

You Only Live Once

Picture this; your son is eight years old, and you're taking him to soccer practice one late afternoon. You are stressed about how his father didn't show up to pick him up the past two times he was scheduled to have a visit. You email your lawyer to give him an update on everything going on. You pull out your phone while driving, putting your son at risk, but not seeing the whole picture. You swerve into the other lane a little, almost hitting a car that's coming head on, but you swerve back over, put your phone away, and make sure your son is okay.

He's now twelve years old. You're driving him home from school, and you get a text from your boyfriend about dinner plans. You take a quick peek at your phone to read it, not seeing the man crossing the crosswalk on his bike.

Daniel, your son, says, "Mom! Watch out!"

You say, "Stop! I'm the one driving, and you're the one in the backseat!"

Swerving quickly, you just miss the man and drive away.

Little did you know, this incident is going to stay in your son's head. Little did you know, your son is being taught and grew up believing texting and driving is okay for anyone to do. Throughout your son's life, he watched you, he watched you text at the wheel, he watched you fight on the phone, he watched you almost hit a car, and he watched you almost hit a man on a bike. No one knows children are watching until the situation hits closer to home.

Your son is now seventeen years old; just getting his license. He's good in school, has great friends, also, you've gotten overwhelmingly close. Your phone rings on a late Friday night. Did you expect it to be a police officer? Did you expect to hear your son was being rushed to the emergency department at your local hospital because he was texting on his way home? No one expects a call like this, but you can't let your child grow up believing texting and driving is okay because, sooner or later, you'll suffer the consequences. It may be the doctor on the road going home from a late shift, you'll hurt him. Or maybe the police officer sitting on the side of the road for a traffic stop, you'll hit his car. Or maybe the pregnant mother with her husband driving to the hospital because she's going into labor, you could hit them. Not only are you putting yourself at risk, but you're putting every man, woman, and child at risk that's also driving.

Distracted driving is serious and risky. Distracted driving accounts for 25% of all motor vehicle fatalities. In 2015, 391,000 injuries were caused from distracted driving accidents. Teens are also the largest age group reported being distracted while driving. The most absurd thing about this problem is that distracted driving is completely and utterly preventable. Prevent distracted driving car accidents. Teach your child young by putting your phone down while driving them places. Tell the people you are communicating with to wait 20 minutes because you're driving somewhere. Don't take a drink, then get behind the wheel. Drive sober. All of these little things could save lives. Remember that you only get one life.

Picture this; your son is eight years old, and you're taking him to soccer practice one late afternoon. You're very stressed about how his father didn't show up to pick him up the past two times he was scheduled to have a visit. Your phone buzzes while you're driving, and you have an anxious feeling it's the lawyer. Instead of giving in to the temptation of checking it, you keep driving. You remember you have your son in the car, you need to show him distracted driving isn't okay, and you need to keep him safe. It's not that hard to not look at your phone to keep your child safe, and show them not to text and drive. Don't drive distracted. Be safe. Arrive alive.