



PSA Contest

INCORPORATING THE CONTEST INTO YOUR LEARNING PLANS

Dear Teacher,

The *In Control: Beyond Distraction* program has a contest coming up and we'd like to invite you to include this in your lesson plans. The attached student flyer, which can be placed in your classroom, describes the basic rules of what is required for the contest, but you can expand upon the contest to incorporate it into your class and fulfill needs for your subject ([see ideas by subject below](#)).

Contest Basics: The contest invites students to create a Public Service Announcement (PSA) about distracted driving. A PSA, generally speaking, is a message with the objective of raising awareness, changing public attitudes, and changing behavior toward a social issue. Students are encouraged to come up with a unique way to communicate to their peers and parents about the dangers of driving while distracted. Messages can be done in a variety of formats: music (e.g., rap, pop, etc.), artwork, video, poetry, radio or TV commercial, stories, etc. The message must be an original work by the student. You can expand upon this basic assignment to meet your subject area needs.

Contest Rules: The assignment can be completed as an individual or small group project. Students can turn the PSA into you for a grade, if possible. Students should be allowed to submit as many PSA entries as they wish. Each student's name and valid email address must accompany all submissions to assure they receive credit for their work. Students should be given an exact date and location where entries should be submitted.

Some important facts about the dangers of driving while distracted should be conveyed to the students:

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and severe injury for teens
- Distracted driving is one of the greatest contributors to crashes and near-crashes
- Teen drivers have the highest incidence of distracted driving, and are overrepresented in fatal crashes
- Sources of driver distraction include cell phones, passengers, electronic devices, eating, pets, etc.

Ideas for expanding upon this contest to fulfill learning plan needs for various subjects include:

Business/Marketing

- Students can develop a plan on how to market a media campaign and disseminate the message to their peers

Drama

- Students can write out a dramatic piece, filming it for the PSA contest submission

(over for more!)

English (to facilitate meeting Standards of Learning (SOL) objectives for English)

- This assignment can fulfill a research project that concludes with a written account of their findings
- Students can gain experience presenting their PSA in an oral presentation
- Students can research previous media campaigns to promote behavior changes and present their findings to the class regarding what worked and what didn't work to change audience behavior
- Students can write a research paper on distracted driving

Health (to facilitate meeting SOL objectives for Health)

- Students can research the morbidity and mortality of distracted driving
- Teens can research and present findings orally on risky behaviors for teens and adults
- Students can use existing data reports to calculate the years of life lost within the teen population, based on the formula:
 $YLL = N \times L$, where: N = number of deaths and L = standard life expectancy at age of death in years

Math (to facilitate meeting SOL objectives for Math)

- Ask students to anonymously answer yes/no questions regarding texting and phone use while in a car.
- Collect and count responses, asking students to create ratios using sums for their peers' yes/no responses. For example, students could calculate ratios for students who observed a driver texting while driving, students who turn off cell phones while driving, etc.

Public speaking

- Students can present research on the dangers of distracted driving or discuss the impact of distracted driving

Science (to facilitate meeting SOL objectives for Science)

- Students can examine the physics behind automobile collisions
- Students can design a study to examine the effects of taking your focus away from an object (such as the path in front of a walking person) for a short period of time and present their findings in a paper or orally

Technology

- Students can use a variety of technology to develop their message; such as computer (for graphics or research), video technology to record a message, graphic design programs, etc.

Visual/Language Arts

- The PSA can easily be produced in the form of artwork or other visual messaging

Thank you for helping keep our students safe!