



Look Both Ways Before You Cross the Street

Yes, you have probably heard this from your mom or your dad. We did too. The problem is this: there have never been more distractions for pedestrians, cyclists or drivers. Pedestrians unfortunately pay the greatest price. The people driving cars and riding bikes that are coming at you—when you are crossing the street—are listening to music, taking a call, texting, or worse. They are not looking out for you—that's for sure.

Today we're trying to get YOUR attention because this threatens your health and life, even that paper due on Friday. That is why we're launching a campaign to encourage everyone to walk more safely. Consider these four simple steps before crossing the street:

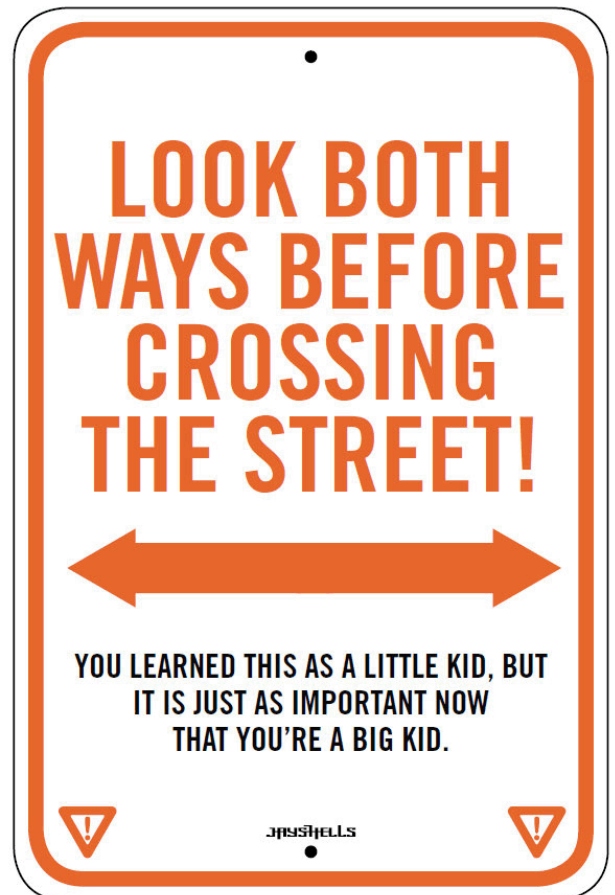
- Find a crosswalk.
- Stop using your phone before you step off the curb.
- Look both ways for cars, bikes, trucks and other moving vehicles.
- Make eye contact with the driver or cyclist coming in your direction before you cross.

Yale's Traffic Safety Committee is devoted to this because the risk is real. Every year about 100 New Haven adults are sent to the Emergency Department after they are struck by a car. We know that a combination of factors—pedestrian behavior, driver behavior and the way the street is configured—play a role in these pedestrian-vehicle crashes. As we work with the City and motorists to make our streets safer, we hope that all of us can take a small step to affect a big change.

Our safety campaign is to remind you to please stop and look before crossing the street. Ask friends and strangers to do the same. Tell us what you think of our ads encouraging safer walking. You can find them on billboards, kiosks, lawn signs and on the sidewalk at some busy intersections around campus.

Peter Reinhardt
Director, Yale Office of Environmental Health and Safety
Peter.reinhardt@yale.edu

Kirsten Bechtel MD
Associate Professor of Pediatrics
Chair-University Traffic Safety Committee Yale School of Medicine
Kirsten.bechtel@yale.edu



According to a new report from the NHTSA pedestrian fatalities increased in the United States in 2011, totaling 4,432 deaths, with an estimated 69,000 injuries. (most recently available data)



Best Practices for Electronic Device Use While Driving –Don't Use Them

Adults frequently multitask. However one place where multitasking should take a backseat is in the car. A recent survey by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) demonstrates that Americans still use electronic devices while driving even though it causes their own driving to deteriorate and can lead to crashes, injuries and death.

The National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) shows that at any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010. In addition, more than 3,300 people were killed and 387,000 were injured in crashes involving a distracted driver in 2011.

According to NHTSA's 2012 National Survey on Distracted Driving Attitudes and Behaviors, most drivers support bans on hand-held cell phone use (74 percent) and texting while driving (94 percent). Thirty-nine states, including Connecticut, ban text messaging for all drivers. Ten states prohibit all drivers from using any handheld cell phones while driving.

The Connecticut statute on the use of electronic devices while driving can be found at this link: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2010/rpt/2010-R-0422.htm>. While the Connecticut statute only specifically bans the use of hand held devices while driving a vehicle, hands-free/Bluetooth electronic devices still pose a significant distraction for drivers:

Hands Free Devices Distract Drivers

AAA Study Shows Hands-Free Devices Are Not Distraction-Free

To prevent distracted driving, please consider the following behaviors of safe drivers:

1. Turn off electronic devices and put them out of reach before starting to drive.
2. Be good role models for young drivers and set a good example by not using electronic devices while driving.
3. Speak up when you are a passenger and your driver uses an electronic device while driving. Offer to make the call for the driver.
4. Always wear your seat belt as they are the best defense against other unsafe drivers.

Bibliography

[NHTSA Survey on Drivers Using Cell Phones or Manipulating Electronic Devices While Driving](#)

[Official US Government Website for Distracted Driving](#)

[National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) - Crash Avoidance

[National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) - Policy Statement and Compiled FAQs on Distracted Driving

[ABC News "NTSB Recommends Banning Texting, Cell Phones While Driving](#)

[DC Streets Blogs: AAA: Hands-Free Devices Don't Solve Distracted Driving Dangers](#)

[AAA News Room: Think You Know All About Distracted Driving? Think Again](#)

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), more than 3,000 people lost their lives last year in distraction-related accidents. In Missouri, two people died and 38 were injured in a pileup in August 2010 after a 19-year-old driver rammed his pickup truck into the back of a tractor truck and was then hit by one school bus and then another. The teen was texting while driving.



At any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving.

Office of Environmental Health & Safety
135 College Street, Suite 100, New Haven, CT 06510
Telephone: 203-785-3550 / Fax: 203-785-7588
ehs.yale.edu
Director: Peter Reinhardt