

Distracted Driving

An Opinion Survey

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Introduction

This year, we as Washington DECA state officers have enthusiastically adopted Target Zero as our philanthropic mission. We have focused our efforts on advocating to our peers the dangers of distracted driving, honed in on future promotions, and have created an opinion survey to gauge the pulse of high-school students on distracted driving. The data we received is telling, and have helped us better understand the mindset of our peers on distracted driving. We hope that you as well find the results of this survey to be of some use in our shared mission to lower roadside injuries and deaths.

Our Sample

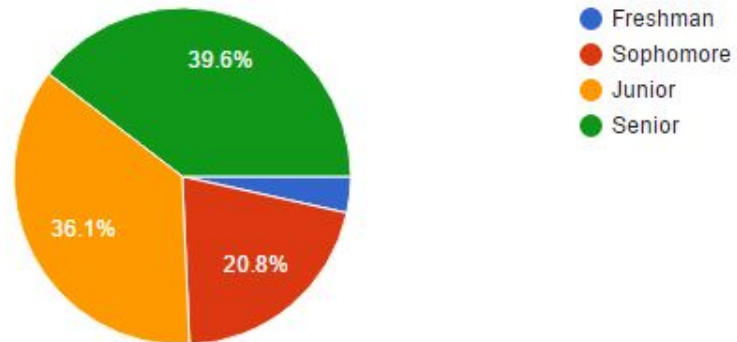
Our method of surveying was Google Sheets. Our process of sampling was after the creation of the survey, all state officers simultaneously pushed the link of the survey out to the public via Twitter and Facebook. In addition to posting said link to the social media accounts of our areas and state, we reached out to outlying DECA state associations, and even the national executive director of DECA to retweet this link. Ultimately, we received 144 total responses, with 109 of them being drivers, and 35 of them being non-drivers. While our sampling method may be subject to a volunteer response bias, we hold that our sample is reliable enough to represent the average high-school student in the United States.

Our Questioning Method

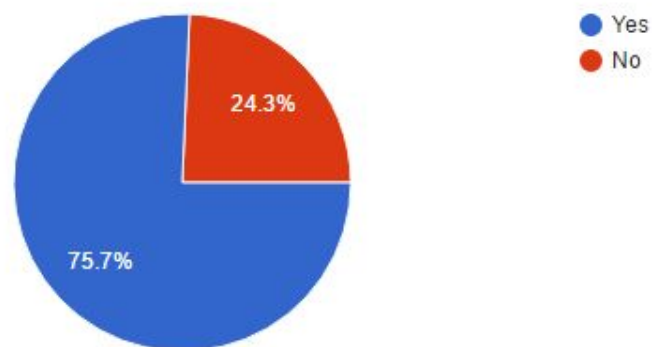
Drivers and non-drivers alike hold opinions on distracted driving. Therefore, our questioning method in our survey was partitioned into two corresponding sections: one for drivers and one for non-drivers, with questions asked to both of similar structure. But without further ado, let us present the data!

Below are two charts that give insight on our sample:

What grade are you in? (144 responses)



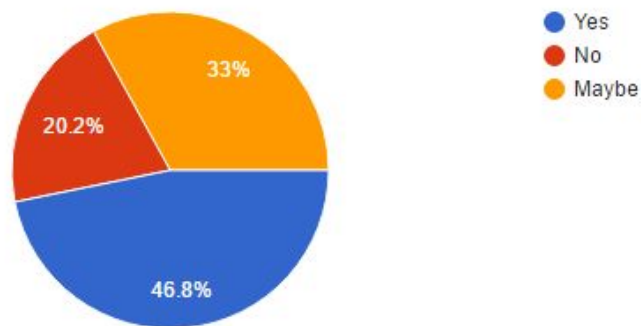
Do you drive? (144 responses)



Questions Asked to Drivers:

