

# Texting and driving research paper examples

[Environment](#), [Disaster](#)



In recent news, reports of motorcycle or car accidents have been attributed to the driver's use of their phones for texting. Investigators have constantly stressed in their reports that many drivers nowadays are distracted from their driving because they often have their phone on their other hand, cutting their concentration in half. The driver would have to double check if he had typed the correct letters before he could send the message to his recipient, affecting his peripheral vision of the road. While the authorities and government officials actively campaigned for the reduction of accidents related to texting while driving, the statistics of cases pertaining the issue continues to increase each year. Some may argue that the concern or sentiment of the authorities warrants no importance given that people tend to be capable of multitasking and still remain safe while texting and driving, however, the statistics show otherwise that the problem is very dangerous since one slight miscalculation on when to check the text and when to look on the road may cause collateral damage.

According to the recent assessment of the US Department of Transportation, almost 3, 331 people were killed due to distracted drivers in 2011. Almost 387, 000 casualties were also reported due to motor vehicle accidents triggered by distracted drivers in 2011, slightly lower than the 2010 casualties of over 416, 000. In 2010, 18% of the casualties involved injuries due to distraction driving, mostly due to using their cellphones for texting. In the June 2011 alone, almost 196 billion text messages were sent and received throughout the country and eventually, some of these messages had distracted American drivers from their driving. The DOT had also recorded that almost 11% of drivers reported to have been part of collisions

and fatal crashes are 20 years old and the usual reason for their distraction is due to texting on their mobile phones. In support of this, surveys have also identified that 40% of these teens find themselves in situations wherein the car they are driving in often has the driver using his phone for texting. The dangers of using mobile phones, especially for texting reach up to 23% in comparison to normal driving. Apparently, studies indicate that the reason for this increased risk in using cellphones for texting while driving is the fact that it take a driver's eye to read or send a text for 4. 6 seconds, which can easily affect the driver's periphery and cause an accident .

As the statistics raise alarm on the number of cases of motor vehicle collisions and crashes due to distracted driving through texting, it is visible that there is a problem with texting while a person is driving. In a normal situation, text messaging is already a part of life that each person could text in any given circumstance, may they be just relaxing or in a moving state. Texting is considerably the fastest form of communication as a person could send a short message to the recipient without the need to wait for his response or open a computer. The privacy of text messages also makes it a preferred mode of communication between family and friends. However, given the nature of texting, many institutions and sectors have stated that texting already presents a problem upon its usage. There is the health risk brought by texting as users can develop wrist and thumb injuries, and the reduction of concentration. It could also be stressed that texting can also foster risks in communication capabilities considering that texting can dull a person's vocabulary and sentence creation capabilities. However, in the case of driving, texting causes problems as it disrupts concentration and focus.

Research, and the statistics stated above, indicate that the problem is severely affecting how driving is done in the present context. According to the report identified by the ICOMM, almost 50% of the American drivers aged 18 to 24 are recorded to be texting while driving. Almost 1/5th of the adult drivers also practice texting while driving despite knowing the risks it has over their safety .

Despite the growing alerts and announcements regarding the problem of texting while driving, law makers and concerned organizations still have issues pertaining to the resolution of the problem, as well as ensure that distractions are removed when driving. Studies show that even if there are warnings against distracted driving, the trend still continue. The study done by West Virginia University School of Public Health identified that young drivers are the ones mostly at risk with texting while driving as they would use their phones more than older drivers. They are also inexperienced, therefore they would not easily be able to control their habits in using their phones. The analysts, who presented the study, stated that many young drivers would find it hard to part with their phones temporarily while driving considering it is now a part of their lifestyle and their identity. It would also be hard for the authorities to convince young drivers to stop texting while driving unless strict enforcement of the law and lessons are done to administer the policies on banning cellphone use while driving .

