

What Parents Should Know About Distracted Driving



Driver inattention is the number one cause of motor vehicle crashes.

Drivers are distracted about **10%** of the time they are behind the wheel.

Distracting secondary tasks—such as texting or dialing—take the driver's eyes off the forward roadway, making it harder for him or her to react to **unexpected hazards**.

Engaging in distracting tasks is **more dangerous for novice teenage drivers** than experienced adult drivers.

Distracting tasks that take the driver's eyes off the forward roadway increase crash risk!



Sending or checking texts



Using a phone to dial, check social media, take pictures, or play music



Looking at a map or GPS



Eating or drinking



Talking to passengers, especially other teens



Adjusting a radio, windows, or mirrors in the car

How can you keep your teen safe?



1 Supervise your newly licensed teen more closely than you think you need to. Ride with him/her when you can.



2 Do not allow cell phone use while driving. If your teen needs to take a call, remind him/her to pull over to the side of the road.



3 Limit nighttime driving and driving with passengers, especially during the first 6 months after your teen gets a license.

4 Agree, in writing, to a series of monthly "**checkpoints**," easing restrictions as your teen's judgment and experience improve.

5 Model good behavior when you are behind the wheel.

The NICHD is committed to research on driving risks and ways to help keep teen drivers safe.

To learn more about how to reduce accidents due to distracted driving, visit <http://www.distraction.gov> or <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/driving>.



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