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GHSA 2003 Annual Meeting: Traffic Safety's "3 R's"

GHSA is gearing up for its 2003 Annual Meeting, "Risks, Remedies & Reauthorization." The meeting will take place August 24–27 in New Orleans and will bring together federal, state, and private sector highway safety officials to discuss strategies for improving highway safety. Fourteen workshops will feature diverse panels from across the country. Topics of these sessions include: emerging technology; impaired driving; work zone safety; child passenger safety; and young drivers.

Invited keynote speakers include Senator John Breaux and Dr. Jeff Runge, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic

Safety Administration (NHTSA). The opening General Session on Monday will focus on the risks being faced in the highway safety community; Tuesday's General Session will discuss the reautho-



SENATOR JOHN BREAUX



rization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, commonly known as TEA-21. The closing General Session on Wednesday will address remedies to the problems identified throughout the meeting. The GHSA Awards Luncheon on Tuesday will honor the outstanding efforts of individuals and groups to improve highway safety.

While the Annual Meeting is full of educational opportunities, there will also be ample time for informal networking and socializing. The Opening Night Reception will be held at the National D-Day Museum, opened in 2000 to honor the American spirit, the teamwork, the optimism, courage and sacrifice of the men and women who won World War II. Monday night's activities include a concert by Pete Fountain at the Sheraton New Orleans Hotel. The Sheraton New Orleans Hotel is also the site of Tuesday's State Night Dinner/Dance, where guests can enjoy a special Mardi Gras-themed evening, complete with a parade. New Orleans offers a wide variety of other social and cultural opportunities at additional cost, including: tours of plantation homes; walking tours of the French Quarter; and riverboat cruises to swamps and Cajun villages. Staff from the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission will be available to assist guests with these activities.

For more information, visit www.statehighwaysafety.org and click on the meeting icon.

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GHSA Participates in the Launch of the State Highway Safety Alliance

NTSB Recommends States Ban Cell Phones Behind the Wheel for Novice Drivers

In a recent report the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recommended that states adopt laws prohibiting inexperienced drivers from using cell phones while behind the wheel. Joseph Osterman, director of NTSB's Office of Highway Safety stated, "We think that inexperienced drivers should do nothing more than concentrate on the driving task." Currently only two states, New Jersey and Maine, have passed laws prohibiting inexperienced drivers (those with learner's permits) from using wireless devices while at the wheel.

The recommendation comes from the Board's investigation into a highway crash caused by a 20-year old driver of an SUV that took the lives of five individuals, including the driver, on February 1, 2002. The probable cause of the accident based on the Board's investigation was the driver's inexperience, unfamiliarity with the new vehicle, speed, and distraction caused by her cellular phone.

NTSB made several recommendations in the report to NHSTA. The first recommendation was for NHSTA to develop a media campaign highlighting the dangers of distracted driving and to work with the American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association (ADTSEA) to create a driver training curricula that focuses on the risks of distracted driving. Second, the Board said that NHSTA should study electronic stability control systems (ESC) for their effective-

ness in assisting drivers at maintaining control of motor vehicles.

The Board, however, did not recommend a ban on cell phone use for all drivers; rather, it recommended alerting drivers to the problems caused by distractions. According to the NTSB report, drivers who are distracted respond to a roadway hazard up to 1.5 seconds later than those not distracted.

Cellular Telecommunications & Internet Association's (CTIA) President Tom Wheeler responded to the NTSB announcement saying, "To make safety a priority for all drivers, the NTSB has honed in on the key to safety—education. This should light a fire under educational efforts on all levels, and we hope to see more media outlets and safety organizations joining us in the effort."

GHSA supports the Board's recommendation and has been urging states to prohibit inexperienced drivers from cell phone use.

For more information on NTSB's report, visit <http://www.ntsbn.gov/publicn/2003/HAR0302.htm>.

On May 22, GHSA participated in the launch of the State Highway Safety Alliance. The Alliance is the formation of state highway groups that share similar core safety policy proposals for this year's reauthorization of the federal surface transportation act.

