

## Charlestown High School students get hands-on lesson about safe driving

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This week, Indiana SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) will travel to Charlestown High School with teen traffic safety activities focused on discouraging distracted and impaired driving, and encouraging responsible driving habits.

The main event of the day will be the Texting and Driving Simulator, which allows students to “get behind the wheel” to see firsthand the dangers of distracted driving. The students take turns practicing “driving” via the simulator; once they are comfortable with the program, they will be asked to get their phone out to send a text while continuing to drive. It will quickly become evident to students that their phone is a distraction.

“Most don’t realize just how dangerous texting and driving is. Studies show that you are 23 times more likely to be involved in a crash when texting and driving – because your focus is on something else, your hands are off the wheel, and your eyes are off the road,” said Indiana SADD Program Director, Geoff Grow. “That’s a deadly combination.”

Two other activities allow students to see and “experience” the dangers of distracted and impaired driving. Students will watch clips of personal stories from other teens via IPADS. They also get behind the wheel (of a motorized cooler) with “drunk goggles” and followed a course of cones to experience the visual impairment of someone over the legal limit. Needless to say, the students participating and watching can see the dangers of driving while impaired.

With car crashes remaining the leading cause of death among 15-20 year olds, Indiana SADD has partnered with the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) and State Farm Insurance to offer free traffic safety programming to schools and communities throughout the state in efforts to lower teen fatalities. Indiana SADD visits dozens of schools each year with one goal in mind – to save lives.