



NewsFlash

WORLD SAFETY ORGANIZATION

www.worldsafety.org

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editorialstaff@worldsafety.org

the future IS NOW



Kristiana (far right) and friends show off their WSO "Safer Place in the World" wristbands during a WSO Southwestern Florida Chapter sponsored "Donuts with Dad" event.



Kristiana, daughter of Norris Varkalhoff WSO-CSE/CSI, is pictured above with the award she received for her speech "Texting while Driving" presented at the Diocese of St. Petersburg (Florida USA) Speech & Forensics Competition. Kristiana's entry in the ILO SafeYouth@Work Media Competition will be uploaded on the WSO website: www.worldsafety.org.

Dear WSO NewsLetter Readers,

My name is Kristana Varkalhoff, and I am a middle school student. I live in Tampa Bay, Florida. When I talk to my fellow students, I hear that most of them want to be soldiers, models, or work for the IT department, but not many want to work in the safety fields. I feel it is important to start thinking about a safety profession/education in the early teenage years.

I had an opportunity to spread my safety message through the International Labour Organization (ILO) SafeYouth@Work Media Competition. There I approached safety for teens in their language.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the WSO for sharing the information and giving me a chance to participate and share my message.

It doesn't matter to me if I become a finalist. What is important is that the words of my safety message, "Don't Text and Drive," will be heard on ILO's SafeYouth@Work Media Competition website, ILO YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram.

Thank you again for this opportunity, and ... let's work together to make the world safer place for teenagers.

Kristiana Varkalhoff

Kristiana's Award-Winning Speech

Presented at the Diocese of St. Petersburg (Florida USA) Speech & Forensics Competition



TEXTING AND DRIVING

Police Officers. Firefighters. Sirens. A car crash has occurred for one reason and one reason only: texting and driving. How many of you have cell phones? How many of you text?

According to a Nationwide Insurance study, 66% of drivers between the ages of 18 and 24 send and receive text messages while behind the wheel. Texting while driving causes almost 80% of all crashes in the United States. I know ... you may think that it only takes a second to type that text and hit send; however, in reality, the average text takes your eyes away from the road for five seconds. If you are going 55 miles per hour, five seconds is the amount of time it takes you to drive the length of a football field.

Another reason to avoid texting and driving is because it is outlawed in many cities and states. 18 states and the District of Columbia have banned texting for all drivers. In Indiana it is illegal for drivers under the age of 18 to use a cell phone while driving. Getting caught will get you in big trouble.

In 2009 5,474 lives were taken away because of car accidents caused by being distracted while driving. Texting while driving puts many drivers' lives in danger daily. Multiple people feel that staying connected to the outside world is more important than focusing on the road, even if it can harm others. Heather Wilson was a 19 year old girl attending Fairmont Junior Collage. She was studying criminal justice, in hopes of someday working for the FBI. Heather made a terrible mistake on the night of December 29, 2009. While texting a friend she struck a guardrail while driving about 60 miles per hour causing her car to flip and slide down into a ditch costing her her life.

Now pick up your cell phone when you can, and read your last received text message and ask yourself: is that text worth someone's life?



Luckily there is a solution. Stars like Demi Lavato have created projects like Hashtag X to let her fans, friends, and family know that she is about to drive. Therefore she won't be distracted while behind the wheel. We need more people like her on the road.

If people would open their eyes to the dangers of texting while driving, less car accidents would take place every year and the roads would be much safer.

Distracted drivers need to know the position they put others in as well as themselves. While behind the wheel, drivers should never direct their attention to their cell phone and should always keep their eyes on the road. Make sure when you are old enough to drive that your next text won't be your last. ■

References:

<http://www.cram.com/flashcards/texting-while-driving-speech-2783104>

http://www.teenink.com/hot_topics/what_matters/article/463526/Texting-While-Driving-Needs-To-Come-To-A-Stop/

Guardian Angels "Donuts with Dads" Event Sponsored by WSO Southwestern Florida Chapter



Guardian Angels students and their dads enjoy donuts and juice together during the event.



Kristiana presents raffle prizes on behalf of WSO Southwestern Florida Chapter