

DISTRACTED DRIVING

DEBUNKING THE MYTHS OF CELL PHONE DISTRACTED DRIVING

Most people may know that texting while driving is a dangerous behavior, but many don't fully grasp the idea that having a cell phone conversation in the car is also risky. Below, the National Safety Council helps dispel the illusion of multitasking and the myths that blind the public into believing it is safe to use your cell phone while driving.

It's no mystery: Americans today have an unhealthy obsession with their cell phones.



A 2012 survey conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that **more than two in three** drivers report talking on their cell phone while driving at least once in the past 30 days.



Nearly **one in three** ~ say they did this "fairly often" or "regularly."



Drivers talking on handheld or hands-free cell phones are **4X** as likely to be involved in a crash.



In addition, the NSC currently estimates that people talking on cell phones while driving are involved in **21%** of all traffic crashes in the United States.

The average cost of a property damage crash in 2011: \$9,100.00

Myth #1 Drivers can multitask.

Reality

Contrary to popular belief, the human brain cannot multitask. Driving and talking on a cell phone are two thinking tasks that involve many areas of the brain. Instead of processing both simultaneously, the brain rapidly switches between two cognitive activities.

Take the classic example of the act of walking and chewing gum. There is a common misconception that because people appear to simultaneously do both that they can just as easily talk on their cell phones and drive safely at the same time.



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Myth #2 “Talking to someone on a cell phone is no different than talking to someone in the car!”

Reality A 2008 study cited by the University of Utah found that drivers distracted by cell phones are **more oblivious** to changing traffic conditions because they are the only ones in the conversation who are aware of the road.



In contrast ~ drivers with adult passengers in the car have an **extra set of eyes and ears** to help keep the drivers alert of oncoming traffic problems. Adult passengers also tend to adjust their talking, when traffic is challenging. People on the other end of a driver's cell phone cannot do that.

Myth #3 “Drivers talking on cell phones still have a quicker reaction time than those who are driving under the influence!”

Reality A controlled driving simulator study conducted by the University of Utah found that drivers using cell phones had slower reaction times than drivers with a .08 blood alcohol content, the INTOXICATION LIMIT!



There is a simple solution — drivers talking on cell phones can immediately eliminate their risk by **hanging up the phone**, while drunk drivers remain at risk until they sober up!

