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The Epidemic of Distracted Driving Accidents

First...What is distracted driving?

Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. *All* distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety. These types of distractions include:

- Texting
- Using a cell phone or smartphone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a navigation system
- Watching a video
- Adjusting a radio, CD player, or MP3 player

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The Epidemic of Distracted Driving Accidents (cont'd)

The Most Alarming Distraction

Since **text messaging** requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the most alarming distraction.

The best way to end distracted driving is to educate all Americans about the danger it poses. In this Corradino & Papa newsletter you'll find facts and statistics that are powerfully persuasive. If you don't already think distracted driving is a safety problem, please take a moment to learn more. And, as with everything in our newsletters, please share these facts with others. Our hope is that, together, we can help save lives.

Key Facts and Statistics

(Share these with your family and friends...especially teens)

- The number of people killed in distraction-affected crashes decreased slightly from 3,360 in 2011 to 3,328 in 2012. An estimated 421,000 people were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving a distracted driver. This was a nine percent increase from the estimated 387,000 people injured in 2011.
- 11% of all drivers under the age of 20 involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the crash. This age group has the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted.
- For drivers 15-19 years old involved in fatal crashes, 21 percent of the distracted drivers were distracted by the use of cell phones.
- At any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving. This is a number that has held steady since 2010.
- Engaging in visual-manual subtasks (such as reaching for a phone, dialing and texting) associated with the use of hand-held phones and other portable devices increased the risk of getting into a crash by three times.
- Sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent to driving the length of an entire football field at 55 mph, blind.
- Headset cell phone use is not substantially safer than hand-held use.
- A quarter of teens respond to a text message once or more every time they drive. Twenty percent of teens and 10 percent of parents admit that they have extended, multi-message text conversations while driving.



National Distracted Driving Telephone Survey Finds Most Drivers Answer the Call, Hold the Phone, and Continue to Drive.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration conducted the first of several periodic national surveys of distracted driving to monitor the public's attitudes, knowledge, and self-reported behavior about cell phones, texting, and driver choices. The survey was administered by telephone to 6,002 respondents 18 and older.

Most drivers said they answer incoming calls while driving on all, most, or some trips. As for making calls, 5% report being willing to place calls on *all driving trips*, 10% on *most driving trips*, and 26% on *some driving trips*.

The majority (66%) of respondents *answer and drive*, 9% *answer and pull over*, 12% *answer and call back*, 3% say they *pull over then answer*, and 9% *hand the phone to a passenger*. Not only do most people tend to answer and keep driving, but close to half (45%) *hold the phone in their hand while driving*.

Seventeen percent use a *hands-free earpiece*, 9% have a *built-in car system*, and 17% use the *cell phone speakers*.

For your information: As of December 2013, 195 billion text messages were sent in the US every month.

Special thanks to www.Distracted.gov (U.S. Department of Transportation) for providing valuable information.

References provided upon request.



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Motor-vehicle crashes are the number one killer of teens in America; almost half of teens killed in crashes are the driver themselves.

In late 2013 The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) unveiled a new campaign that challenges parents to discuss five critical driving practices with their teenage drivers that can have the greatest beneficial impacts in the event of a crash. It is titled "5 to Drive." The '5 to Drive' campaign gives parents and teens a simple, straightforward checklist that can help them talk about good driving skills and, most importantly, prevent a tragedy before it happens.

The "5 to Drive" campaign encourages parents to discuss with their teens one safety topic each day during national teen driver safety week. The "5 to Drive" campaign topics are:

1. No cell phone use or texting while driving
2. No extra passengers
3. No speeding
4. No alcohol
5. No driving or riding without a seat belt

Poor decisions among teen drivers can lead to crashes and fatalities at any time of the day, but fatal teen driver crashes are most frequent between 3 and 8 p.m., and remain high until midnight.

For more information on the "5 to Drive" campaign, visit www.safercar.gov/parents/fivetodrive.htm and join the conversation on Facebook and Twitter.



Community Assistance

No one ever expects to be involved in a car accident, but it does happen. When it does, you need to know what to do at the scene. And, you also need to know what information to gather. Enclosed with this newsletter, Corradino & Papa is providing you with a few cards containing those questions that need to be answered.

Please keep them in your glove compartment. During an already stressful time, they will help.

Hopefully, we can make the whole experience just a little less painful.



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