



Instructor Guidelines for Teens, Trucks & Distracted Driving

As a front-line educator teaching young drivers how to be safe, we hope our training video and materials will be valuable additions to what you already teach. In developing this curriculum, we met with high school students, driving instructors, law enforcement officials and safety experts for advice on how best to present information to teens on sharing the roads with large trucks and buses; we adapted some of the same tools that professional drivers use to minimize distractions.

The following recommendations are helpful in presenting the *Teens, Trucks and Distracted Driving* program to young adults entering the driving population. The information presented in the handout and video is based on statistical analysis and research and personal experiences of safety enforcement personnel, safety educators and more experienced teen drivers. The teens featured in the video are not actors but actual teen drivers. The video includes a personal account of a real-life tragic collision directly related to distracted driving.

The testimonial involves a young man whose texting while driving caused an accident that killed two people, changing his life forever as well as those of the survivors. This depiction includes dramatic testimony and photographs. Care has been taken to exclude unnecessarily graphic crash scenes without sacrificing the message all drivers must heed: *Distracted driving can cause life-altering crashes.*

The prevailing theme of the curriculum is: **Eyes on the road, hands on the wheel, head in the game.** This simple theme is repeated throughout the materials and is an easy-to-remember way to describe how drivers can deal with visual, manual and cognitive distractions.

Included Materials

- Print out the “**No Texting/No Distracted Driving**” **pledge form** and give it to your students to take home, along with the handout.

- **Sample questions** are included in the student workbook and lesson plan. However, feel free to develop your own tests or quizzes.
- After presenting the curriculum, we ask that you complete the **report form** and fax or email it in. This form collects data that will be used to determine the number of students reached and provides feedback to help us improve future educational efforts.
- The **Teens Trucks and Distracted Driving video** is included as well.

Equipment Needed

- Audio/visual – projector and laptop
- Whiteboard/blackboard for instructor’s discretionary use
- Access to copy machine

Discussion Prior to Viewing

Lead a discussion of recent events where traffic incidents have occurred or may occur in a normal day.

Ask students:

- How often do you text on your cell phone?
- Do you talk or text while driving?
- How often do you drink and/or eat while driving?
- Do you sometimes have others in the vehicle as you drive?

Inform your students that these are all distractions to focused driving. Introduce the video to provide some helpful hints on driving safely and avoiding crashes. Explain that there is nothing more devastating to a driver than to be involved in a crash, especially when someone is injured or killed as the result of inattention.

More on next page



Instructor Guidelines for Teens, Trucks & Distracted Driving

View the Video

The video is just over 18 minutes long and is broken down into the following segments which begin at the noted timeline mark:

1. Introduction – 0:00
2. Eyes, Hands, Head – 1:53
3. Reggie’s Story – 5:44
4. Teen Passengers – 8:52
5. Moving Off the Road – 10:50
6. Sharing the Road with Large Trucks – 11:50
7. No Zones – 13:18
8. Driving Preparation and Tips – 15:03
9. Recap – 16:59

You may wish to play individual segments one at a time and then discuss, or play the video in its entirety before engaging students in discussion.

We recommend that students refrain from taking notes during the presentation (much of the information is included in the handout) and instead give their undivided attention to the video. We suggest being attentive to any students in the class who may be emotionally affected by the scenes.

Post Video Discussion

The most important aspect of this presentation is the interaction among students and their instructor while discussing what they viewed. Encourage students to share their personal experiences and talk about what affected them most from the video. To further encourage discussion and interaction with students, you may wish to touch upon the following points:

Visual Distractions (Eyes on the road) – Includes anything that takes the driver’s eyes off the road. Looking at a passenger, electronic device or scenery outside the car window is distracting. Even changing the radio station is a visual, as well as a manual, distraction.

What are some visual distractions students may encounter? How often do they occur?

Manual Distractions (Hands on the wheel) – Involves any action that requires the driver to take his or her hands off the wheel. Examples are manipulating a cell phone, eating, drinking or retrieving something inside the car.

Name some common manual distractions. Ask students to describe how those distractions may get in the way of safe driving.

Cognitive Distractions (Head in the game) – Occurs when the driver is not fully aware of the vehicle, its speed or the changing roadway environment. The driver must be fully alert to changing traffic signals, warning lights or signs, hazards along the roadside and other vehicles sharing the road.

What types of events or incidents can cause cognitive distractions? How could they affect your driving?

Driving Safely Around Large Trucks and Buses

Ask students to identify the “No Zones” of large vehicles. Have someone explain the proper procedures for passing and following large trucks. Identify hazards associated with trucks or buses making left and right turns. Analyze the stopping distance of a heavy-duty, fully-loaded truck (which needs approximately 90 percent more stopping distance) versus cars (a car weighs 1/16 the weight of a tractor trailer). Re-emphasize the four key points for operating safely around large trucks and buses:

1. Don’t cut off trucks.
2. Stay out of blind spots or “No Zones.”
3. Maintain a safe following distance.
4. Remember that trucks and buses make wide turns and need more space to maneuver.

More on next page



Instructor Guidelines for Teens, Trucks & Distracted Driving

Summary and Wrap-Up

To reduce distractions, use the safe driving practices of professional drivers.

1. Before turning on the ignition, check to make sure mirrors are adjusted, loose items are stowed away, and your cell phone is in the off position, muted or set to go to voice mail.
2. Fasten your seat belt.
3. Once on the road, reduce visual distractions by making brief scans of the mirrors but ensure your principal focus is on the road ahead.
4. Refrain from arguments or lengthy discussions with passengers or playing music too loudly which may prevent you from hearing emergency vehicle sirens. Concentrate on the primary task: driving.

Reinforce the message once again: **Eyes on the road, hands on the wheel, head in the game.**

Hand out pledge forms and ask students to sign them, take them home, have their parent or guardian sign them, and post in the home as a reminder.

Sample Questions for Examination, Quiz or Group Discussion

- What role does distracted driving play in highway safety?
- What distracted driving behaviors have you personally observed during your time on the road?
- Do you know anyone who has been or have you been the victim of a crash resulting from distractions on the road or in the vehicle? (Give examples)
- What are the three types of distractions experienced by all drivers? (visual, manual, cognitive)
- Give examples of and discuss what can be done to eliminate various types of distractions.
- What considerations should you have when driving around large trucks?
- What can you do when you observe a friend who is not paying attention to their driving?

For more information on Teens, Trucks and Distracted Driving, visit www.cvsa.org/osd.