

Distracted driving is a plague that is becoming increasingly deadly as technology becomes more prevalent in everyday lives. Answering a quick text or looking at someone's latest post on social media can cost lives. This issue is especially prevalent among teenagers, as many feel that their newfound freedom associated with their new license makes them invincible.

Many drivers feel that the five seconds it takes to look down at a phone will not cause any harm. However, in five seconds a deer can run across the road, causing a car to spin and flip, killing the passengers. In five seconds, a light can turn red and without the distracted driver noticing, the car barrels into others. In five seconds, so many unpredictable occurrences can happen that leave injured people and property damaged.

Distracted driving is increasing relevant as phones are now phones in almost everyone's pockets. Someone does not even think twice about a quick glance at their phone, as this action is second nature to most people. Distracted driving stems from the lack of education surrounding the issue. Drivers' education shows gruesome videos of the outcomes of other's distracted driving experiences and schools force their students to sign posters pledging not to text and drive. However, teenagers and others still believe it will not happen to them. They are better drivers than the unfortunate people in the videos and they are much better at multitasking. One cannot truly understand the consequences of distracted driving unless they have experienced it, either as the victim or the assailant. This poses a major issue. How can we make young people understand the horrific dangers of using their phones while driving before such accidents occur? One solution could come from making drivers watch such videos depicting the horrors of distracted driving every time they need to renew their license. New drivers are made to watch such a program before receiving their first license, but then they never have to face it again. After watching and crying with the families who have lost their loved ones due to distracted driving, most people make an extra effort to avoid instances that could place them in a similar situation, that gruesome video playing in the back of their heads. However, the faces of the victims are

quickly forgotten, and bad habits resumed as drivers seem to forget the risks they take every time they glance at text or post. Rewatching the video in order to renew a license will keep the risks fresh in drivers' minds. For teen drivers, schools could make more of an effort to educate the students about the true risk and dangers of distracted drivers, rather than forcing students to sign a pledge that hangs on the classroom wall, ignored. Bad habits stem from observation. Teen drivers watch as their parents answer texts and phone calls freely while driving and these teens often follow in their parents' footsteps. Education starts at home and continues in schools and real-world experience. If parents, schools, and government facilities all work to better educate the youth about these very real dangers, then cases of distracted driving would decrease.

Not only is distracted driving an issue, but drunk driving continues to cause many avoidable deaths. Drivers, especially young drivers, often believe that the little amount of alcohol will not affect their driving skills or that their next destination is close enough for them to make it despite their intoxication. They would rather take the risk of driving under the influence rather than paying for an Uber or face the threat of getting in trouble with authority figures. In order to avoid the incredible dangerous situation of having drunk drivers on the road, there needs to be safe and accepted alternatives that incentivize people to be responsible drivers. By implementing incentives such as extra pay for Uber drivers for accepting intoxicated individuals and discounts to responsible drivers and by stressing the importance of acceptance and tolerance to parents and authorities, we could see a drastic decrease in the amount of intoxicated drivers on the road.

Proper education is an important aspect of resolving most situations and distracted driving is no different. In order to make a change tomorrow, we must educate the children today. The future drivers should be taught early about the dangers of distracted driving because as technology becomes more prevalent in society, it will be increasingly difficult to convince younger generations that looking at the

phones that they use every day can cause serious harm when used while driving. Improving education revolving around distracted driving should be the first step in reducing dangerous driving habits.