

SAFE DRIVING -

DEALING WITH DISTRACTIONS



NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS (NHES) 9-12

Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

- 2.12.2 Analyze how the culture supports and challenges health beliefs, practices, and behaviors.
- 2.12.3 Analyze how peers influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.
- 2.12.7 Analyze how the perceptions of norms influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.
- 2.12.8 Analyze the influence of personal values and beliefs on individual health practices and behaviors.

Standard 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

- 5.12.5 Predict the potential short-term and long-term impact of each alternative on self and others.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to:

- Identify key factors associated with teenage traffic collisions
- Understand the responsibilities of a newly licensed driver
- Gain a better understanding of consequences associated with inexperienced and distracted driving
- Discuss ways in which behaviors affect safe driving
- Discuss ways to improve their driving
- Identify the rules and allowances of their State Graduated Driver's License Policy

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ACTIVITY 1:

Ask students to think about a recent accident they witnessed or learned about on the evening news.

- Ask students to write down a brief description of the crash and the drivers (adults or teenagers)
- Ask students to identify the apparent cause(s) of the crash. See examples of possible causes below
 - Speeding
 - Driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
 - Texting or talking on the phone
 - Changing the radio station/adjusting iPod or other MP3 device
 - Having been deprived of sleep
 - Putting on make-up, fixing hair
 - Eating or drinking
 - Showing off for friends/passengers
 - Following too closely
 - Making unsafe lane changes
 - Looking at a traffic crash or broken down vehicle on the side of the roadway
 - Misjudging speed and/or distance

How many of the common factors did your class identify? Discuss each of the common factors for clarity.

After the discussion, prioritize the common factors as to the cause of most crashes. Conduct research on the Internet or contact the community relations office at your local police department to determine if your class has prioritized the list correctly. Create a Digital Infomercial or a Digital Vlog for publication in your community or school newspaper, addressing one of the common factors. Include in your Digital Infomercial or Digital Vlog video clips, images, articles, interviews, or other Internet resources you deem effective to make your presentation persuasive.

ACTIVITY 2:

Did you know some fatal crashes occur because a person may be changing a CD or radio channel? Or they may be on a cell phone? Or texting?

Many fatal crashes in which 16-year-olds were driving involve only the teen's vehicle. Typically, these crashes were high-speed where the driver lost control. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), driver error accounts for 75 percent of fatal crashes among 16-year-olds, 68 percent of deadly crashes among 17-year-olds, and 54 percent of fatal crashes among those who are between the ages of 20 and 49.

(ACTIVITY 2 cont. on page 3) **2**

Create a Digital Prevention Plan in which you research, record, and report on how extraneous factors, such as jewelry, applying make-up, texting, cell calls, or clothes have been a catalyst for an accident. Include in your Digital Prevention Plan video clips, images, interviews, articles, and other Internet resources you deem useful. As a class, present all of your Digital Prevention Plans to your school audience and then make them available for review in the library as reminders for safe driving. In addition, if your school has daily or weekly televised news, present one Digital Prevention Plan per week or per day.

REFERENCES:

- U.S. Department of Transportation
- Official U.S. Government Website for Distracted Driving
- *Put It Down Campaign*
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Statistics and Facts about Distracted Driving. Based on the 2008 National Occupant Protection Use Survey [online]. [Cited 2008 June 2–22]. Available from URL: <http://www.distraction.gov/stats-and-facts/#what>
- AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. 2009 Traffic Safety Culture Index. [Cited 2009 July]. Available from URL: <http://www.aaafoundation.org/pdf/2009TSCIndexFinalReport.pdf>
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Policy Statement and Compiled Facts on Distracted Driving. [Online]. Available from URL: <http://nhtsa.gov/>