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April 23, 2018

### Distracted Driving

How difficult is it to focus while driving from point A to point B?. Drivers should be more educated on the dangers of driving while distracted and taught that driving “defensively” is best to prevent incidents. Driving is a privilege, and if we treated it more as such, then we would have significantly more responsible drivers. Operating a vehicle can be tedious in heavy traffic, but add in that millions of drivers are not giving their full attention to the task and it can be deadly.

Being on the phone, fidgeting with music, and talking with passengers can all too easily become distractions to a driver. No, these actions are not illegal or inherently dangerous on their own; however they are potentially lethal if the operator of the car decides to partake in them. It only takes a few seconds to change the song, right? Well, it also only takes a few seconds to wreck. Just because these examples are usually harmless activities does not mean that it is acceptable to do so while behind the wheel of the car.

Driving while not paying attention is just as dangerous as driving under the influence. You can still cause an accident no matter your blood alcohol percentage. People still die from the crash, no matter why it happened. One may hear these stories and not care or believe, but when they experience it firsthand (or secondarily in my case) they know how awful and devastating it can be. My friend caused a wreck that killed a woman a few weeks ago. He has to live with that for the rest of his life- all

because of one stupid decision to pick up his phone from the floorboard. The commercials are right; it can wait.

Distraction does not even have to be a physical thing. Don't drive when heartbroken, furious, or dealing with other strong emotions. My cousin broke up with her boyfriend, dropped her phone, reached to pick it up, and wrapped her car around a tree. Luckily, she didn't harm anyone else, but it ruined her life. She had so much brain damage, she has lost the ability to cry. Her mental state is much lower than that of the bright girl she was before her accident. This is proof that driving distracted will cost you more than it is worth.

Is it even possible to remediate this situation of millions of drivers not fully realizing the dangers of driving while distracted? One can only hope. Education on this topic is an absolute must. One can step out on any highway, county road, and avenue in the nation and see people behind the wheel glancing up at the road and back at their phone. People with the privilege of not having to walk think it is condonable to risk other's safety for a television show or a snapchat. They honestly think it is not a big deal. It is disheartening to realize the nonchalant attitude in which people endanger those around them. Drivers must be made aware on how deadly distracted driving can be and on how it can ruin your life in mere seconds. Not only that, but they should watch testimonials of those distracted driving has affected to establish a personal connection so they feel it affects them as well. People need to be taught to drive defensively- being aware of your surroundings, keep your speed in check, do not rely on other drivers to be safe, and be ready to avoid potential risks. If one is prepared for the worst-case scenario,

they are often not thrown off by everyday happenings. The roads could be made so much safer if every driver was alert and following rules. Drivers should be educated on how to cut out distractions. Maybe it is necessary to create legislation and require harsher punishments for infractions. If it comes to this measure, by all means, break out the quills and ink.

Lastly, it is the responsibility of every single person who gets behind the wheel of a car to account for the safety of those in the vehicle and others near them. It is up to the drivers to stay alert, be careful, and save lives.