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What cultural factors are perpetuating teen driver distraction and how can teen driver distraction be reduced by changing culture?

Breakout Group B1

Cultural Factors for Teen

- Searching for social identity
- Freedom from parents.
- “long-range” communicators vs. “short-range”
- Strong peer influence
- Early adopters of technology
- Rural areas kids need their cars more.
- More libertarian values in rural areas



Challenges and Barriers

- Usually no immediate feedback from distracted driving.
- Lack of enforcement & sanctions.
- Older roads & cars in rural areas.
- Driving as a way “escaping”
- “Car & phone culture”
 - Attachment to phones and cars = greater perceived benefits
- “distraction” and other industries have disprop. influence
- Need to understand teen’s approach to decision making.



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Promising Approaches

- Don't wait until teen years to develop norms
 - Need to work with parents, schools, etc.
 - Integrated K-12 programs
- Technological approaches
 - Disabling devices, Tiwi, monitoring, "sync" systems
- Build norms around distracted driving affects everyone on the road.



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Promising Approaches

- Broad safety culture values
- Peer approaches
 - Bring teens to the development of community-based prevention efforts
- Long-term campaigns
 - Ex: second-hand smoke campaigns



Information Gaps/Needed Research

- Qualitative research on teen attitudes, values
- Gaps between actual norms and perceived norms
- Separate cultural issues from lack of experience issues & cognitive development
- Need to explore traffic safety culture with multiple levels of analysis
 - Individual (Attitudes, beliefs)
 - Social/Relational
 - Structural (Political/economic)
 - Technological/ Design



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In closing...

- Will be difficult to change, but not impossible
 - New technologies promoted by powerful vested interests
 - Teens are always new adopters
 - Teens see the world and approach decisions in ways that are different than adults.
 - Approach decisions differently
- Legislation needs to keep up with fast-changing technology.



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