

# NATIONAL DISTRACTED DRIVING COALITION

**VISION:** To accelerate national efforts to implement short and long-term interventions that will promote attentive driving and eliminate distracted driving fatalities and injuries.

**MISSION:** To promote innovative and collaborative approaches to create a culture of attentive drivers and to serve as a central clearing house for diverse stakeholders.



## 2021 ACTION PLAN PRIORITIES

**Create an overall coalition brand and centralized resource for distracted driving materials.** Plan media launch, develop a marketing and communications strategy, create a website to serve as a resource to consolidate information and make it readily accessible. These resources can enable organizations to spend less time looking for information and more time taking action.

**Communicate the importance of having prevalence data to measure and track the problem.** Emphasize the impact of under-reporting issues and data gaps that make it challenging to measure the distracted driving problem. The Coalition will follow NHTSA's progress on the issue.

**Conduct a national survey to focus on what it would take for drivers to change their behavior and identify the barriers that prevent behavior change.** This initiative is a foundation for a national education campaign. Solutions and messaging associated with an educational campaign should be connected to the health belief model with respect to behavior change strategies. A focused effort to reach an audience reflecting the diversity of our country and customizing our messages will be critical. There have been many surveys, but it will be very important to do an analysis on what strategies work when compiling data to tell the most accurate and compelling story. As part of this initiative, the potential of blocking apps should be considered as well as encouraging industry and the public to turn on these features.

**Highlight the importance of educational messaging to underscore the risks of hands-free phones as a source of distraction.** This initiative is important to discourage a simple shift from handheld to handsfree which is equally risky. Such messaging can also increase public support for banning hands-free phone use to make roads safer.

**Work with children and youth to increase distracted driving prevention strategies.** Cultivating a younger generation of drivers who do not engage in distracting behaviors on the road is necessary to promote a strong shift in social norms to discourage distraction. Young children and drivers are also important influencers of parental behavior if they are empowered to speak up when parents are driving distracted.

**Promote best practices for workplace distracted driving policies to inspire corporate leadership and encourage that leadership to extend their culture of safety to other influencers and the community at large.** Work on this issue has already been completed by the National Safety Council, the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Review existing programs and determine whether a distracted driving program toolkit with clear and actionable steps on how to implement a program in the workplace would be helpful. Increase awareness by sharing these tools through Coalition networks in order to help expand the reach and penetration of these programs. Encourage a national policy shift to require driver monitoring in all vehicles.

**Prepare policy/legislative briefing documents to support legislative initiatives.** These educational documents will provide the foundation for national and state leadership to advance distracted driving policy by offering model language and highlighting the risks and research in lay language. It is very important to be sensitive to the reality of existing policies and legislation and not harm existing progress. A focus should also be to encourage studies to evaluate the effectiveness of laws.

# NATIONAL DISTRACTED DRIVING COALITION

## COMPLETE ACTION PLAN



### DATA

- 1. Summarize available data sources, how these data are collected and used, as well as the strengths and limitations.** This resource would be valuable to many organizations and allow them to spend less time attempting to identify information and more time affecting change. It would also be a useful resource to provide to policymakers, legislators and potential funders so they might make data driven decisions regarding support. The Coalition will review what has already been compiled on this topic before beginning this project and will also determine which states are tracking distraction as a contributing factor in crashes.
- 2. Communicate the importance of having good prevalent data to measure and track the problem.** Underscore the impact of the under-reporting issue and data gaps that make it challenging to measure the distracted driving problem. The Coalition will follow NHTSA's progress on the issue.
- 3. Identify what measures are available with respect to the effectiveness of distracted driving laws or what information is or should be collected by jurisdictions.** Underscore the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of distracted driving laws and practices in order to increase efficiency and accelerate change.
- 4. Recommend that NHTSA continue to produce updated guidance on challenges and best practices on identifying and documenting distracted driving crashes.**

### EDUCATION

- 5. Create an overall coalition brand and centralized resource for distracted driving materials.** Plan media launch, develop a marketing and communications strategy, create a website to serve as a resource to consolidate information and make it readily accessible. The resource can enable organizations to spend less time looking for information and more time taking action. (2021 PRIORITY)
- 6. Conduct a national survey to focus on what it would take for drivers to change their behavior and identifying the barriers that prevent behavior change.** This initiative is a foundation for a national education campaign. Solutions and messaging associated with an educational campaign should be connected to the health belief model with respect to behavior change strategies. A focused effort to reach an audience reflecting the diversity of our country and customizing our message to them will be critical. There have been many surveys, but it will be very important to do an analysis on what strategies work when compiling data to tell the most accurate and compelling story. As part of this initiative, the potential of blocking apps should be considered as well as encouraging industry and the public to turn on these features. (2021 PRIORITY)
- 7. Recommend that NHTSA evaluate the effectiveness of current national campaign themes ("U Drive. U Text. U Pay") and whether new approaches may be needed.**
- 8. Develop or identify campaign materials to educate passenger vehicle drivers about sharing the road with large trucks, with an emphasis on distraction-related risks.** These educational materials should be shareable and easily integrated into campaigns developed and delivered by many organizations at state and national levels. The objective is to increase awareness about the risks of distraction on the road to discourage risky behaviors by passenger vehicle drivers and truck drivers, as well as awareness about who drivers are sharing the road with, and the differences between large trucks and passenger vehicles. The FMCSA has "Our Roads, Our Safety Coalition" and may have some materials already in existence.

