

Distracted driving statistics



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According to the website, Distraction.gov, distracted driving is defined as “any activity that could divert a person’s attention away from the primary task of driving”. In 2015, the State of Florida recorded a total of 45,740 traffic accidents that were a direct result of distracted driving. Of the total number of distracted driving accidents recorded, a total of 39,396 injuries were reported and, sadly, 214 people lost their lives as a result of distracted driving accidents. With astounding statistics as these, some would ask, is the State of Florida doing enough to prevent distracted driving? Given the statistics, the answer appears to be that the state is not doing enough to educate the public about the dangers of distracted driving although some may argue that it has. In order to make a proper determination, it is important to fully understand what distracted driving is, examine the statistics of distracted driving, and explore what more can be done in order to bring awareness to the dangers of distracted driving.

First, in order to properly discuss the topic of distracted driving, it is important to fully understand what distracted driving actually is. As defined earlier, distracted driving involves any activity that would cause the driver of vehicle to divert their attention (Distraction.gov). According to the article entitled, “Focus on Driving Florida” distracted driving can be further broken down into three different categories: visual, manual, and cognitive (Focus on Driving Florida). Any activity that would require a driver to take their eyes off the road is would be a visual distraction. Manual distractions would require that the driver take their hands off the wheel; whereas, cognitive distractions involve the driver thinking about things other than driving ([<https://assignbuster.com/distracted-driving-statistics/>](http://Focus on Driving</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Florida). Examples of distracted driving include: eating, grooming, unsecure pets, adjusting vehicle control. One of the most dangerous forms of distracted driving is texting because it involves all three categories of distraction: visual, manual, and cognitive.

Next, in order to better grasp the growing problem of distracted driving, it is important to examine the statistics. In 2014, it was reported that 3, 179 people were killed and another 431, 000 people were injured in accidents that involved distracted drivers (distraction. gov). However, just the following year, the State of Florida reported that 214 people lost their lives in accidents due to distracted driving. When averaged out among the different states, the statistics provided in 2015 by the State of Florida appear to be an increase in the amount of injuries and fatalities caused by distracted driving. It is reported that in any given month, 169. 3 billion text messages are sent across the US territories and approximately 660, 000 drivers are using their cell phones or electronic devices at any given moment (distraction. gov). Additionally, it has been noted that the amount of drivers observed texting has “ increased from 1. 7 percent in 2013 to 2. 2 percent in 2014” (distraction. gov). Finally, and perhaps most scary of all, is that it only takes 5 seconds for a distracted driver going about 55 mph to cover approximately 100 yards, which equals the length of a football field (distraction. gov)!

Finally, in order to begin to reverse the statistics discussed above, it is important to explore what more can be done in order to bring awareness to the dangers of distracted driving. In 2013, the State of Florida began issuing traffic citations for distracted driving and the number of citations issued since the start has steadily climbed. Currently, texting while driving is

considered a secondary offense, which means an officer has to pull a driver over for another reason before the driver can be issued for texting while driving. The fine for the first offense for texting and driving is thirty dollars and isn't considered a moving violation. A second offense within a five-year period could result in a sixty dollar fine and would be considered a moving violation which would add points to the drivers' license (Isger, S., 2013). At this time, drivers are allowed to use their phones while stopped at a light or stuck in traffic. In addition, drivers are allowed to speak on their phone while driving and can use their phone while driving to check maps, use voice commands, or for other programming (Isger, S., 2013). The State of Florida has attempted to bring awareness to the danger of distracted driving by releasing radio public service announcement ads and launching a social media campaign using the hashtag of " FocusonDrivingFL" on Twitter and Facebook (Focus on Driving FL). However, according to the article entitled, " Brutally Honest: How to keep your teens from texting and driving" that was published in August of 2016, 55% of young adult drivers believed that texting and driving was easy while 34% of teens admitted that they had texted while driving even though forty-four states passed laws making it illegal to text and drive (Wallace, 2016). Teens interviewed for the story admitted that they had seen their parents driving while they were distracted including texting while driving. With this knowledge, it soon becomes apparent that the State of Florida has failed to adequately do enough to educate drivers both young and old so this begs the question, what more can the state do? First, it appears that the campaigns to bring awareness to this issue either need to be more consistent or need to reach a greater audience. The social media campaign stopped with just two platforms: Facebook and <https://assignbuster.com/distracted-driving-statistics/>

Twitter. Although more adults are on Facebook than ever before, most teens have fled that social networking site just for that reason. Instagram has quickly overtaken Twitter as the choice among many teens, yet the State hasn't attempted to launch campaigns on the social networking site.

Additionally, tougher penalties need to be considered when a driver is caught texting and driving. In reality, most people will pay more for their designer coffee in a week than they will if they were ticketed for distracted driving! Finally, the state should consider more in-school campaigns, including those that have been injured or caused the injury of someone else because of distracted driving. It seems as though these type of visual demonstrations have a major impact on teens.

In conclusion, distracted driving is defined as any act that would require the driver to divert their attention from the task of driving. Distracted driving can fall into three different categories: visual, manual, and cognitive with some behaviors, such as texting falling into all three categories. The statistics have shown that the incidents of accidents, injuries, and deaths have continued to rise over the last couple of years. Given this information, it soon becomes apparent that the State of Florida has failed to do enough to educate drivers to the dangers of distracted driving. In order to begin to reverse these statistics, it is necessary for drivers, both young and older, to become more educated about the dangers of distracted driving.

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