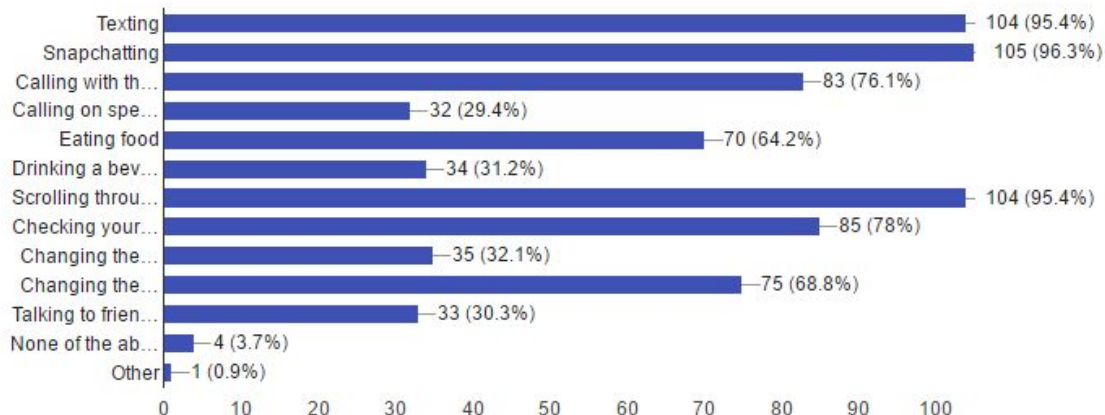
Driver

Do you believe multi-tasking is possible? (109 responses)



We led in with this neutral question to: A) prevent the pattern of response bias occurring for the remainder of the survey, and B) to determine where we should concentrate our educational efforts. According to the above chart, it is clearly apparent that many students believe that multitasking is possible despite it truthfully being impossible. This data could point to the source of teens' justification for distracted driving.

Which of the following would you consider distracted driving? (109 responses)

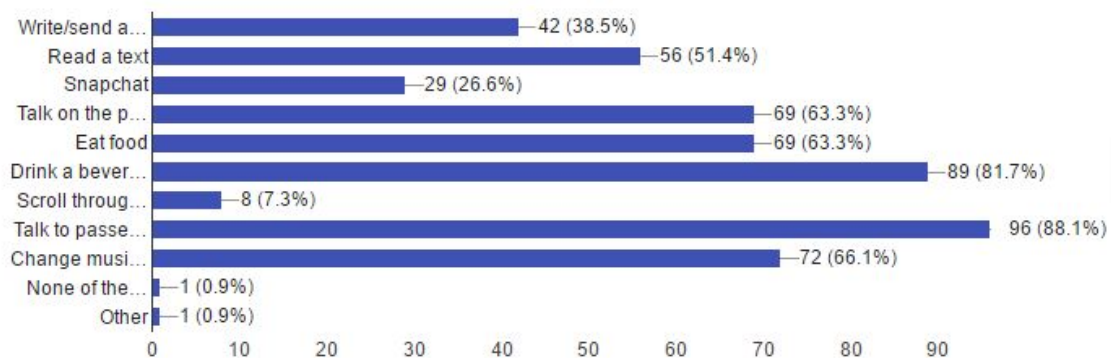


For this question, I will expound the options surveyees had, in respective order. Options are as follows: Texting, Snapchatting, Calling with the phone to your ear, Calling on speaker, Eating food, Scrolling through Facebook, Checking yourself out in the mirror, Changing the music on the radio, Changing the music on your phone, Talking to friends, None of the above, and Other.

The results of this question indicate a clear awareness in high-schoolers that social media while driving is distracted driving. More interestingly, however, are the less-selected option, for they may indicate a gap of knowledge in teens worth focusing on as an organization.

Do you ever do any of the following while driving? (Check any that apply)

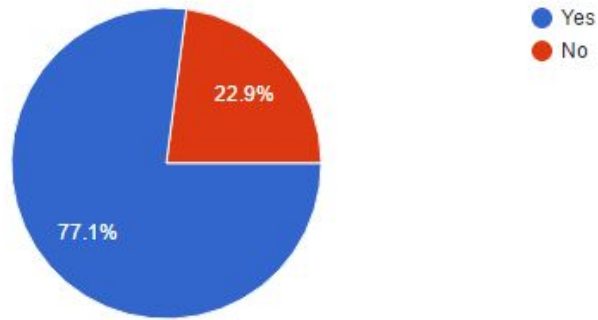
(109 responses)



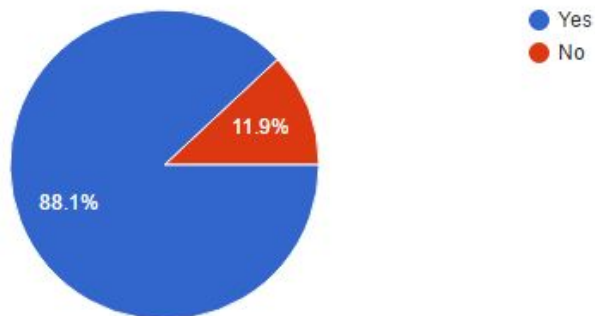
Options are as follows: Write/ send a text, Read a text, Snapchat, Eat food, Drink a beverage, Scroll through Facebook, Talk to passengers, Change music on your phone, None of the above, Other