The announcement was made by GHSA Chair Kathryn Swanson and officials from AASHTO, AAMVA, CVSA, and IACP. In addition, remarks were made by United States Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond (R-MO). Bond said, "Without question, safety is the number one issue to consider when we discuss transportation."

Kathryn Swanson stated that state organizations share a common mission of improving highway safety and therefore it only makes sense that these organizations form an Alliance. "The Alliance will support that mission by encouraging more communication between our associations on safety issues and greater coordination of our safety positions."

For more information, visit http://www.ghsa.org/html/media/press_releases/052203_b.html.

LEFT TO RIGHT: TONY KANE (AASHTO), SENATOR BOND, TOM WOLFSOHN (AAMVA), KATHRYN SWANSON (GHSA), AND STEVE CAMPBELL (CVSA).





Automated Enforcement Upheld by Court

Controversy continues to surround the use of automated enforcement as a lifesaving traffic safety tool. On June 12, Judge Melvin R. Wright of the D.C. Superior Court ruled that the District of Columbia's automated enforcement program does not violate any due process rights. The District government installed the cameras to decrease fatalities and injuries caused by red light running.

The ruling was in response to two motorists who sued the city, saying that the system violates the right to due process protected under the Constitution. Jeff Agnew, spokesman for the National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running, said the court ruling was a victory for traffic safety advocates.

On the same day as the court ruling, CBS Evening News aired a story that portrayed automated enforcement as a purely money making device for localities. Agnew said the CBS segment was misleading as it included incorrect data on signal light timing decisions.

GHSA supports red light cameras and automated enforcement programs and is an active member of the national campaign.

For more information, visit www.stopedlightrunning.com.

Kathryn Swanson Testifies before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

GHSA Chair Kathryn Swanson was among those called to testify before the Subcommittee on Competition, Foreign Commerce, and Infrastructure of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation on Thursday, May 22. The topic of the hearing was the Administration's proposed legislation authorizing funds for NHTSA programs.

Swanson addressed GHSA's concerns about the inadequate level of funding for safety programs under the Administration's proposal. "With increased funding, states could put more resources into enforcement of traffic safety laws, particularly safety belt, speed and impaired driving laws. Better enforcement would help convince populations that are resistant to traditional safety messages."

Swanson objected to the low level of funding for impaired driving programs and the availability of the funds for only ten states. She testified that a much larger impaired driving tier, based on the current 410 program, should be authorized.

She also suggested to the subcommittee that the proposed legislation include an occupant protection tier. "Under the occupant protection incentive tier, states would have to meet specific criteria including performance-based criteria, just as they do under the current 157 program."

In addition to these important initiatives, other recommendations made to the subcommittee in Swanson's testimony included: continuing the budgetary firewalls around behavioral safety programs, continuing the performance-based approach to federal highway safety grant funding, and altering federal lobbying restrictions on safety legislation. She also recommended to Congress that a \$50 million data incentive grant program be authorized to help states implement their traffic records strategic plans.

Other witnesses called to testify before the subcommittee included: Dr. Jeff Runge of NHSTA, Peter Guerrero of the General Accounting Office, Jackie Gillan of the Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, Robert Strasberger of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, Wendy Hamilton of the Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and Rick Berman of the American Beverage Licensees and American Beverage Institute.

For more information about the hearing, visit <http://www.statehighwaysafety.org>.



SWANSON TESTIFIES BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION.

GHSA Helps States Examine CPS Programs

GHSA is developing the first ever CPS Assessment that will help state highway safety offices examine their child passenger safety programs and create a strategic plan for the future. The project is funded through a grant from NHSTA. Assessments traditionally utilize multi-disciplinary teams of national experts to assist states in administrative reviews of their programs. NHSTA has previously developed assessments in the areas of: impaired driving, occupant protection, traffic records, and EMS and motorcycle safety. Although the occupant protection assessment has included child passenger safety as one of its elements, GHSA's assessment will be the first time an assessment has been devoted exclusively to CPS.

