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New tools control texting while driving

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Posted: Feb 08, 2010 10:32 PM EST
Updated: Feb 12, 2010 10:41 PM EST

By Beth Sweeney - bio | email | Twitter
Posted by Sarah Harlan - email

EVANSVILLE, IN (WFIE) - Keeping teens from texting and driving can be a challenge for parents.

There's a new tool on the market designed to do just that.

Texting and driving laws vary in the Tri-State.

Just this year, Illinois banned texting while driving for all motorists.

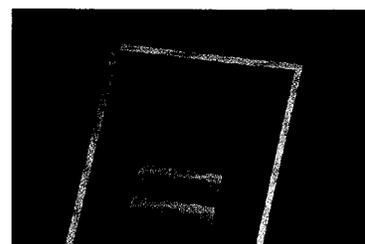
There's no law in Kentucky yet, but legislation is now being considered in both the House and Senate.

In Indiana, similar legislation banning all motorists from texting while driving just passed in the House, so for now, the only texting and driving law in the Hoosier state applies to just one age group: teenagers.

"I have no clue how many a day," teen driver Lexi Sosh said. "It's not even countable."

Like most teens, texting is part of everyday life for Lexi Sosh.

"I know I talk to most of my friends that way," Sosh said.



But texting and driving is a different story, thanks to a new law banning minors in Indiana from texting behind the wheel.

Lexi said the law has changed her way of communicating on the road, but not for every teen.

"I did it before the law happened and I think teens are still doing it," Lexi said. "Texting is their way of socializing and right now their social image is most important and they don't really think about who is on the road or if something could happen while texting."

"You're driving a cruise missile down the road," Vanderburgh County Sheriff Eric Williams said.

Williams said the law is tough to enforce.

"I've seen a lot of kids that can text and not even have the cell phone up where it's visible," Williams said. "They can do it without even looking at the keys. It's another tool for us to use to drive home the point that this is a very dangerous behavior. It's difficult to enforce."

So many parents worried about their teens' texting habits are taking matters into their own hands.

They're buying cell phone software online, like one called textecution.

Download it to your teen's cell phone, and the GPS tracking device does all the work, keeping the cell phone user from texting and driving.

Lexi gave textecution a try in a parking lot.

Once she travels faster than 10 miles an hour, the software disabled the phone's texting feature.

She couldn't send or receive messages without requesting permission from the software's installer: her parents.

"Take a step back and if your child were injured in an accident, or worse case killed, in retrospect you should be using that software," Lexi's dad Nelson Sosh said. "In a worse case situation, take every tool you have to protect your children in society today."

"I think it's an excellent software that someone created," Lexi said. "I think it would be safe for teenagers and even for everybody."

There are multiple software downloads like the one 14 News used available online.

Each one charges a fee and not all phones are compatible yet.

Click here for more information.

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