These results are valuable to us for Target Zero, for true information on distracted driving is hard to come by, given the susceptibility of victims to not want to admit to distracted driving as the cause of their collisions. As expected, the most prevalent forms of distracted driving are talking to passengers, drinking, eating, and talking on the phone. However, we found it telling that over half of responders admitted to reading texts while driving, and even more admitting to changing music on their phones. Awareness of these results may be important in future awareness activities.

Do any of your family members check their phones while driving? (109 responses)

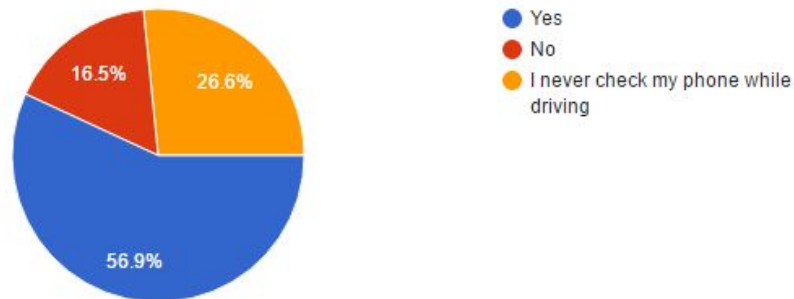


Do your friends ever check their phones while driving? (109 responses)



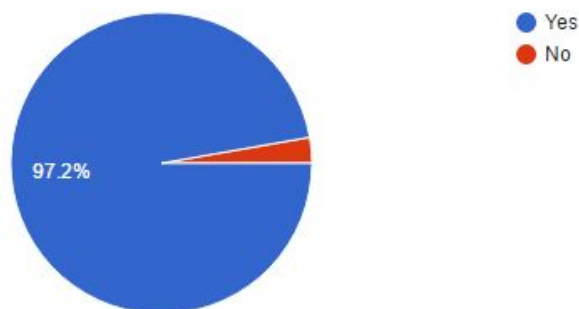
This primary data illustrates that the majority of responders have family and friends that check their phones while driving, a dangerous habit. This shows just how large of an issue distracted driving is.

Do you feel guilty checking your phone while driving? (109 responses)



The responses to the above question indicate that while a majority of driving teens feel guilty checking their phones while driving, 16.5% indicated no feelings of guilt. This may be important in shedding light to the fact that: A) not everyone feels guilt for distracted driving, and B) guilt alone is not going to stop distracted driving, as the majority of responders still drive distracted.

Do you see distracted driving as a problem among teens? (109 responses)

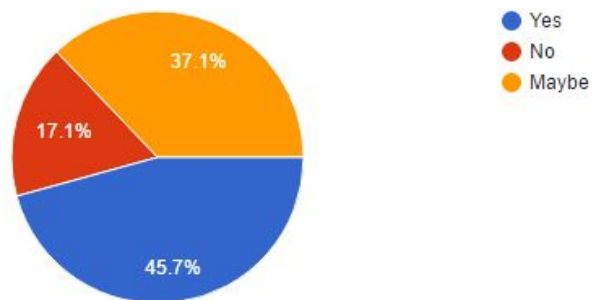


The overwhelming majority of driving responders responded to recognizing distracted driving as a problem. The challenge that lies ahead is utilizing that awareness to usher in positive change.

Questions Asked to Non-Drivers:

