

Electronic Newsletter

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Don't Drive Distracted!

Teen Driving Deaths Are Up



For the first time in eight years, the number of teen deaths on the highway appears to have climbed last year, according to the [Washington Post](#), which noted that "More teenagers die in automobile accidents than any other way each year."

In our view, the National Safety Council's 2010 white paper called "Understanding the Distracted Brain: Why driving while using hands-free cell phones is risky behavior" (see www.KidsAgainstDistractedDriving.com) should be required reading for all middle- and high school students. The NSC compiled over 30 research studies and reports by scientists around the world using a variety of research methods, all comparing driver performance with handheld and hands-free phones. All of these studies showed that hands-free phones offered no safety benefit when driving. The cognitive distraction caused by paying attention to conversation - everything from listening and responding to the voice on the other end of the phone- contributes to numerous driving impairments. Hands-free devices do not eliminate the *cognitive distraction* that occurs when using a cell phone. Taking your mind off the road is just as dangerous as taking your eyes off the road.

Study: Injuries Triple for Pedestrians Wearing Headphones

Serious injuries sustained by pedestrians while listening to headphones have more than tripled in six years, according to a new study published in the journal *Injury Prevention*. The study reports between January 2004 and June 2011, there were 116 reports of death or injury of pedestrians wearing headphones. Most of the incidents occurred in urban areas, and the average age of the victims was 21. More specifically, about two thirds were male (68%) and under 30 years old (67%). The authors point out that along with the increase of injuries to pedestrians wearing headphones, ownership of devices with headphones has also increased. According to findings by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 74% of teenagers reported owning an MP3 player in 2008, and another Pew Study found cell phone use increased from 45% in 2004 to 71% in 2008 for teenagers (12 to 17 years old). The authors state "The association between distraction caused by cell phone use while driving and driver/passenger fatalities has been documented, but the safety risks associated with headphone use by pedestrians remains unknown." Read [more](#).

Teen Drivers Often Distracted by Friends

Teens who think of themselves as thrill-seekers and who believe their parents don't set rules are among the most likely to drive with other teens in the car, which in many states violates graduated licensing laws, a new study finds. And a second study of teens involved in serious accidents found that for those

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Survey: 15% of Surgeons May Suffer From Alcohol Abuse, Dependence

[Healthday](#) reported that "Alcohol use disorders are a significant issue among US surgeons," according to the results of a new survey published in *Archives of Surgery*. Investigators reported that "the online, anonymous poll indicated that 15 percent of surgeons appear to suffer from alcohol abuse or dependence: nearly 14 percent of male surgeons and 26 percent of female surgeons." These "figures exceed the 8 percent to 12 percent figure typically cited for alcohol abuse rates among the public at large, according to background information in the study."

Poll: 32% Afraid Healthcare Reform Will Hurt Care

The AP reported that a recent poll shows 32% of Americans are worried that the healthcare overhaul will "undermine their own care," with the strongest opposition among seniors, "many of whom object that Medicare cuts were used to help finance coverage for younger uninsured people." At the same time, "Confusion about the complex legislation has not helped Obama sell it to the public, contributing to an atmosphere in which wild charges about potential repercussions readily find an audience." Read [more](#).

Survey: 1 in 5

carrying other teen passengers, distraction and risky driving behavior often played a role. It's long been known that having teen passengers increases a teen driver's crash risk, but it hasn't been well understood how these passengers actually increase crash risk. Read [more](#).

Group Says Medical Device Legislation Would Endanger Patient Safety

[CQ](#) reported that "While the Food and Drug Administration takes heat from members of Congress over slow approval for medical devices, Public Citizen argues the regulatory system is too weak and that new proposals could endanger patients." Public Citizen "objects in particular to bills introduced in Congress that it says 'aim to ease the approval and clearance processes for medical devices, often by weakening measures intended to ensure patient safety,' according to a statement from Michael Carome, deputy director and Sidney Wolfe, director, of Public Citizen's Health Research Group." These "objections come as Congress works to reauthorize FDA powers to levy user fees to support its drug and medical device approval process."

Report: Young People Will Benefit and Suffer from Internet 'Hyperconnectivity'

A new report by the Pew Internet Project concludes that "Teens and young adults brought up from childhood with a continuous connection to each other and to information will be nimble, quick-acting multitaskers who count on the Internet as their external brain and who approach problems in a different way from their elders." Experts said "the effects of hyperconnectivity and the always-on lifestyles of young people will be mostly positive between now and 2020" but they "also predicted this generation will exhibit a thirst for instant gratification and quick fixes, a loss of patience, and a lack of deep-thinking ability due to what one referred to as 'fast-twitch wiring.'" Read [more](#).

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About Our Firm



At [The Law Firm of Stephen M. Reck](#), justice is our mission. Our firm is well known and well respected for its ability to handle personal injury, wrongful death, and professional malpractice cases in Connecticut

and Rhode Island. Call today or visit us on the web at www.stephenreck.com.

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*** Advertising Material ***

Americans

Struggling to Pay Medical Bills

[USA Today](#) reported that a CDC [survey](#) found "1 in 5 Americans say their families are having trouble paying their medical bills," while "half of those who are struggling say they are unable to pay a single dime toward those debts." The agency studied 52,000 people from January through June of last year. Notably, "It's the first time the CDC has asked the medical debt question in its long-standing, in-person health survey, so there is no previous data to compare it with."

Recall Central

To read about recent recalls and product safety news from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, click [here](#).

Get the latest recall information from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [here](#).

The Dept. of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service regulate meat, poultry products and processed eggs. Check their recalls [here](#).

Click [here](#) for Food and Drug Administration recalls, market withdrawals and safety alerts.

For updates on the peanut products recall click [here](#).

Don't Drive Distracted!

It Kills



KidsAgainstDistractedDriving.com

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The trial attorneys at The Law Firm of Stephen M. Reck, LLC represent individuals in all types of personal injury cases throughout the state of Connecticut and the state of Rhode Island, including, in Connecticut: New London County, New Haven County, Middlesex County, Hartford County, Tolland County, and Windham County; and in Rhode Island: Bristol County, Kent County, Newport County, Providence County, and Washington County.

Referrals Welcome

Remember we are here if you need a referral to an attorney in a different area of law.