The project began in February 2003. The panel of experts for the project represents a broad range of disciplines, including CPS advocates, state highway safety offices, and NHTSA. The panel's first action was to broaden the scope of the project to include children ages 0 through 15 years. Older children have made the least recent progress in increasing their use of occupant restraints, and, older children (pre-driving age) are often forgotten when highway safety programs are

designed. By expanding the age group, the assessment will assure that programs are implemented to reach them.

The assessment examines the state's CPS program in nine major program areas:

- Management and Leadership
- Data
- Evaluation
- Training
- Seat Inspection and Distribution Program
- Legislation/Regulation/Policy
- Law Enforcement
- Public Information and Education
- Community Programs

Along with assessment in these nine areas, a CPS Advisory will also be developed which outlines best practices for each program element.

In order to provide the states with maximum flexibility, GHSA's CPS Assessment will be designed so that it can be used in a variety of ways depending upon the individual state's needs. The Assessment method chosen by an individual state can range from a traditional format with a

team of experts visiting the state all the way to a self-assessment. The Assessment will include guidance for the states in determining the levels of service it should provide in several areas including the number of CPS inspection stations, and the number of CPS technicians and instructors which should be available in the state. A special effort is also being made to address under-served and under-represented groups and children with special transportation needs.

The assessment components are currently under development and are expected to be pilot tested in three states during fall 2003. One state will be selected to conduct a self assessment. In the other two, the assessment team will conduct a limited number of on-site interviews, develop findings and recommendations, and, then participate with the state highway safety office and its partners in a strategic plan development session. The assessment is scheduled for full release in December 2003 for states to use in their FY 2004-5 planning cycle.

For more information regarding the GHSA CPS Assessment project, please contact GHSA at 202-789-0942.

Share a Story or Opinion

Would you like to share a success story or your opinion with the readers of *Directions in Highway Safety*? Articles can be submitted to:
Editor
Directions in Highway Safety
750 First Street, NE, Suite 720,
Washington, DC 20002.
email: (headquarters@statehighwaysafety.org)



Log On and Identify Driving Distractions

A University of Maryland School of Medicine researcher is urging drivers to report the circumstances of their crashes and near-misses to a special website designed to improve traffic safety and identify dangerous distractions.

Drivers are encouraged to complete an online questionnaire within one month following a crash or near-miss. Participation in the study is anonymous, so respondents may be more likely to report information they may not have been willing to admit to police.

The study will focus on a wide range of behaviors and potential distractions that can affect driving performance. Drivers will be asked questions such as how they were feeling physically and emotionally at the time. They will also be asked, for example, if they were using a cell phone, and if so, were they picking up the phone, dialing or talking?

According to Jeffrey Hadley, Ph.D., of the Charles McC. Mathias Jr. National Study Center for Trauma and Emergency Medical Systems, estimates show that a typical driver experiences a hazardous situation every two hours on the road and is close to a crash about once a month.

The study's results will be released to the public, traffic safety experts, legislators and other policymakers. The study will run for an indefinite period and will be adapted to address other traffic safety issues as they arise.

For more information or to participate, visit www.accident-report.org.

“Nerves of Steel” Survey: Charlotte Politest, Safest Drivers

The Steel Alliance's fifth annual “Nerves of Steel” aggressive driving survey indicates that America's motorists are becoming more dangerous and increasingly rude. The survey ranks drivers in three categories: rudeness, safety, and drowsy driving behavior.

Nine out of 10 drivers identified tailgating, making rude gestures, and passing on the side of the road as the most widely considered acts of aggressive driving. Based on the percentage of drivers who feel that drivers in their city are ruder than those in other cities, New York City comes in as the rudest city, while Charlotte boasts the most polite drivers.

Charlotte also holds the title to the safest drivers. The national sample achieved an “A” grade, although individual cities varied from “A” to “F.” For the third

year in a row, drivers cited driving defensively (49 percent) and driving courteously (25 percent) as the best advice for protection against acts of aggression.

