

Teens Stop Viewing Roads Through Rose-Colored Glasses

TeenDrive365 campaign provides insight into dangers of distracted driving

by Susan Pack

Teens who have set their sights on driving can now see a safer future through virtual reality glasses.

Worn in a distracted-driving simulator, the glasses enable teens to see how behaviors like sending text messages, changing a playlist and checking navigation can impair their driving.

The simulator is part of Toyota's *TeenDrive365*, a new campaign designed to encourage dialogue about safe driving between parents and teens during a teen's critical first year behind the wheel.

The campaign features resources that can be found at TeenDrive365.com, including:

- A safe driving contract that teens and parents can use to set expectations for behaviors behind the wheel and make a joint pledge to drive more safely
- A parent/teen safety challenge on Facebook, which provides friendly competition between parents and teens through a quiz to find out who knows more about the rules of the road
- A video challenge from Toyota Teen Driver, which encourages teens to create short videos that inspire their friends to avoid driving distractions. The winner receives a \$15,000 prize.

The website also offers information about events featuring the new *TeenDrive365* distracted-driving simulators. Steering a stationary Toyota vehicle connected to sensors, participants "drive" along virtual streets that appear in their special glasses. Along the way, they're bombarded with distractions. At the end of each session, the number

of missed stop signs, collisions and other traffic violations are displayed on a TV screen.

The simulator debuted last fall at the National FFA Convention in Louisville, Ky.

"The response to the simulator was phenomenal," says Marjorie Schussel, corporate marketing manager for Toyota Motor North America. "Teens were really

"Safer drivers lead to safer roads, so Toyota is committed to helping educate teens and parents about smart driving choices."

Michael Rouse
Toyota Motor Sales Vice President
Philanthropy and Community Affairs

excited about the simulator, and in some cases, they waited up to 30 minutes to use it. Afterwards, many of them said they were surprised by how difficult it was to drive safely while distracted."

The driving simulators continue to hit the road this year, stopping at auto shows and other events across the nation. ☎



A New Point of View

A teen wears virtual reality glasses to see how distractions can impair driving.

Why Do Teens Need Driver Training?

Car crashes are the leading cause of death for teenagers in the U.S.

In 2011, 2,105 teen drivers were involved in fatal crashes

More than half of the teens who died in crashes in 2011 weren't wearing seatbelts

Speeding was a factor in 35 percent of fatal crashes involving a teen driver

Twelve percent of teen drivers involved in fatal crashes were distracted at the time

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration