and businesses, such restaurants, hospitals, churches, etc. *(See sample poster.)*
  - Distribute “pledge cards” to participating entities.
- **Involve your local media.**
  - Distribute pre-pledge day news release and fact sheets about distracted driving. Be sure to promote TETAF’s public website [www.justdrivetexas.org](http://www.justdrivetexas.org).
  - If you have local radio and/or television talk shows, ask to be a guest and talk about the important of driving safely and promote the pledge drive to “Just Drive.”
  - Have a news conference or some type of event to generate news coverage of the pledge day. Events could be held at the high school, the hospital or a major employer.
- **Take photographs of pledge drives in the school and other settings** and use them on your RAC’s, hospital’s or EMS agency’s website. Also, post them on social media platforms, like Facebook and Twitter. You also can share photos with the local newspaper.

## **Follow-Up**

- **At least monthly, reinforce the safe driving message.** Try to generate some local media coverage about the dangers of distracted driving each month, perhaps tied to specific events or holidays/celebration. For example, high school football season provides an opportunity to talk about drowsy driving or passenger distractions. Messages could be tied to Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas. *(See TETAF website for sample news releases.)*
- Demonstrate accountability. Participating entities could post signs that show days without a driving accident. You can include these statistics in periodic news releases, or repeat appearances on radio and TV talk shows.
- Use social media to send messages about the dangers of distracted driving. **Use your personal Facebook and Twitter accounts** to raise awareness of the “Just Drive” campaign. You also can promote TETAF’s social media platforms, including Facebook ([www.facebook.com/justdrivetetaf](http://www.facebook.com/justdrivetetaf)) and Twitter ([@JustDrive\\_TETAF](https://twitter.com/JustDrive_TETAF)).