

**Mrs. B. Simmons**

**[bsimmons@camden.k12.ga.us](mailto:bsimmons@camden.k12.ga.us)**

**Camden Middle School 1300 Middle School Road  
Kingsland, GA 31548**

**912-729-3113**

**7th grade**

**Connor Daniels**

**Kairi Hargrove**

**Matthew Dowdell**

**Natalee Clawson**

# Lives Minimize Distracted Driving and Walking to Save

In a traffic filled highway, a toddler in a blue Camry screamed at his mother. “No! For the last time, we are not going to McDonald’s!” Mom yelled, glancing at the angry toddler in the rear view mirror. He screamed at her, refusing to let go of his demands.

“I want! McDonald’s!” he demanded angrily. His mom turned around to face him, preparing to yell, but before she had the chance, there was a stomach curling crunch!

A semi-truck rammed into their side, blasting the windows off of the car in a hurry, the mother had just ran a red light.

Did you know that distracted driving accounts for over ninety percent of car accidents? Distractions while traveling have become a growing trend that has often led to the injury and death of both vehicle occupants and pedestrians. Why is this becoming a greater concern, and more importantly,

what can we do to stop it?



According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there are about 102 car crashes per day.

## Distracted

In America, there are about 102 car crashes every day, and six million car accidents every year, but why? What causes these deadly fatal crashes? Road safety organizations think they’ve found the answer.

The National Public Radio, also known as the NPR states, “But the real increase, experts say, comes from larger trends: drivers and pedestrians distracted by their phones and a growth of larger vehicles on the road,” in their article [\*Why Pedestrian Deaths Are At A 30-Year High\*](#). In fact, studies show that walkers and drivers currently use about

4,000 percent more phone data than they did in 2008!”

However, it isn't only phone usage that distracts drivers and pedestrians. Other tasks such as talking to other passengers or walkers, listening to music, and eating or drinking are all examples of things that can distract those on the road.

Those who text and drive are twenty-three times more likely to get into a car accident than those who don't. In fact, ninety percent of all car accidents are caused by distracted drivers. With the number of drivers increasing, rising by about 3.6 percent every year, and the ever growing demand for mobile phones, distracted driving will continue to grow as a threat on the road. This growing rate of attention strain is what is currently killing millions of Americans.



About, nine people were killed and over 1,000 injured daily in accidents in which at least one driver was distracted by their mobile device.



## It Isn't Only Drivers

Distracted Drivers aren't the only ones responsible for the high rate of accidents. Pedestrians are also known to cause accidents on the road.

If you text your mom or take a selfie for your Snapchat story on your walk home, you aren't aware of your surroundings. If you are focused on a conversation or a game on your phone, you probably won't notice important details, like the change of the traffic light or an incoming car. The National Safety Council advises that both pedestrians and drivers avoid phone usage when traveling.

“ Over half of distracted walking injuries occur in our own homes, proving that we need to stay aware of our surroundings whether indoors and out,” the National Safety Council states in their article on distracted walking.

Pedestrian crashes aren't only caused by distractions, but can also be caused by their surroundings. In fact, 74 percent of all crashes occur at night

and 78 percent in urban areas, according to the National Safety Council. More pedestrians die from car accidents on Saturday nights than any other time of the week.



A 36-year-old woman was killed after the car she was driving collided with an SUV

## Does It Happen in Georgia?

Distracted driving and pedestrian fatalities are a severe problem nationally, but it is becoming worse in the southern state of Georgia.

Georgia's pedestrian death rate has grown four percent out of their total car accident death rate. According to *Georgia Pedestrian Deaths Spike In 2018: Report*, an article released on March 9 in 2019 by Deb Belt, Georgia's pedestrian fatality rate was higher in 2018 than it was in 2017. The text reads, "In Georgia, 133 pedestrians were killed on roads during the first half of 2018, the report projects. That's a 32 percent increase compared to the first half of 2017."

Florida, California, Arizona, Georgia, and Texas accounted for almost half of the total pedestrian fatalities within the first half of 2018 alone. Over the past ten years pedestrian deaths have increased, mostly occurring in urban areas. However, pedestrian accidents have also impacted smaller counties in Georgia. For example, within the past four years three people have been victims of pedestrian accidents, two of which were young teenagers.

What's the solution? Recently the state created a new law forbidding drivers from holding any mobile devices while traveling. The purpose of this law is to shorten the number of accidents by preventing drivers from being distracted. If this plan succeeds, then the high rate of pedestrian fatalities will lessen and quantity of car accidents will decrease as well!

## How To Stay Safe

How can you avoid danger on the road while walking or driving? Here are some quick tips!

1. Avoid distractions-  
While walking or driving home, don't play on your phone and keep your headphones out. Be aware of your surroundings!
2. Don't distract others!  
One of the best ways to keep others and yourself safe is by allowing others to focus. Don't pester your

mom with rude remarks while she's driving, and don't text somebody you know is driving.

3. Follow the rules!

Don't startle drivers by running through traffic during a green light. Remaining predictable by following guidelines makes it easier for the driver to avoid conflict.

4. Be visible!

Make sure the driver can see you! Wear bright clothing or hold a light if you're walking at night. When crossing the road, make eye contact with the drivers to ensure that you've been seen.

Distracted driving and walking is the cause of many car accidents and is responsible for millions of deaths throughout America. States like Georgia, who have high pedestrian fatality rates, are attempting to prevent accidents caused by distracted driving by creating laws that will limit distractions on the road. To ensure that you stay safe on the road, avoid distracting yourself and others. To find out more, check out organizations like the National Safety Council to help take down distracted driving!

## **Resources:**

Photo 1

<https://www.thezebra.com/distracted-driving-statistics/#targetText=Distracted%20driving%20deaths&targetText=Roughly%2C%20nine%20people%20are%20killed,of%203%2C450%20people%20in%202016.>

Photo 2

[https://www.newsandtribune.com/news/three-injured-in-four-car-wreck-in-sellersburg/article\\_945b6e4c-932e-11e7-a397-230ccebd3629.html](https://www.newsandtribune.com/news/three-injured-in-four-car-wreck-in-sellersburg/article_945b6e4c-932e-11e7-a397-230ccebd3629.html)

Photo 3

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Akt\\_motorcycle-crash.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Akt_motorcycle-crash.jpg)

Photo 4

[https://qctimes.com/news/local/woman-loses-life-after-her-car-is-broadsided-in-ri/article\\_1500a810-7d30-5347-8e1d-eedb25c36781.html](https://qctimes.com/news/local/woman-loses-life-after-her-car-is-broadsided-in-ri/article_1500a810-7d30-5347-8e1d-eedb25c36781.html)

Photo 5

<http://www.freestockphotos.biz/stockphoto/15864>

Photo 6

<https://www.thezebra.com/distracted-driving-statistics/>



Teenagers account for half of all pedestrian injuries within the past five years.