While men are more likely than women to admit to committing an act of aggressive driving, women are three times more likely to “put on makeup or comb hair” while driving.

For the first time, the survey included questions on drowsy driving. Seattle drivers rank as the drowsiest—86 percent compared with 76 percent of drivers nationwide who sometimes feel drowsy while driving. Denver drivers reported the highest incidences of falling asleep at least once behind the wheel.

For more information on the survey, visit www.thenewsteel.com/nos.

New Poll Highlights Drowsy Driving Danger

During the past year, according to the National Sleep Foundation's 2003 Sleep in America Poll, four times as many drivers ages 18-54 reported driving while feeling drowsy (60 percent) as compared to drivers ages 65-84 (15 percent). Drivers in the younger age group were also more likely to fall asleep while driving—20 percent as compared to 4 percent of older adults.

Only 1 percent of all respondents reported having had a crash as a result of falling asleep or feeling fatigued behind the wheel.

About 15 percent of older drivers reported daytime sleepiness that frequently interferes with daily activities.

For more information on this report, visit www.sleepfoundation.org.



Lifetime, Monthly Alcohol Use Down for Hawaii Students

A survey conducted by the State of Hawaii Department of Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD), and the University of Hawaii Speech Department, reveals that during 2002, the state's reports of lifetime and monthly alcohol prevalence declined and were lower than reports nationwide. Daily use of alcohol in Hawaii, however, was slightly higher than the nationwide reports.

Funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, the study assessed the prevalence and trends of substance abuse, the risk and protective factors that indicate potential substance use and abuse, and treatment needs within the community. The survey was administered anonymously to 27,995 students ages 10-17 in Hawaii.

In 2002, 20 percent of sixth graders, 43 percent of eighth graders and 65 percent of tenth graders reported using alcohol at least once in his/her lifetime. These numbers show reductions from 2000 levels (24 percent, 49 percent and 67 percent, respectively).

Daily use of alcohol by students in eighth and tenth grades was slightly higher in Hawaii as compared with use by students in the same grades around the nation.

The study estimated that at least one out of 10 students in sixth through twelfth grade needs substance abuse treatment. Treatment needs had dropped in 2002 to 11 percent, down from 13 percent in 2000.

ADAD is piloting "Best Practices" youth substance abuse prevention programs in 18 communities with an \$8.4 million federal State Incentive Grant Program. Using current funds, the Department is providing treatment to students in 29 of the state's 44 high schools and three of its 56 middle schools.

For more information, visit www.hawaii.gov/health/resource/drug_abuse.html.

Life in Transit

State Highway Safety Offices should have received a copy of "Flesh, Metal & Glass" from the National Road Safety Foundation to review for use in state programs.

"Flesh, Metal & Glass," is a 130-page Manual for Life in Transit that presents primary safety issues, driver proficiency and responsible behaviors in a compelling and easy to read way. "Flesh, Metal & Glass" is a handy resource for new drivers, their parents, special adult populations, educators, law enforcement, and safety professionals.

All NRSF Programs and materials are free. Adele Kristiansson with NRSF can be contacted at akristi@optonline.net or by telephone at (631) 726-2705.

Speed Limit Increases Affect Men and Women Differently

According to a recent study in the *Journal of Economic Letters*, raising a speed limit to 70-mph or more increases the risk of driving-related deaths for women and the elderly, but not for younger men. Researchers found that states that raised their speed limits experienced a change in the percentage of women and elderly killed in traffic-related deaths. They found that fatalities for every 100,000 people rose 10 percent for women and 13 percent for the elderly but found no increase for men under the age of 50.

The study did not provide any reasons for this disparity among different ages and genders.

While the study finds that highway deaths may be increasing for women and the elderly as speed limits increase, men are still killed on the roads in greater numbers. In 2001, approximately 28,000 men died in car crashes, over fifty percent more than women killed on roadways.

Since Congress abolished the national 55-mph limit in 1995, 29 states have raised their speed limits to 70-mph.

