

# IN CONTROL: A PREVENTION PROGRAM TO REDUCE TEEN DRIVER DISTRACTION



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Community Focus.  
World Impact.



Funding provided by:

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# About Us

- *In Control* is a program of *Car Safety Now*
  - Promotes motor vehicle safety for children and teens
  - We are health promotion scientists & CPSTs, with over 20 years in the field
    - Rooted in behavioral science & research supported to motivate change
    - Designed with input from teachers, parents, and teens
    - Developed in the Dept of Pediatrics at Eastern Virginia Medical School
    - Funding from Virginia DMV Highway Safety Office (also EVMS, CDC, NHTSA in past)
  - Our most popular program is the *Boost 'em in the Back Seat* video
  - All our materials are FREE & online at [carsafetynow.org](https://carsafetynow.org)

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# Teen Drivers are Overrepresented in Fatal Crashes (NCSA, 2022)

- Teens' inexperience makes them more susceptible to driver distraction (NHTSA, 2022)
  - The two biggest sources of distractions for teen drivers are cell phones and passengers
- Use of cell phones (to type or talk) is one of the greatest contributors to teen crashes
  - Texting while driving increases the risk of a crash by 23 times (Olson, Hanowski, & Hickman, 2009)



# Rethinking our Approach



- High awareness of distracted driving dangers  
(Will, Maple, & Perkins, 2015)
  - Engage and motivate our audience, not lecture
- Borrowed from tobacco prevention literature to develop an anti-manipulation campaign
  - Respect-based, edgy & humorous, capitalize on youths' desire to control their own lives  
(Farrelly et al., 2002; Hicks, 2001; Sly et al., 2001)

