



FAMILY SAFETY & THE LAW



Don't let texting & driving kill your kids

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We've all seen the signs of distracted driving — a car swerves in front of you or remains at a standstill, even after the traffic light turned from red to green. While these are harmless occurrences, the reality is that distracted driving — and especially texting and driving — can have deadly consequences.

Distracted driving is particularly dangerous among teenagers as their inexperience behind the wheel makes them more likely to be involved in an accident. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 16% of all drivers younger than 20 involved in fatal crashes were distracted while driving.

More Notable Facts

- Using hand-held or hands-free cell phones while driving delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent.
- 20% of car crashes in 2009 involved distracted driving.
- Of those killed in distracted-driving-related crashes, 995 involved a cell phone. This is 18% of fatalities in distraction-related crashes.
- In 2009, 5,474 people were killed

on U.S. roadways and an estimated additional 448,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes that involved distracted driving.

4 Important Tips to Keep Young Drivers Safe

First, educate your kids. Talk to them about the facts and the extreme dangers of texting and driving.

Visit *Distraction.gov* with your kids. It features "The Faces of Distracted Driving" campaign. These are faces of kids who have died or lived through the death of a loved one or best friend because of distracted driving. The message is somber, but effective. It only takes a moment to be distracted and be in a terrible car crash.

Make sure you set the example. Don't text and drive. If you need to take a call, use a hands-free device and keep it brief. And only try to touch base with your kids or anyone you know who is driving when they are off the road.

Lastly, have every driver in your family take the pledge not to text and drive.

Texting and driving is not just dangerous, it's illegal in New York. Remember, drivers can now be pulled over for typing text messages, surfing the web, or playing video games on their smart phone while behind the wheel.

Commit to Quit Don't Text and Drive

Helpful links: lawampm.com/community-relations/commit-to-quitghsa.org/html/issues/dist_tips.html

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