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SHP-93 B 5/2014

Don't Text & Drive

Don't Drink & Drive

Buckle Up

Don't become a crash victim who is ...

GONE TOO SOON

Don't Speed

Pay Attention

GONE TOO SOON

In 2012, a total of 826 people were killed and 50, 376 were injured in Missouri traffic crashes. Of all persons killed in 2012, 330 were in the 16-35 age group. The age group most overrepresented in Missouri fatal traffic crashes is 21-25 with 118 killed. These were not random events that took place for no reason. These crashes have specific causes. Most of the time, these causes were traffic violations.

Every year in the state of Missouri, inattention, speed, and alcohol continue to the leading contributing circumstances of traffic crashes. Seat belt use is not a contributing factor, but it plays a major role in the outcome of these crashes.

Traffic crashes affect many people, from those who are killed and injured to friends and family members of those involved. Take the responsibility of driving seriously and don't become a crash victim who is GONE TOO SOON.

This program is designed to show how drivers can help reduce traffic fatalities in Missouri by doing four simple things:

- Pay Attention To The Job Of Driving
- **DON'T SPEED**
- **DON'T DRINK** And **DRIVE**
- Make Sure **ALL** Vehicle Occupants Are Properly **RESTRAINED**.

Child Restraints

Who must be secured in a child safety seat?

- The law requires children under age four or who weigh less than 40 pounds, riding in any type vehicle, be secured in an approved child safety seat. To make sure the child safety seat meets Federal Safety Standard No. 213, check the labels on the side of the seat.
- Children between the ages of four and eight, who are less than 80 pounds, or less than 4'9" tall, must be secured in an appropriate child restraint or booster seat.

Who is responsible and subject to fine?

- It is the driver's responsibility to ensure the safety of these children. There is a fine and court costs for those who do not comply. Failure to comply, however, also may result in criminal charges if the child sustains injury or if the manner in which the vehicle is being driven shows disregard for the child's safety.

What are the exemptions?

- The law does not apply to public carriers for hire.
- The booster seat law does not apply to school buses designed to carry 11 passengers or more.

Remember: By doing the things discussed in this brochure, you, too, can help avoid the PERMANENT effects of a traffic crash.

Consider These Facts:

- An unbelted occupant of a 30 mph car crash hits the windshield or other interior surfaces with the same impact as a fall from a three-story building.
- People without seat belts have been killed at speeds as low as 12 mph.
- The effectiveness of the air bag system drops 40 percent when a seat belt is not used.
- Seat belts would have saved the lives of more than half of the car passengers killed each year.
- A driver's chance of being killed in a Missouri crash if they are not wearing a seat belt is 41 times greater than that of a driver who is buckled up.

Missouri's Seat Belt Law

Who must be secured?

- Everyone riding in the front seat in automobiles and trucks with a licensed gross weight of less than 12,000 lbs. must wear seat belts.
- Children ages eight through 15 riding in any seat position of any vehicle must wear seat belts.
- Persons less than 18 years of age operating or riding in trucks (regardless of gross weight for which licensed) must wear seat belts.

Who is responsible and subject to fine?

- It is the driver's responsibility to ensure passengers under the age of 16 are safely buckled up. Those 16 and over are responsible for themselves.
- Violators may be subject to a fine and court costs for not properly using seat belts and/or child restraints.

Inattention

In today's fast paced world, extra time is hard to come by. Multi-tasking is a great way to get more things done, but there are some tasks you just can't combine. When a driver multi-tasks they stop focusing their attention on driving and results can be dangerous or even deadly. Inattentive drivers are more and more common now and this can be bad news for everyone else on the road.

Driving is a full-time job, and any person or thing that diverts our attention from the job of driving could be deadly on Missouri's roads. Young drivers are particularly susceptible to distractions. Inattention can be caused by a number of things: talking with other occupants in the vehicle, talking with others outside the vehicle, eating, drinking, smoking, reading, putting on makeup, changing a CD or radio station, texting, or talking on a cellular phone.

Section 304.820 RSMo. states, "Except as otherwise provided in this section, no person 21 years of age or younger operating a moving motor vehicle upon the highways of this state shall, by means of a hand-held electronic wireless communications device, send, read, or write a text message or electronic message." A violation of this section shall be deemed an infraction and shall be deemed a moving violation for purposes of point assessment under Section 302.302 RSMo.