MMUCC is Now Available

The Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) 2003 2nd Edition is now available. MMUCC Guidelines are available on NHSTA's website: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/.

For more information, please contact Sandy Johnson, GHSA/NHTSA Consultant at (202) 366-5364.



Real World Driver Launched

Ford Motor Company and GHSA launched a major new teen driving program: *Real World Driver: Driving Skills for Life*. The launch of the program took place on Tuesday, May 8 at the Ford Motor Company's Dearborn Proving Ground. During the launch, a group of Michigan teens were given a hands-on safe driving demonstration. The demonstration paired teens with driving experts from *Car and Driver* magazine, providing them with experience in hazard recognition, vehicle handling, space management, and speed management.

The partnership will ensure that *Real World Driver* is promoted in states and local communities. GHSA Chair Kathryn Swanson said during the launch, "We're excited to partner with Ford on this program and hope it will help states raise awareness of the teen driving issue as they work to strengthen their graduated driver's licensing laws."

Real World Driver is a multi-year educational campaign aimed at teens, parents, and the education community. The program includes a teacher's guide, video, pamphlets, and other materials that are being distributed to every high school in the country.

For more information, please see Sue Cischke's article, "Real World Driver: Driving Skills for Life" in this edition of *Directions* or visit www.realworlddriver.com.

Top Driver Distractions are Traffic and Fatigue

Researchers from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) have found that rubbernecking, fatigue, and looking at scenery are the leading cause of driver distraction. Cell phones ranked sixth on VCU's list of distracting behaviors.

Researchers examined more than 2,700 crash scenes and nearly 4,500 drivers. In 16 percent of the crashes studied, the primary distraction was identified as looking at traffic, crashes, and roadside incidents. Driver fatigue was the primary distraction in 12 percent of the crashes, followed by looking at scenery (10 percent); passenger and child distractions (9 percent); and adjusting the radio, CD or tape player (7 percent). Cell phones were identified as the primary distraction in slightly more than 5 percent of the crashes.

Distractions inside the vehicle accounted for 62 percent of

all the crashes studied. These distractions included: daydreaming; eating or drinking; and reading.

Sixty-two percent of the crashes occurred in rural areas. These crashes often resulted from driver fatigue, insects or animals entering or striking the vehicle, and unrestrained pet distractions. Urban crashes, however, often resulted from drivers looking at other crashes, traffic or vehicles, or from cell phone use.

The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) requested the study to test a standard list of distracted driving behaviors that will be used by law enforcement when reporting a crash that involves distracted driving. DMV estimates that driver distraction accounts for 13 percent of all traffic crashes in Virginia annually.

Drivers on Cell Phones Twice as Likely to Have Rear End Collisions

Drivers who talk on cell phones are twice as likely as other drivers to be involved in rear-end collisions, according to a new study by the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center (HSRC). Crashes involving cell phones, however, are less likely to result in fatalities or serious injuries than crashes that do not involve the devices.

Cell Phone Use in N.C.: 2002 Update shows that almost 60 percent of licensed North Carolina drivers have used a cell phone while driving. Drivers most often talking on the phone while driving were between 25 and 39 years old. The average amount of time per day spent talking on phones was 14.5 minutes. Cell phone-related crashes were more likely to occur during midday hours in urban areas and on local streets.

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Youth Overexposed to Radio Alcohol Advertising

In 2001 and 2002, America's youth heard more beer and distilled spirits commercials on the radio than did people of legal drinking age, according to a report released by the Center of Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) at Georgetown University. The study also found that wine advertisements, on the other hand, were overwhelmingly more effectively delivered to an adult audience.

Youth ages 12-20 heard 8 percent more beer and ale advertising and 12 percent more malt-ernative advertising than adults 21 or older. Youth heard even more distilled spirits advertising (14 percent).

The study also found that alcohol ads were placed on stations with "youth" formats. Seventy-three percent of the alcohol radio advertising in terms of gross ratings points was on four formats—Rhythmic Contemporary Hit, Pop Contemporary Hit, Urban Contemporary and Alternative—that routinely have a disproport-

tionately large audience of under-age youth.