Analysts have stated that law enforcement agencies are having troubles ensuring that drivers would not touch their gadgets, especially their cellphones, given that it would take their eyes out of the road. In some cases, despite the warnings and tickets given to drivers found guilty of

texting or using their mobile phones for other needs (ex. GPS), there is still the continued trend of people texting. The fines are also quite light as it would only cost up to \$125. However, it is most often that drivers are not ticketed or warned for texting while driving. There is also the lack of policy as to how policemen and local authorities could determine if the driver is indeed using their phone while driving. There are also lapses in the law as there would be instances wherein drivers could use their time on traffic, on stop due to the red light or while waiting for the train crossing to text, thereby removing instances for the policemen to use this time to pursue these drivers. With the lack of rule and proper setup to counter drivers while they text, almost 3, 000 people and more have been either killed or injured. There are already methods used to educate drivers and students as to the importance of concentrating on driving than drive while texting. In terms of the cellphones themselves, there are now additional features that would ensure that a person would not be able to use the device once it senses that the person is on a car and if it is in motion. Several programs are also available in the market that would ensure that drivers cannot text while driving. Anti-texting applications such as Cellsafety, iZup, tXtBlocker, and ZoomSafer uses the phone's GPS to identify if the user is currently moving and would automatically disable the cellphone to prevent the user from texting . Aside from these apps, there are also paid applications that could prevent and discourage texting while driving. An example to this is ORIGOSafe which could be bought for \$279, a cellphone dock that can be placed on the car and prevent the driver from using the cellphone while the engine is open. If the phone is removed while the engine is running, the dock

would send a warning and force the car to stop. The car would not open or restart unless the administrator gives the restart code .

Classes are also held in schools pertaining the importance of safe driving and the dangers of texting while driving. The curriculum nowadays also include the discussion on using iPods and other similar electronic devices while driving considering that some of the reported cases also pertained to drivers using these devices while driving. Schools also offer nowadays driver's education to ensure that new drivers are aware of the dangers of their devices while they are driving and it is visible in these new drivers that they understand the severity of the issue as they see their friends and family text while driving . Mock Drills are also enforced by some schools to teach students the dangers of drinking and texting while driving. In one example, the students of the Manila High School in Arkansas were given a drill to showcase as to how emergency teams and law enforces would respond in accidents caused by texting/drinking while driving. The mock drill showed to the students as to how the possible scenarios that may happen if they drink or text while driving, showing as to how hard the damages would be if it happens. Students had stated the mock drill allowed them to understand as to how their actions can lead into an accident, especially if they tried to text and drink while driving. The mock drill also showed how students should act if they are with people who tend to exhibit distracted driving behaviors .

Parents are also advised by schools and even non-profit organizations concerning family safety and check their child's phone bills to see if they have exceeded their texting limit and discuss with their children the importance of not texting while driving, becoming the ideal image for their

children to follow with regards to safe driving. Given in the statistics that some parents act as the bad influence for the children when it comes to driving, it is essential that parents readjust their driving behavior and showcase to their children the dangers of texting while driving. It is suggested that parents also take their children to do a “commentary drive”, which would help teen drivers to see the dangers of texting while driving, showing how their parents would act in the situation and how they could refrain from texting while driving. Intolerance must also be done in educating children and teens pertaining texting while driving .

Finally, in the case of the government, several policies are now in place to prevent the increasing number of cases of accidents due to texting while driving. Throughout the US, some state legislatures have already applied their laws restricting the use of cellphones while driving – may it be for texting or call. Almost 18 states have passed laws against texting while driving as these 18 states argued that texting distracts the driver from driving and may cause problems once the driver does not anticipate his distracted state. A ban on texting while driving has also been issued by the states for interstate bus drivers and truckers given the weight and possible consequence of their vehicles being manhandled due to distractions. The federal department also ordered its personnel to prohibit from texting while driving, especially in times of government business. The federal transportation department alone had also assessed that almost 5, 870 cases have been reported due to driver distractions due to phone use . In the 111th Congress, several other bills were passed to ensure the prohibition of texting while driving. Some of the notable examples are Senate Bill 1536 and

House Resolution 3535, which amends Title 23 of the US Federal Code that would reduce the government's highway funding to states that would not incorporate laws or policies that would prohibit texting while driving. These two bills were known as ALERT Drivers Act of 2009 and were proposed by the Committee on Environment and Public Works and the Committee of Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Highways and Transit respectively. Another bill passed to prevent the onset of texting while driving is House Resolution 4153, which would also edit the Title 23 of the US Code to detail the national standards that would be used by states when it comes to the policies that can be used to combat distracted driving. The bill also requires the Secretary of Transportation to withhold funding from states who fail to support the state and federal laws on distracted driving. The Distracted Driving Prevention Act of 2009 or HR 3994/S. 1938, was also established to open multi-pronged approaches to reduce cases of texting/calling while driving throughout the country .

