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coalition news

Prevention news and information from the Tiverton Prevention Coalition

A Family Promise: A Gift that Keeps Giving All Year Long

Eyes on the road. Hands on the wheel. Most everyone who has a driver's license can remember this basic driver-instructor rule. Yet, that safety rule is quickly fading and, as a result, traffic accidents and fatalities are trending upward. With more people on the road during the holiday season, it's a good time to think, talk and do something about "distracted driving." It could be a life-saving family activity!

Sorry, Grinch-like stats. Each day in the United States, 9 people are killed and 1,153 people are injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver, according to [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Distracted driving activities include things like using a cell phone, texting, and eating. While any of these distractions can endanger the driver and others, the CDC reports that texting while driving is especially dangerous because it combines all three types of distraction: 1. Visual: taking your eyes off the road; 2. Manual: taking your hands off the wheel; and 3. Cognitive: taking your mind off of driving.

What's even more alarming is a [recent report](#) on distracted driving from State Farm® indicates a significant increase in the number of drivers, as many as 40 percent in the 18 to 29 age group, who surf the web, update their social media pages and send e-mails while behind the wheel.

Smart Phone, Smart Users. Most drivers surveyed agreed that Smart phone use while driving isn't safe. The simple solution isn't rocket science; it's making the decision not to

use phones while driving. But that's easier said than done. Americans are hooked on cell phones. The [Pew Research Center](#) reported in 2015 that nearly two-thirds of Americans now own a cell phone and that 46 percent report that they "can't live without them." So what could motivate a cell phone owner to give it a rest while driving? Families could turn the tide.



A "promising solution." Suppose families agree to look at cell phones as distractions whenever they're behind the wheel, distractions that could lead to an accident that would affect every family member. Suppose family members promised each other that they won't take that risk, that they won't use a phone while driving?

Consider this as a family promise: No outbound, limited inbound. No outbound means you won't initiate cell phone use while driving — for calling, texting or surfing the web. Limited inbound means you can accept short calls from family or business colleagues (setting up a family ring tone is a good idea). Any other calls and all texts can wait until you pull over or reach your destination — for your family's sake.

Whatever you decide, have a family discussion about avoiding the negative consequences of distracted driving. A family promise to eliminate or at least reduce cell phone use while driving would be a gift that lasts all year long.



REBECCA'S notes

In 2011 Chris Herren was speaking to a high school assembly about the dangers of substance use. He noticed several students, sitting together, all wearing purple shirts. When asked what the purple shirts meant, one of the students stood up and said, "We are the sober students of this high school and each year we take a pledge to not use drugs or alcohol." Inspired by those students, [The Herren Project](#) launched Project Purple in 2012.

The Coalition embraces the mission of Project Purple: Empower youth to stand up and make a difference, to give students motivation and support as they embrace a message of education and awareness. And we're joining hundreds of communities across the United States during the last week of January 2016 to encourage the whole Tiverton community to show its support for kids who choose a drug-free lifestyle.

Several events and a special contest are planned as in-school activities and every household and business will be asked to display a purple ribbon to show their support for kids who choose to remain drug-free — as well as to get a chance to win a special Super Bowl platter to entertain your guests for the big game (where many of us hope to see the Patriots on the field). You'll find complete details in our January newsletter — and more on the Super Bowl Contest via a postcard every household will receive next month.

Until then, and on behalf of all Coalition members, thank you for all you do to keep Tiverton kids safe and healthy. And please accept our sincerest wishes for a safe, healthy and family-centered holiday season.

Holiday Mocktails

When families raise a glass for a holiday toast, it's the sentiment and not what's in the glass that matters. A toast is a feeling of oneness, that we're all in this together.



Be sure to include your kids in the tradition of holiday toasts with a special Holiday Mocktail, a tasty, non-alcoholic drink that's also perfect for pregnant moms and other adults who don't drink alcohol. Better yet, have your kids make them.

Here's a kid-friendly recipe for Pink Champagne from Mothers Against Drunk Driving:

- 1 ounce cran-apple juice, chilled
- 1 ounce apple juice, chilled
- 2 1/2 ounces cold ginger ale

Pour first 2 ingredients into mixing glass and stir well. Add ginger ale and stir briefly. Pour into champagne flute and serve immediately.

You can also check out M.A.D.D. [recipes](#) for White Hot Chocolate, Sparkling Mocktail, Quick Holiday Eggnog and Cold Chocolate Peppermint — and lift a glass together as a family. Cheers!

Popcorn Lungs

A recent [study](#) by the Harvard School of Public Health found that the chemical diacetyl, used to flavor most e-cigarettes, is linked to a debilitating respiratory disease, bronchiolitis, commonly called



"Popcorn Lung" because it first appeared in workers who inhaled artificial butter flavor in microwave popcorn manufacturing plants.

Diacetyl is used in 75 percent of flavored e-cigs and vaping refill liquids.

"Since most of the health concerns about e-cigarettes have focused on nicotine, there is still much we do not know about e-cigarettes. In addition to containing varying levels of the addictive substance nicotine, they also contain other cancer-causing chemicals, such as formaldehyde, and as our study shows, flavoring chemicals that can cause lung damage," said study co-author David Christiani.