Hispanic youth heard 34 percent more beer and ale advertising on the radio than Hispanic adults, while African-American youth and adults heard the same amount of beer and ale advertising.

CAMY's executive director, Jim O'Hara, said, "Youth under 21 top the charts when it comes to exposure to alcohol advertising." He added, "The fact that kids under 21 hear more beer and distilled spirits ads than people 21 and older should concern everyone who cares about our children."

This report on radio advertising practices is CAMY's fourth study on the marketing tactics of the alcohol industry. Previous studies have also showed clear overexposure of alcohol products ads to underage audiences.

For more information, visit www.camy.org. CAMY also published a study on youth overexposure to television alcohol advertising. See March Directions front page.

Hispanic Youth Exposed to More Alcohol Ads

According to another recent study released by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY), more alcohol advertising is delivered to Hispanic youth than non-Hispanic youth in the U.S. across major youth-oriented media.

CAMY's analysis shows that Hispanic youth saw 24 percent more beer and ale advertising and 24 percent more distilled spirits advertising in magazines during 2002. They also saw 32 percent more advertising for malt-ernatives, alcopops and other "low-alcohol refreshers."

On the radio, Hispanic youth heard 9 percent more advertising for distilled spirits, 17 percent more ads for "low-alcohol refreshers," and the same amount of beer and ale advertising as heard by non-Hispanic youth.

In 2002, alcohol advertisers spent \$23.6 million to place ads on 12 of the 15 programs (in English and Spanish) that were most popular with Hispanic youth, including Vias Del Amor, Ver Para Creer, That '70s Show, and MadTV.

The study includes other research substantiating the findings of the CAMY report: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services shows that Hispanic youth are more likely than non-Hispanic whites or African-American young people to drink and to get drunk at an earlier age, while the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that Hispanic high schools students are more likely to report riding in a car with a driver who had been drinking.

For more information, visit www.camy.org.



PCPS Aims to Lower Risk of Injury to Children in Motor Vehicle Crashes

The Partnership For Child Passenger Safety (PCPS) is a partnership between The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), the University of Pennsylvania, and State Farm Insurance Companies that investigates injury or death of children in motor vehicle crashes. The study began in 1997 and remains the single largest research project in the United States centered on child motor vehicle injuries. Currently, research has been compiled from 15 states and the District of Columbia.

PCPS has taken numerous steps to reduce the risk of injury to children in crashes. They have optimized child safety into 4 simple steps: restrain children on every trip, use the rear seat for all children under the age of 13 years, use the appropriate restraint for age and size of child, and use restraints correctly. PCPS has also created a website com-

plete with interactive videos highlighting appropriate techniques for restraining a child as well as educational tools for State Farm's "LEAP" program.

Parents are starting to get the message. There are increases in age-appropriate restraints by 4-to-8 year old children as well as increases in rear-seating. According to a recent PCPS report, by the end of 2002, 49 percent of children between the ages of 3 and 8 who were restrained were placed in an age appropriate restraint, a 24 percent increase from the level reported in 1990. Despite the increase, over 50 percent of children between the ages of 3 and 8 are still inappropriately restrained in motor vehicles.

PCPS also found that children riding in the front of a vehicle who are exposed to deployed air bags are twice as likely to suffer significant injuries as those who

are not exposed, according to Flaura Winston, M.D., Ph.D., principal investigator for PCPS. Winston added, "We need to do a better job of reinforcing the message of rear seating for children under the age of 13."

Despite NHTSA's recommendation that children under age 13 be seated in the rear of a vehicle, PCPS found that about 33 percent of children ages 9-12 and 10 percent of children ages 4-8 are sitting in the front seats—a startling percentage that PCPS hopes to change.

Current efforts to improve passenger side air bags to reduce risk of injury to children are well justified. Winston explained, "PCPS will monitor how improved air bag design impacts child occupants of newer vehicles involved in crashes."