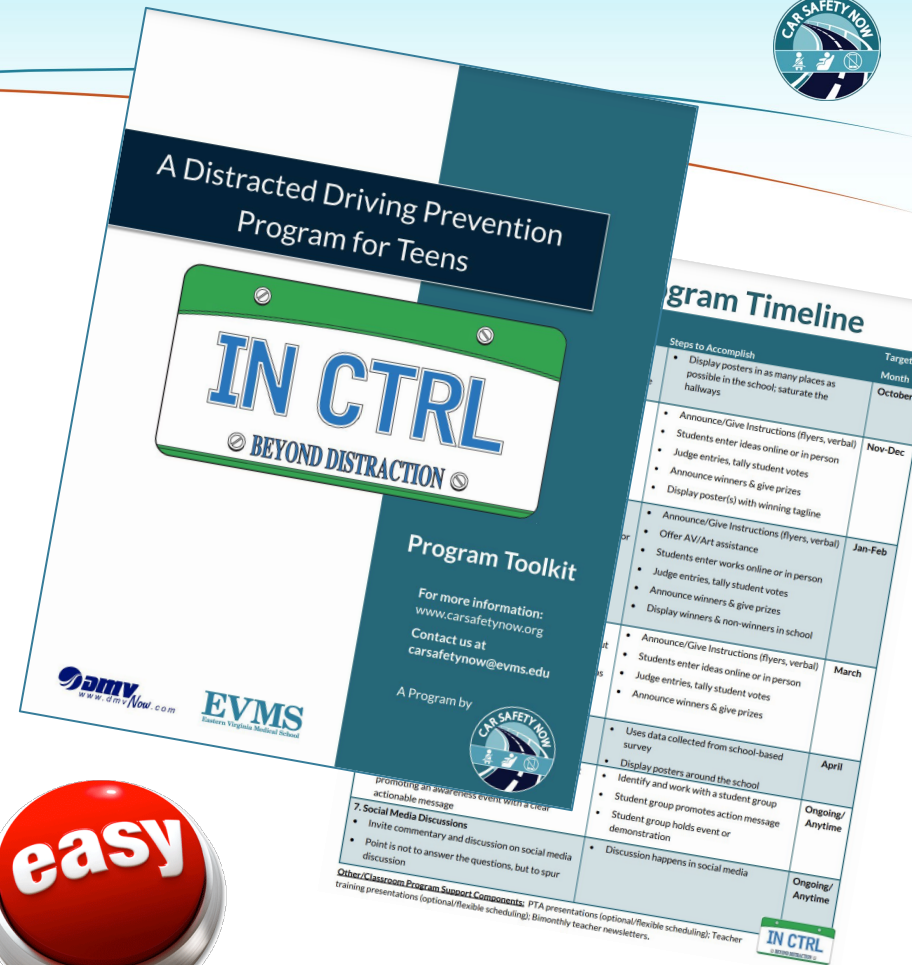


# Program Development

- ❑ Phone portrayed as the villain – controlling the driver
- ❑ Developed with student focus group (N = 28) & school personnel input
- ❑ Participative education program (Lehman & Geller, 1990; Will & Dunaway, 2017)
  - ❑ Grounded in social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986)
  - ❑ Maximizes intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008)
- ❑ Piloted in public high schools in southeastern Virginia using a 2X2 pre-post randomized control group design (Will, Maple, & Perkins, 2015)

# The Toolkit (revised 2021)

- ❑ Free, online or printable
- ❑ Menu of activities, choose your adventure
- ❑ Facilitator instructions, learner handouts, resources
- ❑ Designed for minimal burden, minimal resources & time
- ❑ Adapt to any setting





In Control Program Toolkit for Teen Drivers: Activities and posters promote the norm to be in control when behind the wheel. The research-supported distracted driving program for teens includes posters, social media discussion topics, contests encouraging creativity, and more.



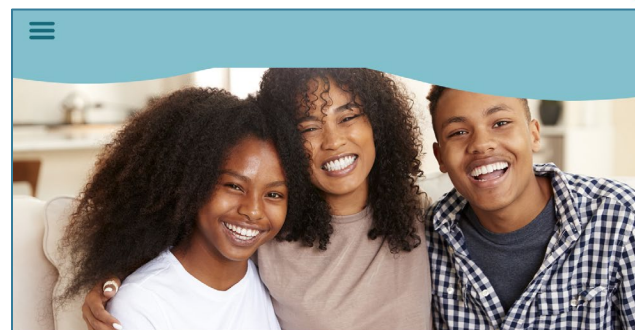
## About the In Control Program

In Control is a school-based program designed for teen drivers. Rather than a lecture-based format, the program materials are fun and engaging for students. The design received input

# Teen Safety Pages for Professionals



## For Parents




## Teens and Young Driver Safety

Car crashes are a leading cause of death for teens. Their greatest dangers are alcohol and other drug use, forgetting to use a seat belt, distracted driving, speeding, and driving with passengers in the vehicle.

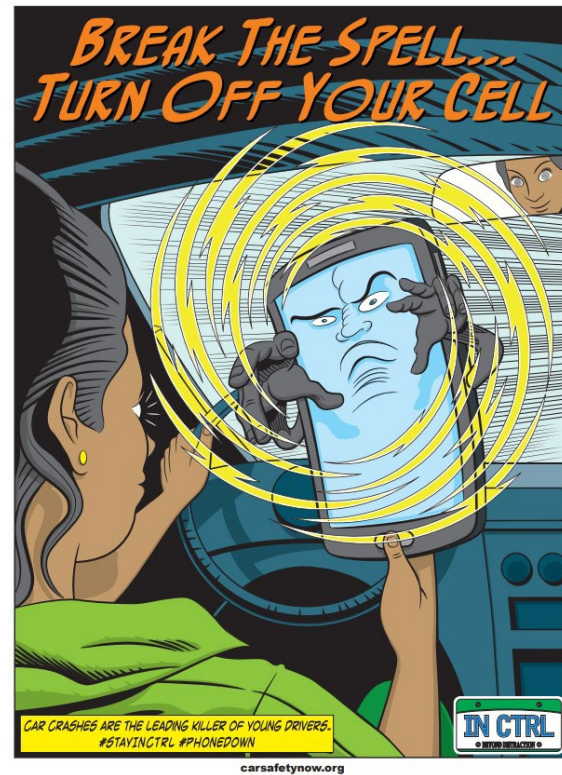
**You've been protecting your kids their whole life. Don't stop now – Set the rules before they hit the**



