

Turning Off The Problem

Amongst high school students, texting and driving has become the new drinking and driving. In fact, Dr. Andrew Adesman, chief of developmental and behavioral pediatrics at Cohen, states "Fifty percent of high school students of driving age acknowledge texting while driving" (Ricks). Lawmakers across the nation have taken steps to find a solution for this increasing problem. Although, implementing strict laws to solve the problem concluded in no affect on teen texting and driving rates (Adesman). Therefore, schools must reduce this problem educating students about the consequences of texting and driving.

According to research done at Cohen Children's Medical Center, texting and driving causes 3,000 deaths and 300,000 injuries each year (Ricks). One of these teen deaths includes Amanda Clark. After rolling her car over three times, Clark promised to pay more attention to the road. Overtime, however, this pledge failed and a year later her texting and driving caused a fatal car crash. However, Amanda's story lives through her mother, who continues to impact students lives by showing them what can happen to drivers who text behind the wheel.

Real-life student incidents, such as Amanda Clark's story, presented in front of the entire student body impact students beyond the auditorium. For instance, recently our school had an assembly where theatre students demonstrated an effective way to react to a gunman. Seeing real students in a life-threatening crisis shifted the attitude of the students. Similarly, a mock car collision, involving distracted driving, done at Cudahy High school shook students as they watched student actors endure devastating injuries. Thus, I propose that schools across the nation need to show the effects of texting and driving. They must present devastating videos, talks, and first hand student experiences multiple times throughout the year. Similar to smoking prevention tactics, the presentation of significant statistics and stories should begin with middle school students and continue to high school. Starting the introduction of texting prevention early engraves student's minds with cons of texting and driving, which will override the attraction of phone usage in the car. In order to engage students, English teachers could assign research papers or projects on texting and driving. In addition, the tech department of each school could promote a video contest about the risks of distracted driving. Allocating specific assignments forces students to become familiar with the stories and statistics about texting and driving and encourages them to solve this urgent problem. As a result, this additional knowledge affects their subconscious, so it becomes second nature for students to place their muted phone in their backpack before turning on the engine.

Many recent solutions involve the creation of apps to avoid texting and driving. In contrast, Rocco Panetta, spokesman for The Texting Awareness program, reports, "The easiest technological solution is to turn the phone off" (Farrell). As a result, "developers may only be adding one more dangerous distraction" by creating apps to encourage good driving habits (Farrell). The utilization of apps to prevent phone usage contradicts the purpose of the app. It enables drivers to take their focus off of the road and onto the app. No app can impact the minds of students and teach them how the dangers of using phones while driving. The school serves as the one place where students can have constant reminders about distracted driving.

To conclude, instead of inventing questionable apps that could likely make the problem worse, schools need to get involved by highlighting the dangers and consequences of texting and driving. The key, motivating students to think before they become one of the 3000 teen deaths caused by texting and driving.

Works Cited

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