

# CASE Newsletter

California Association for Safety Education Volume XXV, No. 3 - Sept. 2014

## Report Highlights Programs With Potential to Increase Teen Seat Belt Use

Buckling up has always been a simple action that dramatically increases a person's chances of surviving a crash, *but more than half of teen drivers killed in 2012 failed to use a seat belt*. What's more shocking is that this number has increased by six percent over the last three years. And worse, teen passengers killed in fatal crashes use their seat belts even less than fatally injured teen drivers – almost 20 percent less. A report by the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and The Allstate Foundation is giving states and localities tools to combat these trends by highlighting programs across the country that can serve as models to increase teen seat belt use rates.

The report, *Getting It to Click: Connecting Teens and Seat Belts*, examines the elements of effective teen seat belt programs, showcases promising programs currently implemented in 12 states, and recommendations to accelerate the success of programs motivating teens to buckle up.

Programs and initiatives covered in the report were identified through a survey of State Highway Safety Offices conducted by GHSA in January 2014. After reviewing survey responses, an expert panel identified a number of states with strong teen seat belt-related programs that had the potential for replication by other states. These states are: Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Texas and Wisconsin.

Expert panel members identified seven elements that effective teen seat belt programs had in common. These include:

- Laws and their enforcement;
- Peer-to-peer efforts;
- Parental participation;
- Community involvement;
- Incorporation of social media;
- Provision of incentives; and
- Resources that would be useful to diverse audiences.

Programs detailed in the report all had one or more of these seven elements at their core, and the most successful used a multifaceted approach. Nearly every state has implemented campaigns that address teen road safety, and many have specific efforts that target seat belt use in particular. However, no single approach has solved the challenge of improving teen compliance with seat belt laws. Instead, research shows that combining approaches improves the likelihood of affecting teen behavior.

Governor's Highway Safety Association, July 8, 2014

## 90% of Parents Admit to Driving While Distracted

Nearly nine of 10 parents admit to talking, texting or otherwise driving distracted while transporting their children in the past month, a study by the University of Michigan reveals.

“Lots of attention has been given to distracted teen drivers. However, our results indicate parents are frequently distracted while driving their 1- to 12-year-old children, and these distracted drivers were more likely to have been in a crash” than those who said they refrain from distracted driving, according to Michelle Macy, clinical lecturer in the university's departments of emergency medicine and pediatrics. The findings were published in the May issue of the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Parents were surveyed while their children were being treated at one of two Michigan emergency rooms from October 2011 through May 2012. Participants were asked how often they engaged in the distracting behaviors while driving with their child over the past month, whether they use age-appropriate child restraints and if they had ever been in a motor vehicle accident.

Among 618 drivers surveyed, almost 90 percent of parents admitted to talking, texting, using a global positioning system, or “engaging in at least one technology-based distraction.” About two-thirds of parents surveyed admitted to talking on cell phones while driving a child, and 15 percent said they've texted with kids in the car.

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## Parents Admit to Distracted Driving

(Continued from page 1)

A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study released in April found that at any given daylight moment in the United States, 660,000 drivers are using phones or other electronic devices. The agency's data showed that 3,331 people died in distracted-driving accidents in 2011, up from 3,092 in 2010.

## Fall 2014 Teen-to-Teen Safe Driving Campaign Contest

The non-profit Safety Center and the Allstate Foundation are sponsoring a contest for teens in Northern California high schools. The focus is to create positive messages and activities that produce a measurable change in teen behavior related to Distracted Driving & GDL Laws in California.

Teachers are encouraged to lead a campaign to reduce distracted driving at their schools by:

- Creating a positive message and campaign activities
- Engaging students, parents and community
- Surveying to see if it increased safe driving decisions

The campaign entry form must be completed by September 12, 2014, and the contest start date is September 29. The deadline for completing the campaign is October 24, 2014, and the Final Contest Submission Deadline is November 21, 2014.

**Prizes:** The Safety Center will send checks to each of the winning schools with Safe Driving Campaigns by December 16, 2014. Three-first place winning schools will receive \$500, 3-second place winners will receive \$250 and 3-third place winners will receive \$125.

The Campaign Entry Form may be downloaded from the Safety Center contest webpage: <http://safetycenter.org/teen-safety/teen-safe-driving-campaign/northern-california-contest>

## FDA Warns About OTC Drugs and Driving

Drowsy driving causes more than 100,000 crashes a year, resulting in 40,000 injuries and 1,550 deaths. As tragic as these numbers are, they only tell a portion of the story. It is widely recognized that drowsy driving is underreported as a cause of crashes.



On June 30 the U. S. Food and Drug Administration hosted a webinar briefing about the dangers of driving while using common drugs. Antidiarrheals, motion sickness medications and antihistamines are some of the non-prescription medications the FDA says can negatively affect your driving.

Dr. Ali Mohamadi, a medical officer at the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, explained that because these medications are available over the counter, many people are unaware of the risks to driving ability. Some of the drugs' effects may include decreased attentiveness, impaired judgment of time and distance, and slow motor skills.