 <b>Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
Kickoff Posters	The phone is the villain having control over driver; hallways and classrooms are saturated with posters
Tagline Contest	Students submit ideas; display winning tagline
PSA Contest	Students create videos/artwork/music/poetry for “What it means to be <i>In Control</i> while driving”
Solve It! Contest	Students enter ideas (invention or intervention) to solve the problem of distracted driving
Social Marketing Posters	Students design posters using data collected from the student body
In Control Challenge	Student group holds event or demonstration with clear actionable message
Social Media Discussions	Suggested conversation starters for school social media discussions
Auxiliary Components	Evaluation tools, PTA/PTSA Presentation, Teacher Training

Portray the phone as a villain controlling the driver

These are meant to saturate the school at kickoff





Available in Spanish & multiple sizes  
on our website [carsafetynow.org](http://carsafetynow.org)



# Tagline Contest

- Teens enter ideas
- Prizes for winner(s)
- Display winning tagline

## Tagline Contest!



**Attention Students:** Create a Tagline for display in your school!

Taglines must focus on the theme of distracted driving and should be between 5-10 words long. Be sure to NEATLY print your full name, tagline and email address on your entry.



Submit your best tagline, by

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

Entries should be submitted to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The winning tagline will be printed on the poster above and displayed in your school.



Also  
available as  
a Finished  
Poster  
(and in  
Spanish)



## PSA Contest

### *Distracted Driving*



*Create your own public service announcement to communicate the dangers of driving while distracted.*

What is a  
PSA?

A **public service announcement** is a message with the objective of raising awareness, changing public attitudes, and changing behavior toward a social issue.

### *The Contest*

- Your PSA can take many forms, such as artwork, poetry, radio announcement, music, TV Commercial, Video, Skit, or anything else!
- You may submit with friends or individually, as many times as you like.

All entries must be submitted to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Email)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Room)

All entries **MUST** include your full name!

Entries should be received by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## PSA Contest

- ❑ Teens submit original public service announcements
- ❑ Prizes for winner(s)
- ❑ Showcase the PSAs

## Solve it!

### How Would You Solve the Problem of Distracted Driving?



We are looking for students to propose an idea, invention, or safety intervention to solve the problem of distracted driving!



#### Rules:

You can submit as an individual or small group project. Students can enter as many interventions or ideas as they wish. For example, an idea for a safe location to store the phone in the car or an idea for a safety intervention to promote awareness about distracted driving.

Be sure to include your name and contact information and submit your entry by

#### Entry Submission (3 ways):

Website: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email ideas to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Turn it to : \_\_\_\_\_

## Solve It! Contest

- Teens enter ideas (inventions or interventions) for how to solve the problem of distracted driving
- Prizes for winners
- Showcase the ideas

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### Instructions for

## Social Norms Marketing Posters

This activity is unique in that it uses actual data pulled directly from the Distracted Driving Surveys at your school. Students designing a poster can pick a question to build a theme for their poster, calculate the statistics of all the responses, and create unique posters to bring awareness to students that driving distracted is not “the norm” for teens within their school. Posters should be displayed around the school. Samples of past student posters are below.

#### Important definitions to know:

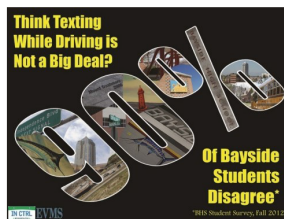
**Normative influence** is the way that a person’s behavior can be influenced and altered in order to be liked and accepted as part of “the group”.

**Social norms marketing** shows that the “normal” thoughts on distracted driving may actually be different (safer) than what the students think.