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# NATIONAL DISTRACTED DRIVING COALITION

## COMPLETE ACTION PLAN (CONTINUED)



- 9. Highlight the importance of educational messaging to underscore the risks of hands-free phones as a source of distraction.** This initiative is important to discourage a simple shift from handheld to handsfree which is equally risky. Such messaging can also increase public support for banning hands-free phone use to make roads safer. (2021 PRIORITY)
- 10. Work with children and youth to increase distracted driving prevention strategies.** Cultivating a younger generation of drivers who do not engage in distracting behaviors on the road is necessary to promote a strong shift in social norms to discourage distraction. Young children and drivers are also important influencers of parental behavior if they are empowered to speak up when parents are driving distracted. (2021 PRIORITY)
- 11. Tackle increasing awareness related to distraction in other modes of transport and among other types of road users.** Distraction is a concerning behavior among pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users.
- 12. Understand the Brain. Provide insight in to the brain and how increased access to advanced technology underlies distracted driving.** Review the literature, and educate the public on how excessive use of technologies (i.e., cell phones, in-cab infotainment systems) may tap in to naturally occurring neural mechanisms and relate to increased risk for distracted driving.

## EMPLOYERS

- 13. Promote best practices for workplace distracted driving policies to inspire corporate leadership and encourage that leadership to extend their culture of safety to other influencers and the community at large.** Work on this issue has already been completed by the National Safety Council, the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Review existing programs, and determine whether a distracted driving program toolkit with clear and actionable steps on how to implement a program in the workplace would be helpful. Increase awareness by sharing these tools through Coalition networks in order to help expand the reach and penetration of these programs. Encourage a national policy shift to require driver monitoring in all vehicles. (2021 PRIORITY)
- 14. Educate employers about differences between handheld and hands-free and compile best practice tools for employers with respect to communication tools/policies.** This should include describing differences between in-vehicle conversations and phone conversations, so that employers understand the risks and have evidence to support the development and implementation of workplace policies.
- 15. Tackle increasing awareness related to distraction in other modes of transport and among other types of road users.** Distraction is a concerning behavior among pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users.

## ENFORCEMENT

- 16. Encourage and support initiatives to provide training on distracted driving laws to law enforcement.** Work with the IACP and the National Sheriffs Association to insure that proper policy, training, and strategies are widely adopted and that agency leadership understands the importance of supporting and enforcing these laws.
- 17. Explore advanced technologies to increase the enforceability of distracted driving laws.** Research cutting edge technologies and showcase their abilities to law enforcement. Encourage law enforcement to adopt technology as an effective tool to enforce the law. Encourage NHTSA to provide grant funding for automated technologies.

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# NATIONAL DISTRACTED DRIVING COALITION

## COMPLETE ACTION PLAN (CONTINUED)



## LEGISLATION

- 18. Prepare policy/legislative briefing documents to support legislative initiatives.** These educational documents will provide the foundation for national and state leadership to advance distracted driving policy by offering model language and highlighting the risks and research in lay language. It is very important to be sensitive to the reality of existing policies and legislation and not harm existing progress. A focus should also be to encourage studies to evaluate the effectiveness of laws. (2021 PRIORITY)
- 19. Identify and promote equitable distracted driving enforcement initiatives.** Equitable enforcement is a priority consideration in the development and implementation of distracted driving legislation. The coalition can encourage the collection of traffic stop data to determine the effectiveness of enforcement efforts and ensure equitable enforcement activities are promoted.

## TECHNOLOGIES

- 20. Research studies and documents on the evaluation of new and emerging in-vehicle technologies (e.g., driver monitoring cameras) and increase awareness about how vehicle technologies can help reduce distraction, and the limitations of these technologies.** Analyze the opportunities to improve the safety technology currently in vehicles. Actively engage with the automakers to encourage the adaptation of effective technologies.
- 21. Identify and promote equitable distracted driving enforcement initiatives.** Equitable enforcement is a priority consideration in the development and implementation of distracted driving legislation. The coalition can encourage the collection of traffic stop data to determine the effectiveness of enforcement efforts and ensure equitable enforcement activities are promoted.
- 22. Review studies and analyses of existing and emerging DNDWD Apps and make this information available to the general public.** Encourage drivers to adopt DNDWD applications and run in the automatic mode. Encourage companies to add prompts upon installation to turn on DND with the default setup on auto block or at the minimum to add a prompt to use in the automatic mode. Research technology that differentiates between passengers and driver in order to eliminate that excuse from the non-user.
- 23. Partner with vehicle safety and consumer advocates to consider federal mandates and/or voluntary guidance for vehicle-based and wireless technologies to prevent distracted driving.** Mandate ongoing evaluations of these technologies.
- 24. National Prioritization.** Identify and cultivate relationships with the U.S. Congress to support national policy priorities related to distracted driving, including more resources to accomplish the actions listed above.
- 25. Conduct outreach to U.S. DOT leadership to link the risks of distracted driving to current interest in pedestrian and bicycle safety, and to achieve federal support for national planning, research, and programs.**