



Ankin Law Office LLC

Protecting the Rights of Injured Workers

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Teen Drivers and Distracted Driving—A Lethal Combination

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Distracted driving is a problem for anyone who drives a car. If you're not paying attention to the road and are focused on something else, whether it's your cell phone, the radio, or a GPS device, you're putting others on the road at risk. Distracted driving is dangerous, no matter who's doing it.

But it's even more dangerous for teenagers, since they are simply less experienced drivers. According to a recent [Chicago Tribune article](#), these factors greatly increase the likelihood that a teen driver will be in a car accident compared to more experienced drivers:

Teen drivers face a four times greater risk for accidents than older adults, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Chalk it up to a number of factors, among them inexperience dealing with emergency situations, distracted driving and the inclination to show off to friends.

After discussing the increased incidence of teenage car accidents, the article then examined the top 10 driving mistakes made by teen drivers:

- Being Distracted Behind the Wheel
- Taking Too Many Risks
- Speeding

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- Overcrowding the Car
- Driving Under the Influence
- Following Too Closely
- Driving Unbuckled
- Driving Too Closely
- Driving Drowsy
- Choosing the Wrong Car and Not Maintaining It

Other interesting statistics from the article include that teen drivers wear seat belts far less frequently than other age groups, with only 76% wearing them on a regular basis. And, when teens are involved in [car accidents](#), nearly 30% of crashes involve speeding. Finally, 53% of teens surveyed reported seeing their friends use hand held devices while operating a motor vehicle.

In other words, it would seem that teens aren't exactly the most responsible drivers and that they sometimes make poor choices that could have very serious ramifications in the event of an automobile accident. Of course, for those of us who have teenagers, or who used to be a teenager, this comes as no surprise. Teens can be irresponsible and when that irresponsible behavior intersects with the operation of a car, the consequences can sometimes be life threatening.

So, it's important to emphasize the importance of safety when driving to your teenagers. Do it once, do it twice, then do it again. Because their lives are at stake, along with the lives of everyone else who shares the roadways with them. Make sure your teens know that safety always comes first.

Howard Ankin of Ankin Law Office LLC (www.ankinlaw.com) handles [workers' compensation](#) and [personal injury cases](#). Mr. Ankin can be reached at (312) 346-8780 and howard@ankinlaw.com.

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