In Fig. 1, the student selected question 1 from the Distracted Driver survey given schoolwide to students and calculated the number of positive (Agree/Strongly Agree) responses given.



In Fig. 2, the student selected question 3 from the Distracted Driver Survey given to the students and calculated the Strongly Disagree/Disagree responses from all surveys to create the poster.



# Social Norms Marketing Activity

- ❑ Teens design posters using data collected from the student body
- ❑ Display posters



### *Instructions for*

## In Control Challenge

*Students take an active role in engaging peers to discuss how they can avoid driving distracted.*

This challenge can take place multiple times throughout the school year. Teachers will need to select student liaisons or ask for student volunteers to meet and develop materials to engage peers in this topic. Students devise creative posters, displays, or even skits around the topic of distracted driving and attend the pre-selected events to actively engage students to discuss the issues and accept the challenge to be in control. This is a chance for students to take an active leadership role and show their creative side.

#### Potential School events:

- Football games,
- Pep rallies,
- Dances, or
- A monthly table at lunchtime.



# In Control Challenge

- Teen group holds event or demonstration
- Clear actionable message

### Instructions for

## Social Media Discussions

*An important component of In Control is to have teens engage in dialogue with peers, school staff, and parents about distracted driving throughout the school year. Social media can help facilitate this. Discussions can take place on whatever media platform a school uses for teacher, student, and parent discussions about tests, quizzes, homework, etc.*

### Discussion Instructions

Each week (or more often, if desired) a new question can be posted and discussed online. Below are sample topics used in the pilot study for this program, but others can be developed as well. Sample questions can be altered to reflect another state or region.

1. What do you think is the most common reason why people might text and drive?
2. Do you have (or use) a talk-to-text feature on your phone?
  - a. YES, If yes: Do you think talk-to-text is a safer alternative to texting manually?
  - b. NO
3. Which is the best way to avoid texting while driving? Why?
  - a. Wait to text at a stop light
  - b. Allow other passengers in the car to text and talk for you
  - c. Turning off cell phone but keeping the phone on your lap
  - d. Turn the phone off and put it out of reach
4. Do other passengers in the car affect your driving behavior?
  - a. YES, If yes: Does it make it better or worse?
  - b. NO
5. As a passenger in a car, do you encourage safe driving behaviors (for the driver)? For example, telling driver to slow down when driving over the speed limit. If so, what are some of the things you may say or do to help the driver avoid distractions?



# Social Media Discussions

- Conversation starters
- Invite commentary and interaction on social media

# Teacher Training

- ❑ Slide presentation to train facilitators
- ❑ Includes suggestions to incorporate contests into lesson plans and meet standards of learning objectives

## Teacher Training: Solve it! And PSA Contests

Incorporating In Control: Beyond Distraction in Your Classroom

### Expanding the Contests to Meet Science Standards of Learning Objectives

- ▶ Examine the physics of collisions
- ▶ Design a study to determine effects of taking one's focus away from something for a short period of time
- ▶ Present findings orally or in paper

### Expanding the Contests to Meet English Standards of Learning Objectives

- ▶ Students can orally present research on previously used media campaigns
- ▶ This assignment can fulfill a research project that concludes with a recorded account of findings
- ▶ Write a distracted driving research paper
- ▶ For PSA contest, students can present persuasive writing or video-taped media message

# PTA/PTSA Presentation

- Presentation about teen safety and distracted driving
- Very brief
- Any audience

## In Control: Beyond Distraction

What you need to know about distracted driving and teens

### Why are Teens at Risk?

- Teens' inexperience behind the wheel makes them more susceptible to driver distraction.
- The two biggest sources of distractions for teen drivers are cell phones and passengers.
- Young drivers are involved in more speeding -related fatal crashes compared to other age groups.
- Use of cell phone (to type or talk) is one of the greatest contributors to teen crashes.

