



## TRAGIC TEXT

### Ben's Story

Ben was a junior in high school and had just recently got his driver's license. Ben loved playing baseball, his girlfriend Heather, and he especially loved the new truck his parents got him as a seventeenth birthday present.

One day on his way home from school, Ben got a text from Heather asking him to meet her later to study. When Ben looked down to reply, he shifted into the other lane of traffic and hit another car head on killing the other driver instantly. Ben's car was crushed and he had to be cut out of his truck. His life was spared, but due to his injuries, he lost both of his legs. Ben was charged with manslaughter and was sent to prison for the death of the other driver. All this could have been prevented if only Ben had waited to reply to the text.



## FREE RESOURCE



### Text Guardian App

Download this free app and help save lives.  
(Available on Android & Window devices)

## TEST YOURSELF!

What do you know about distracted driving?

1. There is nothing wrong with texting and driving.
  - a. True
  - b. False
2. It is easy to focus on driving while also doing something else.
  - a. True
  - b. False
3. Distracted driving kills more teens each year than drug abuse.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. Eating while driving is not a form of distracted driving.
  - a. True
  - b. False
5. If you kill someone while distracted driving you could be charged with manslaughter and serve jail time.
  - a. True
  - b. False

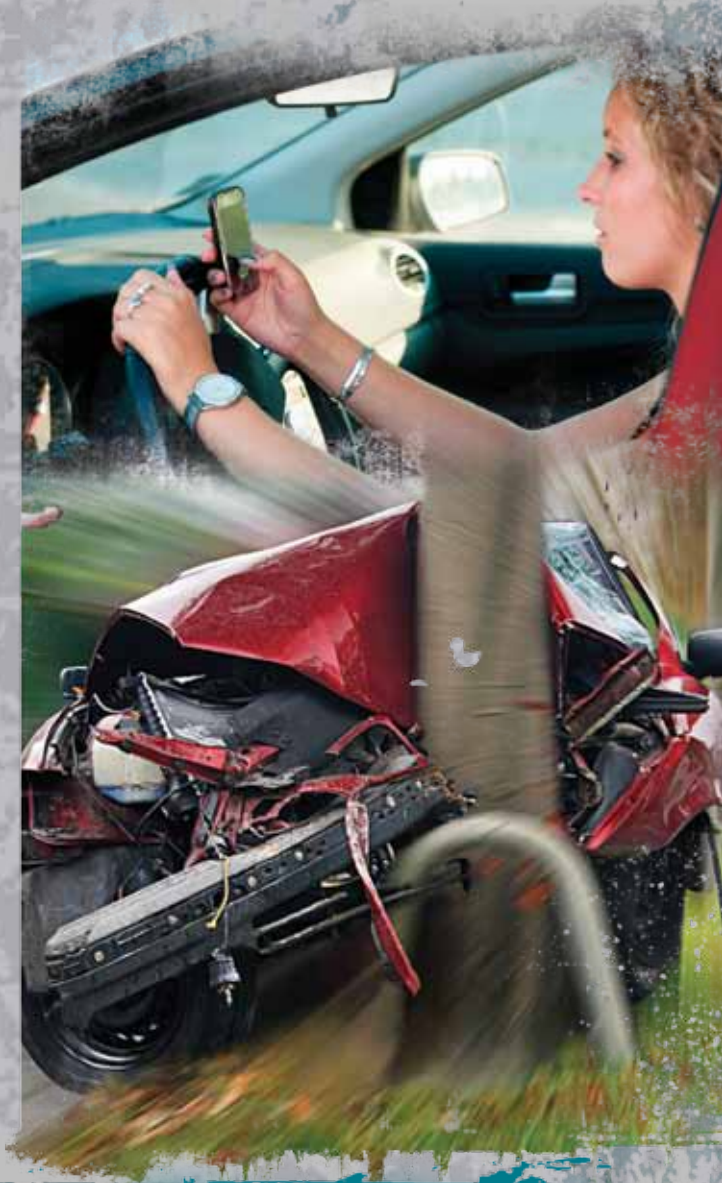
Answers: 1. b; 2. b; 3. a; 4. b; 5. a

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STAY SAFE SERIES

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# DISTRACTED DRIVING



## A DEADLY DECISION



## WHAT IS DISTRACTED DRIVING?

Distracted driving is driving while your attention is on something else other than the road. This could be texting, eating or being deep in thought about something other than the road. When you are not giving the road your full attention, driving can be a dangerous endeavor.

Each day accidents on the road due to distracted driving claim the lives of at least 20 Americans. This could be prevented if people would stop driving while trying to do other things.

## EXAMPLES OF DISTRACTED DRIVING?

- Texting or Use of Cell Phone
- Eating and Drinking
- Paying attention to or talking to passengers
- Grooming, such as putting on makeup or combing hair
- Adjusting systems in your car such as the radio or navigation
- Reading maps or things on the side of the road
- Being deep in thought about things other than your driving



## WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

### The Danger to Teens

Distracted driving is the number one cause of death of teens in the United States, eclipsing drug use by at least one third. Many teens feel like they can multitask, but that is simply not the case. Many teens who are new to driving don't know all the risks involved, and when they take their eyes off of the road, they often do not have a quick enough response time to correct the error.

Distracted driving is a choice, and teens need to be aware how dangerous their decisions on the road can be. Of the teen fatalities from car crashes in the past year, half of those deaths were either passengers of a teen driver or someone a teen driver hit in another vehicle. If it is proven that distracted driving caused the death of a passenger or someone else on the road you could be charged with manslaughter. Your decision to drive distracted could have major consequences, even jail time.



## TEXTING AND DRIVING

### It Can Wait!

Of all the ways a person can drive distracted, texting is by far the most dangerous. When you are texting you are impairing yourself in three different ways. Your eyes are diverted to the phone screen, your hands are used to type the message and your mind is focused on what you are typing. Therefore if something happens, such as a child in the road or a vehicle stopped in front of you, by the time you notice it could be much too late. Of all teen road fatalities, texting while driving is the number one cause of death. When all your senses are diverted, it gives little room for error.

## WHAT CAN HAPPEN?

### Risks of Distracted Driving

1. Distracted driving can impair you visually – if your mind is focusing on something else, you can look at something without comprehending what you are seeing. This is known as “inattentive blindness”. If you are not truly seeing that something is there, you are more likely to hit it, causing an accident.
2. Distracted driving can cause you to lose control of your vehicle, therefore making it impossible to stay on your side of the road. If your hands are busy fidgeting with something else, such as the radio dial or texting, you can lose control of your vehicle and cause an accident.
3. Distracted driving can slow your reaction time as a driver. If you are thinking about something else or focusing on a text, you may not react in time to a given situation such as bad weather or something in the road which could cause a serious accident.

## TIPS TO AVOID DISTRACTED DRIVING

### Risks of Distracted Driving

1. Keep your hands on the wheel and eyes on the road at all times.
2. Limit interaction with passengers to avoid distraction.
3. Check your mirrors often and always watch for other drivers and keep your mind on the road.
4. Take breaks if you feel yourself getting sleepy instead of eating or listening to music to stay awake.
5. Make a promise to never text while you are driving.

