

Key Messages

Road crashes are the third-leading cause of death among young people ages 15 to 24 in Canada. Young people are killed in crashes at a higher rate than any other age group under 75 years old. Transport injuries for youth and young adults cost the Canadian economy \$990 million in a single year. Parachute's National Teen Driver Safety Week (NTDSW) is an annual campaign to build awareness of teen driver safety issues and to encourage community and youth involvement as part of the solution.

In fatal crashes, drivers aged 20 to 25 were more likely to be distracted than all other age groups, followed by drivers aged 16 to 19. Parachute NTDSW wants to help put a stop to these preventable deaths by bringing awareness to the serious issue of **distracted driving** among teens and young adults.

Join the conversation on social media, using the hashtags **#DrivingTakes100** and **#NTDSW2022**.

Put down the phone: Don't drive distracted

Distraction can be defined as anything that takes a driver's attention away from the task at hand and can be classified into three categories: visual, manual and cognitive.

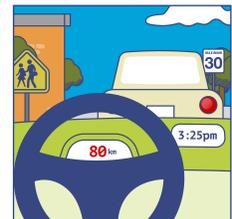
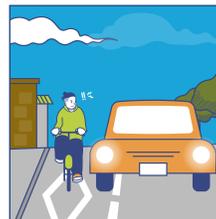
- Visual distraction: When a driver's eyes leave the roadway.
- Manual distraction: When a driver's hands leave the steering wheel.
- Cognitive distraction: When a driver's mind is no longer on the task at hand.

Some examples of distraction include daydreaming, using your phone to talk, text, or read, talking to friends in the car, switching songs, changing the temperature, eating, smoking and even putting on make-up.

Note that the **legal definition** of distracted driving varies by province and territory, as do the penalties for this offence. Make sure you are familiar with the distracted driving laws in your area.

Young drivers may drive distracted for different reasons. These reasons include the fear of missing out (FOMO), texting while driving is expected among their peers to maintain peer-to-peer interaction in a timely manner, and to increase feelings of belonging. Here's why distracted driving is a bad idea:

- Drivers who text while driving are up to **six times more likely** to be involved in a crash. Eyes on the road. That message can wait. Don't drive distracted.
- When you use your cell phone, your eyes are not on the road and you miss seeing information needed to drive safely. Don't put yourself or others at risk; keep your focus on the road.
- The risk of a crash increases when you take your eyes and attention off the road, even just for a second. Remove the temptation by keeping your phone out of reach while driving.
- Your phone can do a lot of things, but it can't drive a car.
 - Turn your phone off while you're driving
 - Give your phone to a passenger
 - Set up automated messages to let people know you're driving
- Don't drive distracted: Text your friends before you leave, wait to post your new video when you get home and leave your phone in the back seat.
- Texting your friend "be there in 5 min 😊" might seem harmless and helpful but it's not worth getting into a crash or getting injured. Check your ETA before you leave and text your friend before you start driving.
- When you're driving is not the time to like your friend's post. Your friends want you to wait and like their post when it is safe.
- There are several risk factors associated with cell phone use while driving in teens. Watching parents and caregivers use their phones while driving is one of these factors. If a parent texts and drive it, increases the likelihood that their kids will text and drive. If you are a parent: if you don't text and drive, chances are better that your kids won't, either.
- Phones aren't the only thing that can distract you when you're driving. Other distractions include in-car touchscreens, eating, passengers and pets.



Rail safety and distracted driving

- Saw the text, but did you see the train? Don't put yourself or others at risk; keep your focus on the train track.
- Because of their size, trains appear to be much farther away and travelling much slower than their actual speed. Don't be fooled!
- The average train needs at least 2 km to stop. Trains can stop, but they can't stop quickly.
- An average freight train weighs more than 5,500 tonnes. Compare that to a car, which weighs about 1.5 tonnes. A train hitting a car is like a car hitting a pop can.

Teen driver safety and Vision Zero

No collision death is acceptable on our roads. Strategies and policies that have proven to be effective prevention against distractive driving include technology, enforcement, engineering, education and engagement. Efforts such as NTDSW seek to advocate and educate in support of these evidence-based approaches.

Learn more about the Vision Zero approach to road safety at parachute.ca/visionzero

#DrivingTakes100 #NTDSW2022

Help us prevent the tragedy of serious injury and death in car crashes.

NTDSW 2022 also focus on the issues of drug-impaired, drunk, speeding and aggressive driving, and rail safety. For more information, visit parachute.ca/ntdsw