Recent changes to Missouri's graduated driver's license limits the number of passengers young drivers can have in the vehicle. Sixteen-year-old drivers can have only one non-family member under the age of 19 in the car for the first six months. After that, they can have up to three non-family member passengers under the age of 19 in the vehicle.

Section 304.012 RSMo. requires the operator of a motor vehicle to drive the vehicle in a careful and prudent manner, and at a rate of speed so as not to endanger the property of another or the life or limb of any person. It also states drivers shall ***exercise the highest degree of care.***

Speeding

Speed was found to be a significant contributing factor in Missouri traffic crashes, especially as it relates to crashes involving death or in-

jury. Speed is particularly dangerous when coupled with the inexperience of young drivers. Speed is a factor in nearly one-third of all fatal crashes.

Too few drivers view speeding as an immediate risk to their personal safety or the safety of others. Yet, speeding reduces the driver's ability to steer safely around curves or objects in the roadway, and it extends the distance required to stop a vehicle in emergency situations.

Crash severity increases with the speed of the vehicle at impact. Inversely, the effectiveness of the restraint devices like air bags and safety belts, and vehicular construction features, such as crumple zones and side member beams, decline as impact speed increases.

The probability of death, disfigurement, or debilitating injury grows with higher speed at impact, and such consequences double for every 10 mph over 50 mph a vehicle travels.

Many drivers believe the worst that can happen to them is to get a speeding ticket. Drivers like this are wrong—maybe even **dead** wrong. Driving too fast for the conditions or exceeding the posted speed limit can **kill you**.

Drinking And Driving

On September 29, 2001, Missouri's per se law of .08 took effect. A per se law makes it illegal in and of itself to drive with an alcohol concentration measured at or above the established legal level. Under the law, a driver will be considered impaired at a BAC (blood alcohol content) level of .08 percent. No other factors are needed as evidence. The majority of Missourians supported the decrease in the BAC standard for drunk driving. In fact, 73 percent of Missourians responding to the January/February 1999 AAA Midwest Traveler survey agreed that Missouri should, "Reduce the definition of intoxication to .08 percent of blood alcohol."

Missouri law also prohibits drinking by those who are under the age of 21. Medical studies have shown that the last skill developed in life is one's judgment. That skill is developed on average by age 21. The very first skill that is affected by alcohol is our ability to make rational decisions. That is why the drinking age was set at 21.

Measuring Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC):

A person's weight, gender, food intake, alcohol consumption rate, and other factors affect the absorption of alcohol. BAC is a measure of alcohol in the blood, and can be measured by testing a person's blood, breath, urine, or saliva. While it is impossible to determine exactly how much alcohol a person must consume before reaching .08 percent, the following can serve as a general guideline: A 170-pound man would have to drink more than four alcoholic beverages on an empty stomach*, and (a 137-pound woman would have to drink three alcoholic beverages in one hour on an empty stomach). All people, however, are significantly impaired at .08 percent.

Impairment

By the time a level of .08 percent is reached, virtually everyone experiences dangerous driving skill impairment, even those who are experienced or habitual drinkers. As BAC rises, so does the risk of being involved in a crash. A driver is three times more likely to crash with a BAC of .08 percent, and 12 times more likely to crash with a BAC of .10 percent—Missouri's previous standard.

**One drink equals .54 ounces of alcohol. This is the approximate amount in one shot of distilled spirits, one can of beer, or one glass of wine.*

SEAT BELTS

Driving or riding in an automobile can be dangerous. Nationally, motor vehicle crashes kill tens of thousands of drivers and passengers and injure nearly 2 million people each year. The chance of being in a traffic crash in your lifetime is virtually 100 percent. On average, you'll be in a traffic crash every 10 years, and you have a one in 50 chance of being killed.

No matter how safely you drive, you can't control other drivers. Seat belts are your best protection against all types of unsafe drivers. It takes about three seconds to fasten your seat belt when you get into a car or truck. Using lap/shoulder belts cuts your chances of being killed or seriously injured in a crash 45-50 percent.