In 1999, for every 10,000 children in crashes, 73 were exposed to air bag deployments, while 148 were exposed by the end of 2002. PCPS researchers attribute this increase to two factors. First, the percentage of vehicles with passenger air bags rose from 50 percent of all vehicles in 1999 to 80 percent in 2002. Secondly, in 2002, 12 percent of all children under 13 were still riding in the front seat.

For More information on CHOP, visit www.chop.edu/carseat.

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Drivers on Cell Phones Twice as Likely to Have Rear End Collisions

Although most crashes occurred while drivers were talking on their phones, some crashes involved reaching for, dialing, getting ready to dial, answering or picking up dropped phones, or hanging up.

During the two-month collection period, the North Carolina Highway Patrol found 29 reported cell phone collisions, which projects to 174 cases annually.

Researchers estimated that cell phones were involved in about one in 623 reported crashes in non-metropolitan areas. Nine out of 10 crashes, however, occurred within municipal areas, which are jurisdictions not usually reported on by the state highway patrol. Hence, cell phone crashes may be under-reported.

HSRC researchers estimate that cell phones are responsible for at least 1,500 motor vehicle crashes across the state each year.

Dr. Stutts will present her research at the GHSA Annual Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana.



Real World Driver: Driving Skills for Life

By: Sue Cischke, Ford Motor Company Vice President of Safety Engineering

A teenager's world revolves around having friends and being perceived as "cool." Having a driver's license is integral to both.

To parents, a driver's license signals the formal transition of their son or daughter from years of protective cocooning to serious risks that they can no longer control completely.

Highway safety professionals look at teen driving from a statistical picture—4 million new teen drivers are licensed every year, and half will be involved in a crash by the time they are 20. Of all the pressures a teen faces, learning to drive demands the most focus.

Many teenagers begin driving with little formal preparation beyond a few often harrowing hours at the wheel with a nervous parent in the passenger seat, and passing a cursory state license exam.

To address these problems, improve driver training, and better protect young novice drivers, Ford Motor has developed the *Real World Driver: Driving Skills for Life Campaign*. We are proud to be partnering with GHSA, NHTSA, and other advisory board members. *Real World Driver* is intended to work in parallel with state graduated driver's licensing laws.

The program operates on the belief that influencing teens to

drive better requires reaching teens with relevant information, not just restricting their driving. In fact, *Real World Driver* was designed after focus group meetings during which teenagers and their parents provided advice about what they like and don't like, and what would be most influential.

Real World Driver includes an educational curriculum and video in which teens talk to teens about safe driving. It has been distributed to every public high school (more than 20,000) in the nation.

The program builds awareness about four driving skills for life that our advisory board of safety experts believe are key to making teens safer drivers:

Hazard Recognition:

Recognizing and anticipating hazards, such as distractions and intersections, and dealing with them successfully.

Vehicle Handling: Learning how to handle different vehicles competently under a range of driving circumstances and maneuvers.

Space Management:

Maintaining safe spacing with other traffic and managing space in an emergency.

Speed Management: Driving at speeds that are right for conditions and how to maintain control in dangerous situations such as skids.

Real World Driver also emphasizes safety belt use, zero tolerance for alcohol, and avoiding distractions. It also encourages discussion between teens and their parents about responsible driving.

Driver training is a need that parents applaud. In a new national survey conducted for Ford Motor Company, more than three-quarters (76 percent) of parents said they are concerned about their teen driving independently. Moreover, public sentiment is that we are not doing enough to train teen drivers. Only 11 percent of parents of teens are very satisfied with available training resources to improve teen driving.

In a perfect world, teenagers would attend driving schools with test tracks that provide challenging behind-the-wheel training. But this is not always a realistic option.

Real World Driver will conduct "hands on" training sessions for teens in the hope that media coverage will influence thousands more teens and direct them to our interactive website. The site encourages teens to go through a learning module and take a driving skills test.

We hope that *Real World Driver* will contribute to the progress already being made to ensure new drivers are less of a threat to themselves, and to all of us who share the road.

