

International Conference on Distracted Driving



Awareness and
Educational Approaches
for Dealing with the
Problem of Distracted
Driving

October 4, 2005
Toronto, Ontario

Primary Objectives of Awareness & Educational Campaigns / Programs



Distinction between Awareness & Education

- Awareness: - bringing attention to the individual
 - providing link to what is important
- Education: - providing actions / steps to remedy
 the situation

Primary Objectives of Awareness & Educational Campaigns / Programs



Inform Public About the Risk of the Behaviour

- Need to emphasize the high risk of the activity
- Campaigns need to focus on the problem and convince drivers that there is a problem
- Public must understand the level of increased risk that is associated with the “distracted” behaviour
eg. Do risks of distracted driving compare with risks of drinking and driving?

Primary Objectives of Awareness & Educational Campaigns / Programs



Provide Definition of “Distracted Driving” for the Public

- Need to define elements of Distracted Driving for public messaging
- Need to raise profile of Distracted Driving vs other driving issues
- Drivers must understand the consequences of Distracted Driving

Primary Objectives of Awareness & Educational Campaigns / Programs

Challenges to Objectives

- Current “Best Practices” indicate that relevant messages should be positive
- Driver should be convinced to join the “majority” of responsible drivers

Issue:

How do we achieve the desired behaviour without recognizing the potential negative outcomes (serious injury, death, trauma, etc.)

Types of Campaigns / Programs That Would be Most Beneficial

General Statements

- Campaigns should be based on “Best Practices”
- Campaigns should be truthful and memorable

Information and Enforcement

- Programs need to be combined with enforcement
Therefore, programs should be enforceable – support from police organizations and police services must be part of the development of the initiative

Types of Campaigns / Programs That Would be Most Beneficial

Influencing the Influencers

- Children influence their parents – teens listen to teens. Campaigns should include elementary school students as well as secondary school students
- Peer to Peer:
Need to create a sense of social stigma related to distracted driving behaviour
eg. Air Traffic Controller

Primary Target Groups for Campaigns



Novice / Young Drivers

- Driver Education course curriculum
- Tie in distracted driving to Graduated Licensing programs
- Internet Websites
- Drive Test Centres / Departments of Motor Vehicles

Primary Target Groups for Campaigns

High Risk Drivers

- Could reach speeders and aggressive drivers through courses that these drivers are often required to take

Seniors

- Could be reached at Doctors' Offices and through Community Programs

Employers

- Large fleet owners can provide programs and influence their drivers' behaviour

Evaluation and Measurement of Success

YIKES! No Benchmark for Success

- Why are drivers distracted?
We don't know the cause of the problem. We don't currently have enough data from our collision reporting
- We're not sure of the "distracted" cause of the collision – so it is difficult to measure the success of the Awareness / Educational initiative

(Need to engage vehicle manufacturers in process)

Evaluation and Measurement of Success

Measuring Success

Surveys: - number of exposures
 - audience recall of messaging

Focus Groups:

Using established parameters, focus testing of messages with selected target group(s) prior to Campaign

Selected Study Group:

could apply initiative(s) to a fleet of drivers, with driving behaviours measured before and after their involvement

Evaluation and Measurement of Success



Who Should Evaluate

- Government body or campaign creators
(no preference indicated)

