

# **BOSWORTH & ASSOCIATES**

A UNIQUE INSURANCE AGENCY

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## **Teens and Text Messaging**

**When it comes to teen driving, you make sure they fasten their seatbelts and obey the speed limit. Do you make sure they turn off their cell phones?**

Text messaging is cited as one of the biggest distractions while driving for teens. In fact, studies show text messaging has become just as dangerous as drinking and driving for teens in regards to inhibiting their ability to concentrate on the road.

A study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Virginia Tech Transportation Institute found that almost 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes can be attributed to some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the event. Add to this fact that statistics from the American Automobile Association show 46 percent of teens text message while driving, and you have a deadly combination.

Texting has been cited as the likely factor in fatal accidents across America, prompting many states to take legal action. Washington and New Jersey specifically prohibit texting while driving. Sixteen other states are considering similar bills. However, legislation may not have much effect on the trend. Police officers state it is difficult to enforce a texting ban because texting is often done with the phone held where it's difficult to see.

### **So what can you do to protect your teen?**

Set a good example. Studies reveal that parents have the biggest influence on teens when it comes to driving habits. Parents often face the same set of distractions teens face while driving, including cell phone usage. Practice safe driving techniques and always pull over before using your cell phone while driving. Be simply setting a good example for your teen, you may save their life.