

Save Lives: Don't Text and Drive

“Every day, 11 teenagers die because they were texting while driving.”¹ Many people text while driving every day on public roads. Some believe this is okay, others disagree. In order to save young lives, cell phones must lock when moving at more than five mph.

Texting and driving is a major problem in today's world. When people text and drive they risk putting themselves and others in harms way. According to The National Safety Council, each year, 1.6 million accidents involve cell phones. 330,000 leading to severe injuries. Some might think that texting and driving is nothing compared to drinking and driving, but they would be wrong. The chances of being in an accident while texting and driving is 6 times higher than driving while drunk. Even though people understand the consequences they still believe they can do both at the same time. “94% of teenagers understand the consequences of texting and driving, but 35% of them admitted that they do it anyway.”²

Why does this problem happen in our world today? It is mostly because people think that they are good at texting and driving, and teens see their parents or others text while driving. “When polled, 77% of adults and 55% of teenage drivers say that they can easily manage texting while driving.”³ With the number of deaths caused by texting and driving, this seems to keep being false. When teens are asked why they believe texting and driving is okay, “the standard excuse is that they have seen adults do it too.”⁴ Today almost all states in the US have a ban on using your cell phone while driving. The success of these bans on texting and driving is unknown. Studies of these bans found that, “despite the proliferation of laws limiting drivers' cellphone use, it is unclear whether they are having the desired effects on safety. Priorities for future research are suggested.”⁵

Cell phones need to be programmed so when the phone's gyroscope senses it is traveling more than 5 miles an hour it locks the phone. Except for navigation apps and to call 911. This solution to texting and driving is practical because this can be easily implemented into phones. This solution was already started when Apple filed a patent in 2008, “which the lawyers said was granted in 2014, for technology that would “lock out” a driver's phone by using sensors to determine if the phone was moving and in use by a driver. If so, it would prevent certain functions, like texting.”⁶ With this solution less people would die each year from being distracted. This program could be conveniently implemented using the phone's pre-existing gyroscope inside. Parents would accept this answer to the problem because this would help keep their child safe while on the road. The consumer might try to buy a phone without this feature however if this is law than all phone companies must have this built into their phones. This way people would not be able to get a phone that does not include this feature.

When someone texts and drives they are distracting themselves from the road and this action could kill them and others. There needs to be a way to stop people from using their phone while driving. The answer is a program on your phone that knows when the phone is moving more than 5 mph and then lock the phone . Before you use your phone while driving just think, Is this text really more important than my life?

Endnotes

¹Ameen, Luke. "The 25 Scariest Texting and Driving Accident Statistics." *Icebike*. N.p., n.d. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

²(Ameen)

³(Ameen)

⁴(Ameen)

⁵ McCartt, Anne T., David G. Kidd, and Eric R. Teoh. "Driver Cellphone and Texting Bans in the United States: Evidence of Effectiveness." *Annals of Advances in Automotive Medicine*. Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine, Mar. 2014. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

⁶Richtel, Matt. "Phone Makers Could Cut Off Drivers. So Why Don't They?" *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 24 Sept. 2016. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.