Many people feel they don't need to read the drug label because they already are familiar with the medicine, or that they have used the medicine before and have never been harmed. They may also believe that if some medicine is good, more is better.

Dr. Mohamadi emphasized that OTC medicines are serious medicines and have risks. All medicines have risks, and the risks increase if you don't use them as directed. You need to read the Drug Facts label every time to use the medicine safely, and if you have questions about an OTC medicine or OTC label, talk to a healthcare professional.

The webinar presentation may be viewed at: <http://1.usa.gov/1qU74eu>

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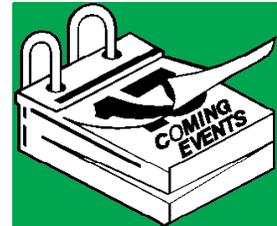
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## CASE Calendar

**September 14-20, 2014** - National Child Passenger Safety Week. Contact: [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)

**September 20, 2014** - National Seat Check Saturday. Contact: [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)

**October 19-25, 2014** - National Teen Driver Safety Week. Contact: Children's Hospital of Philadelphia @ [www.teendriversource.org](http://www.teendriversource.org)

**December 2014** - National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month (3D). Contact: [www.nhtsa.gov/StopImpairedDriving](http://www.nhtsa.gov/StopImpairedDriving)

**July 12-15, 2015** - ADTSEA Conference, Raleigh, North Carolina. Contact: [www.adtsea.org](http://www.adtsea.org)

## 2015 CASE Conference

The CASE Board of Directors has voted to hold the next annual conference in 2015 on Saturday, October 10 in the Sacramento region.

Moving to a fall conference schedule will avoid school calendar conflicts in the later part of the school calendar. The specific conference location and other details will be provided in a future CASE Newsletter.

## Dr. Bill Cole 1930-2014

Dr. Bill Cole passed away suddenly on August 1, 2014 at the age of 84 after a long and distinguished career in traffic safety education. Bill was a retired Professor of Criminal Justice and Safety Studies at California State University, Los Angeles, former Editor of the *Journal of Traffic Safety Education*, and an active member of the CASE Board of Directors. In recent years he served as a CASE representative to the Strategic Highway Safety Improvement Plan for the State of California. He was known as a frequent presenter and panel member at CASE conferences for many years.

Bill was born April 11, 1930 in Los Angeles and graduated from Eagle Rock High School. He joined the Naval Reserves in 1948 and was called to active duty during the Korean Conflict where he was a radioman on the heavy cruiser USS Helena, flagship of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Following his military service, Bill earned his B.A. in Industrial Education at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and his M.A. at California State University Los Angeles. He taught at the secondary level in the Los Angeles Unified School District and continued his education at Texas A & M, earning his doctoral degree in Industrial Education with an emphasis in Safety Education. He was a member of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Delta Kappa. In addition to teaching at CSU, Los Angeles, Bill also taught at the USC Safety Center and was a traffic safety education consultant for the California Department of Education.

Bill was very active in the community, having served on the Temple City Traffic Commission, the California Task Force for Traffic Safety Education, the Community Traffic Safety Forum of the Los Angeles National Safety Council, the Automobile Club of Southern California Advisory Committee on Traffic Safety, and the community advisory committee for the UCLA Alcohol Research Center.

An active member in both CASE and ADTSEA over the years, he served as Higher Education Representative and Chair of the Teacher Training Task Force on the CASE Board of Directors. For ADTSEA he served as Director for the Southwest Region, chaired the higher education section, and served on the publications committee.

Upon the untimely death of Dr. Richard Kaywood in February 1985, Bill was appointed to assume the position of editor of the national *Journal of Traffic Safety Education*, published by CASE. He had been working with Dr. Kaywood in a planned phase-in as assistant editor and probable successor as editor. Bill and his staff did an excellent job of publishing the *Journal*, but printing costs kept rising, advertising revenue decreased, and it became too large a burden for CASE to subsidize. In July 1991, ADTSEA assumed publication.

Bill is survived by his children Kenny, Michael, Vicki, Julie, Jeannine, and 6 grandchildren. He will be remembered as a good man and a good friend to many. He was a dedicated professional – a tireless advocate and supporter of traffic safety education well into his retirement years. He will be greatly missed.



## CHP removes lane-splitting guidelines from website and print materials

In early 2013 the California Highway Patrol published motorcycle lane-splitting safety tips on its website. California law does not allow or prohibit motorcycles from passing other vehicles proceeding in the same direction within the same lane, a practice often called “lane splitting,” “lane sharing” or “filtering.”



According to the CHP, “the underlying purpose of the guidelines was to provide common-sense traffic safety information.”