For more information on *Real World Driver: Driving Skills for Life*, visit www.realworlddriver.com.



National Highway Safety Forum Held

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) held its 2003 Spring Business Meeting on Sunday, June 1 in Lexington, Kentucky followed by a highway leadership safety forum on Monday, June 2.

The forum was convened by AASHTO President Codell, who has made transportation safety one of his AASHTO emphasis areas for 2003. It was sponsored by GHSA, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA).

Those in attendance received briefings by Dr. Jeff Runge, Administrator of NHSTA, FHWA Mary Peters, Deputy U.S. Transportation Secretary Michael Jackson, and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administrator Annette Sandberg. Deputy Secretary Michael Jackson addressed those in attendance, asking them to be "leaders with passion in their bones." Jackson said highway crashes deserve attention because they devastate so many lives and families each year. Following their remarks, attendees pledged to return to their home states and work together with parties interested in highway safety to decrease the death tolls on our roads. A meeting to assess progress is planned for October.

GHSA was represented at the meeting by Chair Kathryn Swanson, Vice Chair Jim Champagne, Joyce Shaul (MO), Roberto Rodriguez (NJ), R. Craig Reed (PA), John Moffat (WA), Tony Young (KY), and Executive Director Barbara Harsha.

June 27–July 13	You Drink & Drive. You Lose. Mobilization, www.nhtsa.dot.gov
August 23-24	State Motorcycle Safety Administrations Annual Conference Celebrate Safety, www.state.oh.us/odps/mo/
24–27	GHSA Annual Meeting Risks, Remedies & Reauthorization New Orleans, LA Contact: www.statehighwaysafety.org
September 7–12	National Stop on Red Week, www.fhwa.dot.gov
18–20	Underage Drinking Laws Program: Annual National Leadership Conference Uniting for Success: Next Steps in Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws, www.udetc.org
October	Walk to School Week, www.nhsta.dot.gov
6–10	Drive Safely Work Week, www.netsnational.org
10	Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day www.brakesonfatalities.org
19–25	National School Bus Safety Week www.nhsta.dot.gov

GHSA Welcomes New Associate Members

- Betty Mercer**
- GAIA, Inc.**
- Insurance Institute for Highway Safety**
- SADD, Inc.**
- TEAM Coalition, Inc.**
- Traffic Safety Association of Michigan**

To apply for Associate Membership in GHSA visit www.statehighwaysafety.org or call (202) 789-0942.

U.S. Supreme Court Rules on Traffic-Related Crash Data

A January decision of the U.S. Supreme Court has confirmed the right of state and local agencies to withhold traffic crash-related data, ruling that data “compiled and collected” by public agencies in order to apply for Sec. 152 federal traffic crash hazard elimination funds cannot be used in a lawsuit against the agency. The protection, however, is limited to only those agencies actually using the data for Sec. 152 requests.

The initial case stems from a suit against Pierce County, WA, when plaintiffs requested materials related to the safety of a particular intersection—such as previous accident reports—in pretrial discovery. The County refused to produce the documents, citing its

protection under Title 23, Sec. 409 of the U.S. Code, which states that data collected for federal hazard elimination funds under Sec. 152 is not subject to pretrial discovery or admission as evidence during a trial. A trial court ordered the county to produce five of the requested documents; this decision was overruled by the Washington State Supreme Court. In the same opinion, however, the state Supreme Court ruled that Congress, in passing Sec. 409 legislation, had exceeded its powers under the Commerce clause of the U.S. Constitution. Pierce County appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of state and local authorities,

so long as the agency is responsible for Sec. 152 funds. The Supreme Court also reversed the state court’s ruling that Congress had overstepped its jurisdiction.

The practical implications of the Supreme Court’s decision will not be clear until the Washington state and Pierce County courts make their rulings in response. According to Daniel Hamilton, the district attorney who argued before the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of Pierce County, plaintiffs have other resources, such as expert testimony, by which to prove an intersection or road was unsafe, rather than relying on the data collected for Sec. 152 purposes.



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