

Texting and Driving:  
A Modern Epidemic

Texting and driving is a dangerous and reckless habit that puts everyone on the road at risk. The consequences are obvious, with looking away from the road for one message equaling driving an entire football field-length blindfolded. Though laws have been enacted and statistics for accidents have been released, the epidemic continues to plague our roadways. As a cure to the texting and driving epidemic, using an app to encourage and reward safe driving would lower phone usage within vehicles.

In order to solve this problem, we need to work with the supplies we are given. Though smartphone usage is what is causing accidents, they may also contain the solution. If we could create an app that rewards drivers for not using their devices while driving, teens and adults would have a subtle reason to stay safe on the roads. In the app, you would get points for keeping your phone out of site, untouched, and silenced from texts and calls (excluding Bluetooth car devices). Though the inability to play music off your phone and battery drainage would be problematic, it can be argued that simply using the radio and plugging in your phone would fix this. A points based reward system could be of better used to collect donations from sponsors towards a cause instead of meaningless points. If a charity is linked to the app, donations can be made while also lowering the rates of crashes. Sponsors would donate to a cause for every certain amount of driving time with your phone set on the app. If the app can be advertised successfully, convincing users to download it for free on app stores will be simple; having ads on popular apps like Pandora, Instagram and Facebook would increase downloads.

Other organizations have used apps to work towards a cause. For example, the UNICEF Tap Project\*\*\* set up a website that donated one day's worth of clean water to people who need it for every five or ten minutes a user left their phone staying facedown and stationary. The project surpassed expectations and was a success. \*UNICEF encouraged people to put down their phones to save the lives of others. An app that simply encouraged safe driving would also saves lives, even excluding sponsors.

An app is a practical solution because “according to Statista, the overall number of mobile phone users reached 4.43 billion in 2015”\*\* and has definitely increased since. With smartphones, trending apps are quick to pop-up and spread amongst users. With the problem of texting and driving pertaining mainly to our smartphones, it only makes sense to include our phones in the solution.

To stop texting and driving, using an app to encourage and reward safe driving could make a significant change on our roads.

#### Works Cited

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\*\*\*"The UNICEF Tap Project Is Back!" *UNICEF USA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.