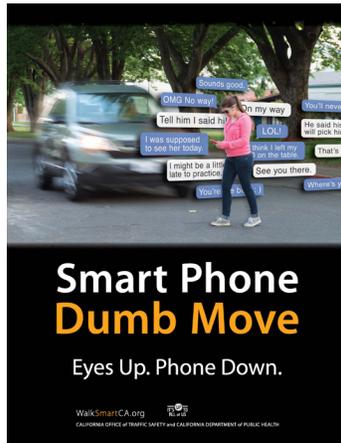
However, in July the CHP removed the safety guidelines for the practice from its website and destroyed all printed materials. The Department of Motor Vehicles and the Office of Traffic Safety also have removed these materials under orders from the state’s Office of Administrative Law. The CHP explains on its website that, “A petitioner complained to the Office of Administrative Law that there was no formal rulemaking process for the guidelines, and raised other objections. The CHP discussed the issue with the Office of Administrative Law and chose not to issue, use or enforce guidelines and thus removed them from the website.”

When the guidelines were first published more than a year ago, motorcyclists enthusiastically praised them as a significant improvement in traffic safety. California was the only state in the country where lane-splitting was legal, but until then there were no general rules on how to do it safely.

In the absence of published guidelines, CHP agency spokesman Officer Mike Harris suggests motorcyclists should talk to a CHP officer or sign up for a course with the CHP’s California Motorcycle Safety Program. In general lane-splitters are advised to travel no more than 10 mph faster than other traffic, and avoid the practice if traffic is moving faster than 30 mph.

## California Dept. of Public Health Launches WalkSmart Campaign

WalkSmartCA is part of the *It's Up to All of Us* public education campaign and is designed to educate both pedestrians and drivers on what steps they can take to keep our streets safe. New messages have been focus group tested on the impacts of speeding, older adult pedestrian safety, and distracted walking. The campaign materials are free and publicly available for use by educators or any interested party.



To get the message out, the campaign features ads that focus on:

- Not texting while walking
- Slowing down when you see pedestrians
- Higher speeds lead to more severe pedestrian injury
- Staying alert and aware
- Recognizing you are driving through our community

In California today we know that approximately 19 percent of traffic fatalities are pedestrian related. That is approximately 58 percent more than the national average.

**For more information on the WalkSmart campaign and to access the educational materials, go to: <http://cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/injviosa/Pages/WalkSmartCA.aspx>**

## Going up: States keep raising speed limits

Loosening speed limits on U.S. freeways and interstates appears to be in vogue among some state lawmakers regardless of the safety costs. This year, four states have raised posted limits to as high as 80 mph or extended maximum limits to more roads. In all, 38 states have speed limits of 70 mph or higher on some portion of their roads.

Idaho and Wyoming raised the maximum speed limit from 75 to 80 mph on interstates, effective July 1 in both states. In Utah, the current maximum posted speed limit is 80 mph. Last year the state increased the number of interstate segments posted at 80 mph and decided this spring to allow other DOT-approved freeways to be posted in excess of 75 mph, effective in May. Georgia raised limits on urban interstates to 70 mph, up from 65 mph.

Driving faster may put motorists at their destinations a bit sooner, but that doesn't mean the journey will be a safe one. More than 10,000 deaths — about a third of all crash fatalities — occurred in speed-related crashes during 2012.

*IHS Status Report, July 30, 2014*

## Texting bans work: They cut teen traffic deaths by 11 percent, study finds

Texting bans aimed at teens and that allow primary enforcement of the law — i.e. they don't require officers to have another reason for the traffic stop — had the most dramatic effect, a team of researchers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health found in a study published in the August *American Journal of Public Health*.

"[O]ur results provide strong evidence that the primarily enforced texting laws seem to be reaching the intended subpopulations who are most at risk for texting while driving," they write. California's texting laws are primarily enforced and apply to all drivers.

The team examined 11 years worth of data from the 48 contiguous states for the study. They controlled for other factors that may influence crash risk, such as economic, legal and population-specific indicators. (Unemployment, for example, can influence risk because fewer workers means fewer drivers on the road. Income and gas prices can affect how much people drive, again exposing them to more risk.)



Just having a texting law was linked to a 2.3 percent decline in overall traffic fatalities for all drivers. But there's a lot of variation in such bans. From 2000 to 2010, 31 states passed texting-while-driving bans, 24 aimed at all drivers and seven aimed at young drivers. Delaware's was first — its law went into effect in April 2005 — while Wisconsin's was last, going into effect in December 2010. And some laws only allow enforcement of the ban if officers have another reason for the stop, which is known as secondary enforcement.

The first of the researchers' three main findings was that primary enforcement really matters. "Our results indicated that primary texting bans were significantly associated with a 3 percent reduction in traffic fatalities among all age groups, which equates to an average of 19 deaths prevented per year in states with such bans," one of the authors, Alva O. Ferdinand, said in a statement.

The second main finding is that targeting primary bans at subpopulations seems to be effective — primary bans aimed at teens reduced deaths among that group by 11 percent. Finally, they found that banning all handheld devices — i.e. laws that don't specifically call out texting — were most effective at reducing traffic deaths among adults ages 22 to 64.

While 31 states passed texting bans during the 10 years studied, 44 ban texting among all drivers today, according to a late-June count by the bipartisan National Conference of State Legislatures. Thirteen states, including California, ban handheld devices.

*Source: American Public Health Association, Aug. 1, 2014*