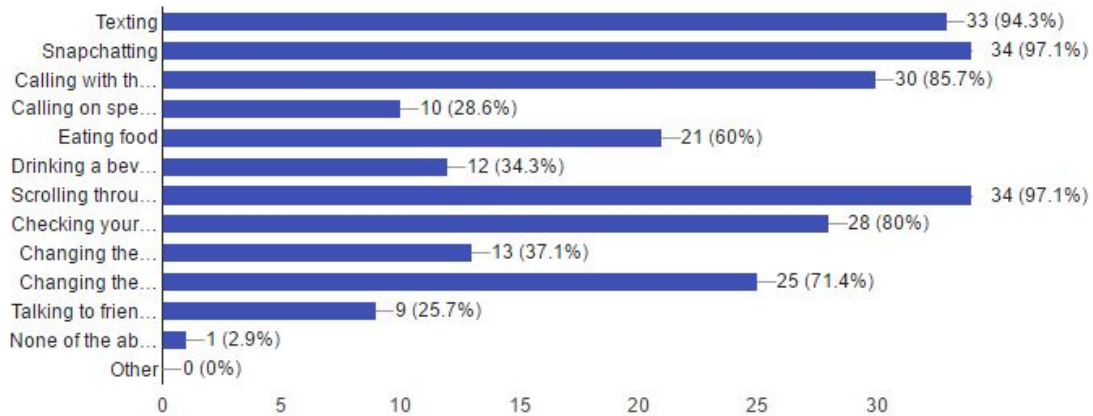
Non Driver

Do you believe multitasking is possible? (35 responses)



We saw no noticeable statistical difference between the above response given by drivers and by non-drivers. Still, the notion that multitasking is possible exists in the average U.S. high-school student.

Which of the following would you consider distracted driving? (35 responses)

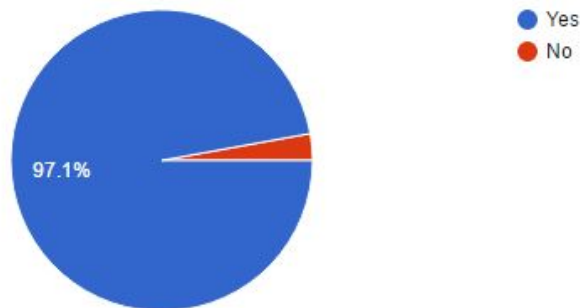


Options to the above question are as follows: Texting, Snapchatting, Calling with the phone to your ear, Calling on speaker, Eating food, Scrolling through Facebook, Checking yourself out in the mirror, Changing the music on the radio, Changing the music on your phone, Talking to friends, None of the above, and Other.

Again, we see a similarity in response to the same question asked of drivers.

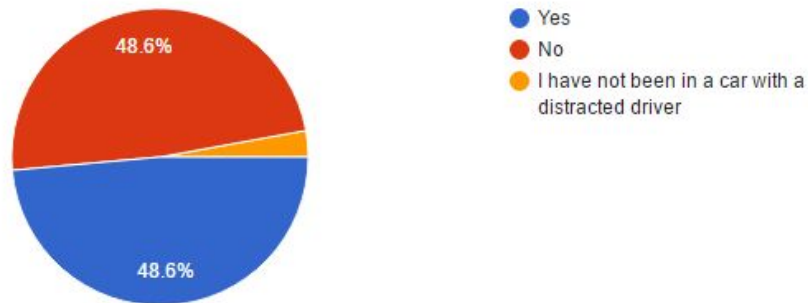
Have you ever been with the car with someone driving distracted? (For example, checking their phone or talking on the phone)

(35 responses)



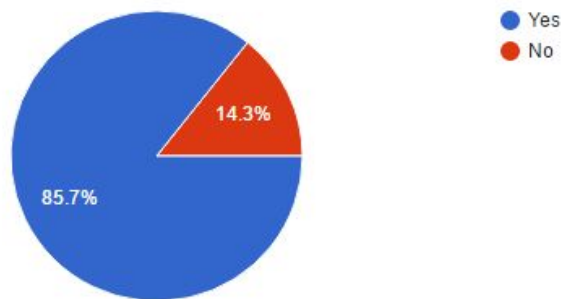
Distracted driving is everywhere. High school students live it.

Did you feel safe in that car? (35 responses)



This question ties into the one preceding it on whether non-drivers had been in a car driven by someone distracted. While our response data here is coincidentally partitioned equally between yes and no, the fact that half of responders felt unsafe in a car should be motivation for our work, and should serve as a rallying cry for our mission for Target Zero.

Do you see distracted driving as a problem among teens? (35 responses)



Just as we had opened with the same question for both groups of responders, we concluded with the same question. From our non-driver responses, we see that distracted driving is still recognized as a problem for the majority of students, but in this case, less of a majority than drivers. We determined that this statistical difference is the result of Driver's Education and licensing programs that promote distracted-driving awareness.

Conclusion

The results of the opinion survey distributed to students across our state and country yielded results that will guide our Target Zero efforts. There is much to interpret from this data, and we hope to use these results as we move forward. While teens may be aware of the dangers and what constitutes distracted driving, the data points that there is much work left to be done.