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For additional information on the digital world of kids, visit the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding's Digital Kids Initiative at [digitalkidsinitiative.com](http://digitalkidsinitiative.com).

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## CELL PHONES, TEXTING, AND DRIVING AT A GLANCE

- More than 4 out of 5 teen drivers admit to using their cell phone while driving.
- Research shows that hands-free cell phone use while driving is no less dangerous than using a hand-held phone. It's the conversation – not the type of device – that's the distraction.
- Over half of all teen drivers admit to texting or emailing while driving. Teenage and young adult drivers are the age group most likely to send a text or read an email while driving.
- Teens say that texting is the number one driving distraction.
- Texting and driving is a form of distraction. Almost 80 percent of all vehicle crashes and 65 percent or near-crashes involved some type of driver inattention or distraction during the three seconds before the crash or near-crash.
- Talking on a cell phone while driving impairs drivers at a rate equal to a blood-alcohol level of 0.08.
- The National Safety Council estimates that at least 200,000 crashes a year are caused by texting and driving.
- Texting while driving results in 330,000 distracted driving injuries per year.
- About 6,000 people a year die as a result of using their phone while driving.

# TEXTING WHILE DRIVING

***"Distracted driving is an epidemic on our roadways... our youngest drivers are particularly at risk."***

RAY LAHOOD, U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, APRIL 2012

***"We've been talking on the phone for 80 years. We've been driving for 100 years. It's only recently that we've tried to combine the two."***

DAVID TEATER, NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL, NOVEMBER 2009

## WHEN YOU TEXT AND DRIVE...

- You are four times more likely to cause an accident than when you drive drunk or talk on a cell phone.
- You are 23 times more likely to crash.
- You are taking your eyes off the road for an average of 5 seconds. At 55 miles per hour, that equals driving the length of a football field while wearing a blindfold.
- Your response time diminishes greatly. The average time it takes a drunk driver to respond and apply the brakes is 4 times more than normal. The average time it takes a texting driver to respond and apply the brakes is 40 times more than normal. Still, most young drivers view texting and driving as less dangerous than drunk driving.
- You risk injuring/killing yourself and others. It results in car crashes that kill an average of 11 teenagers a day.

## SAFETY STEPS...

- Know and obey your state's cell phone driving laws. These laws exist for your protection.
- Get in the habit of turning your cell phone off when you get in to the car.
- If you must use your phone while driving, purchase and use a hands-free device that enables you to talk on the phone without using your hands.
- Ask a passenger to read and respond to your text messages.
- Speak up if you are a passenger in the car and the driver is driving distracted.

## IF YOU'RE A PARENT...

- Research indicates that parent intervention is a crucial element in helping your driving teen make good choices.
- Teens who do not text and drive are more likely (82%) to have had frequent talks with their parents about safe driving practices than those (67%) teenagers who do text and drive.
- Continue to talk with your teen about safe driving after your teenager gets their driver's license.
- Provide a good example.
- Drill into your teenager this one simple rule: "On the road. Off the phone."