

VISION ZERO

Zero fatalities. Zero excuses.

Two Stand Out North Dakota SADD Students Work to End Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is becoming more of an issue every day. It is so devastating to know that drivers across the nation are not only putting their life at risk, but also everybody around them because they could not wait to check their social media, change the song, or take a bite of their lunch. Distracted driving is a very serious issue that needs to change. When anyone drives distracted they are putting themselves, passengers, and everyone else in danger.

As members of Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), we want to share with our fellow teens why distracted driving is so dangerous and how they may not even realize they are being distracted while driving. Drivers can become distracted by their phone, passengers, music playing, eating, grooming, etc. and this is very concerning because all of these distractions are taking place and the driver's focus is not on the road. Many teens think they're invincible. They believe that nothing bad will ever happen to them. Sadly, it usually takes a tragedy for them to realize the dangers.

We encourage our fellow teens, as well as all drivers, to follow this advice to avoid driving distracted:

- Silence your cell phone and turn off the vibration mechanism: Turn off your notifications. The less you hear your phone, the less tempted you'll be to respond while driving.
- Designate a texter: Borrow thumbs from your passengers. Ask your passengers to handle tasks such as texting, placing a call or reprogramming your GPS.
- Ask family, friends and colleagues to respect your drive: Set cell phone boundaries and politely ask them not to contact you during the hours of your commute.
- Place your phone in the glove compartment or trunk: The old adage, 'out of sight, out of mind' can be applied here. Wait until you're at your destination or pull into a safe place or rest area to check messages.
- Download an app: Get some technological help to stop texting while driving. Download your favorite distraction-free app and forget the distractions while you drive.

Through our work with SADD, we are excited about teaming up with the North Dakota Department of Transportation to help promote the North Dakota Vision Zero strategy to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries caused by motor vehicle crashes. We know by working together and combining our resources we are going to take leaps and bounds towards drivers recognizing the need to take personal responsibility behind the wheel. Zero is the only acceptable number when it comes to roadway fatalities and serious injuries and we know with hard work and determination we can reach that goal. We feel that Vision Zero is a great strategy that will make a difference in communities and we will see a change in distracted driving crashes in the years to come. We can't wait to help make a difference in our communities and state.

Lauren Roscoe and Logan Munson
SADD Students

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