Recently, the House Economics Affairs Committee had cleared HB 13 that would entail that texting while driving would be considered a secondary offence that the police could use to stop drivers after stopping them for another violation. Upon the first violation, a driver would be fined \$30 plus the court fees to arrange their violation. However, for the second and succeeding offences, the driver would be fined \$60 and their driver's license would be recorded for increased violations. Additional points would lead to increase insurance rates which may find it difficult for the driver to manage the fees of their actions. The court may also decide on confiscating the license and imprison the driver for a specified amount of time, while paying



the fees for repairs and the recovery of their victims.

Aside from the House Bill, the Senate also made their own bill, SB 52 which would pose a ban on texting while driving, either sending a message or reading texts. The ban is supported by several important names in the industry such as AT&T, the AARP, AAA and the several businesses and law enforcement groups who see that the increasing number of accidents caused by drivers texting is getting out of hand. Research had already noted, according to lawmakers, that drivers who take their eyes off the road for more than 5 seconds may find himself driving in a different direction or lane, causing an accident in the process . Senate Bill 1222 was also amended and backed by the Senate that would fine drivers \$125 if they are caught texting while driving on their first offence. If the driver is caught again doing the same act, he would need to pay \$200, \$250 and \$500 respectively per succeeding violation. The bill also sustains its key provision on making texting a primary offense, enabling police and traffic officials to file tickets on the driver for that act alone .

With the increasing number of cases related to accidents due to distracted driving by texting steadily adding numbers per year, drivers must be re-educated and informed as to the dangers of texting while driving considering that every second spent on the distraction can lead to the deaths of companions, and fellow motorists. On the one hand, it may be true that some may indeed be capable of texting despite driving without experiencing an accident and texting is very important in society today. Every person must be connected with each other through text messaging to share important messages and other necessary messages that could not wait for a

reply. However, there is a proper time for texting and it is not the time while a person is driving because the driver is handling the lives of his passengers and himself. A single error in focus may lead into collision and accidents with other motorists, which may lead to grave injury and death. The public must be made aware of the dangers of texting while driving, as well as be given all possible solutions to ensure that the habit is removed. Communicating through texting may indeed be a need that must not be apart from a person's lifestyle, however, when it comes to texting while driving, it is crucial that one concentrates on driving since a text message can be sent after driving to prevent accidents from occurring.

## **Works Cited**

- Beaton, Matthew. "UPDATED: House panel OKs ban on texting while driving." 3 April 2013. The News Herald. Web. 16 April 2013. .
- Berko, Roy, Joan Aitken and Andrew Volvin. ICOMM: Interpersonal Concepts and Competencies: Foundations of Interpersonal Communication. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010. Print.
- Craig, Randy. "Texting While Driving: Parents' Role in Prevention." 2012. National PTA Headquarters. Web. 16 April 2013. .
- Engelhardt, Jeff. "Distracted drivers a difficult problem to solve." 6 February 2013. The Daily Chronicle. Web. 15 April 2013. .
- Figliola, Patricia and Gina Stevens. Text and Multimedia Messaging: Emerging Issues for Congress. Washington, D. C: US Congressional Research Service, 2011. Print.
- KAIT-TV. "'Mock Drill' teaches students dangers of drinking/texting while driving." 2013. KAIT8-TV Arkansas. Web. 16 April 2013. .

Merrier, Patricia, Joyce Logan and Karen Williams. Business Communication. Mason: Cengage Learning, 2010. Print.

Nolan, Jim. " Senate backs amendments on texting while driving." 4 April 2013. Richmond Times-Dispatch. Web. 16 April 2013. .

Panetta, Kasey. " Technology forces your teen to stop texting and driving." 19 March 2013. ECN Magazine. Web. 16 April 2013. .

West Virginia University. " Texting While Driving Injuries to Rise Despite Bans, Warnings: Study." 8 March 2013. Insurance Journal. Web. 16 April 2013. .

Yahoo! News. " New Technology Could Help Solve Texting While Driving Problem, Tennessee Attorney Says." 4 August 2010. Free Republic News. Web. 16 April 2013. .