### What should you do?

- Create a parent-teen driving agreement and set 5 rules before they hit the road.
  - No cell phones
  - No extra passengers
  - No speeding
  - No alcohol/substances
  - Buckle up
- Become more familiar with your state's graduated driver licensing requirements
- Set the example! Believe it or not, teens will assimilate the behaviors adults exhibit while behind the wheel.
  - Graduated driver licensing laws set mandatory practice hours, high driving limits, and passenger limits for novice drivers.

IN CTRL





# Evaluation Tools

- Teen survey
- Driver observation form
- Permission slips
- Instructions for use & scoring

## Driver Distractions Survey

Please **DONOT** write your name on this survey.

Answer as honestly as possible by filling in the circle to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Thank you for your participation.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Putting cell phones away and out of reach when driving is effective in preventing crashes.					
2. Cell phone use while driving is a safety risk.					
3. Texting while driving is not that big of a deal.					
4. I am able to keep my phone in the glove compartment to help prevent getting in a crash.					
5. It is likely that I will get in a distracted driving crash.					
6. I purposely place my phone away (or turn it off) while I am driving.					
7. When I am a passenger, it bothers me if the driver uses a cell phone while driving.					
8. Adjusting the music while driving is a risky distraction.					
9. I am at risk for getting in a distracted driving crash.					
10. I have the self-control to put my phone away to prevent a distracted driving crash.					
11. I believe that distracted driving crashes have serious negative consequences.					
12. I don't think eating in the car is a distraction.					
13. I look at my phone while driving with no problem.					
14. I can easily put my phone out of reach to prevent a distracted driving crash.					
15. A spotlight is a safe place to use a cell phone.					
16. If I put my phone away and out of reach while driving, I am likely to get in a crash.					
17. I read text messages while driving.					
18. My phone is within arm's reach while I am driving.					
19. While I am driving, I do not use my cell phone.					
20. I believe that distracted driving crashes are avoidable.					

## Distracted Driving Observation Form



Primary Observer: Jane  
Date: 9 / 15 / 15 Secondary Observer: John  
MM DD YY Day of Week: M T W R F S S School: Jackson High  
Time start: 6:50 am/pm Time end: 7:20 am/pm Lot: Side lot by gym

Obs. #	Obs. view	Talking on cell phone (hand-held or otherwise)	Text manipulation (e.g., texting, GPS, etc)	Other distractions (list)	Driver using seat belt?	Notes
1		✓	X	passengers, cat	✓	
2		X	X	Eating	✓	
3		X	X	Passengers	✓	
4		X	X	X	✓	
5		X	X	Load music	✓	
6	✓		X	Load music	✓	
7		X		X	X	Seat belt under left arm
8		X	✓	Passengers	✓	
9	✓		X	Eating	✓	
10		✓	X	X	✓	
11		X	✓	Passengers	✓	
12		X	✓	X	✓	
13		X	✓	Passengers	✓	Passenger showing phone to driver
14		X	✓	Hanging out window	✓	
15		X	✓	Load music	X	
16		X	X	X	✓	
17		X	X	Putting on make-up	✓	
18		✓	X	X	✓	
19		✓	X	Eating	X	
20	✓			Load music	✓	
21		X		X	✓	
22		X	✓	X	✓	
Totals: 19	(6/19)*100=32%	(10/19)*100=53%	(13/19)*100=68%	(16/19)*100=84%		

# Research Support (Will, Maple, & Perkins, 2015)

- Classroom surveys (N=1147) assessed attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs about distracted driving. Anonymous parking lot observations of student drivers (N = 1644) were also conducted before and after the program.
- Evaluation indicates a buffering effect: the program was successful in deterring distraction-related perceptions and practices at the intervention school, whereas control school students' distraction-related perceptions and practices worsened over time with increased driving experience.

# THANK YOU! QUESTIONS?



*Free Program Materials:*  
[www.carsafetynow.org](http://www.carsafetynow.org)  
[carsafetynow@evms.edu](mailto:carsafetynow@evms.edu)  
757-446-5159

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