



**Safety Center's Youth-led Teen Safe Driving Campaign, *Youth Take Action to End Distractions*, receives funding from The Allstate Foundation Good Starts Young Grant.**

Safety Center's Youth Advisory Council (YAC), comprised of high school students throughout California, continues to raise awareness around teen safe driving issues with the California Teen-to-Teen Safe Driving Campaigns, now in its eighth year of funding from The Allstate Foundation.

The \$150,000 grant from The Allstate Foundation will support the safe driving programs for high schools for the 2019/2020 school year, where student leaders create a positive teen safe driving message and activities to engage their peers, parents, guardians, and the community in month-long teen safe driving campaigns. New goals for this program include positive youth development, youth civic engagement and social emotional learning skills, and they will be achieved through participation in Safety Center's Youth Advisory Council, which is also made possible with The Allstate Foundation funding.

The purpose of the Teen Safe Driving Campaign is for youth to Take Action to End Distractions in their schools and their communities. Distracted driving issues are believed to be under-reported and this dangerous behavior will continue to increase with new in-vehicle technology and the prevalent use of personal electronic devices, especially by young people. This year's focus is empowering students to create change through advocacy in their school districts and communities and using positive messaging reinforcing teen safe driving choices.

"We are incredibly proud to support Safety Center and their Teen Safe Driving Campaign," said Kyla O'Brien, Allstate California's Community Relations Manager. "Educating our youth about safe driving habits and promoting the dangers of distracted driving will ultimately help make our roads safer and protect families. Giving back is core to who we are, and we are thrilled to continue to work with Safety Center to empower students to drive change in their communities."

Funding from The Allstate Foundation supports the growth of Safety Center's Youth Advisory Council (YAC), which is now in its third year. High school students in California use technology to join in meetings learning the core competencies of Social and Emotional Learning skills through educational curriculum and volunteer experiences that increase the capacity of individual members to develop, lead, and participate in youth empowerment projects.

During the 2018/2019 school year, 66 schools entered Safety Center's Teen-To-Teen, Teen Safe Driving Campaign contest and 100,477 students heard the message of safe driving issues created by 1,244 youth leaders. Students heard the message through their peer-led activities and 8,850 students in elementary and middle schools heard the message from contest participants leading those activities, up from 1,463 students the previous year. Student leaders rallied their peers to get the message of teen safe driving issues out not only to their schools, but to adults and their communities as well, reminding everyone involved that this is not just a teen issue. All drivers and pedestrians need to be aware of distractions,

how to change this behavior, and save lives.

Although the trend for highway fatalities are down for the third consecutive year, distracted driving still reaches epidemic proportions in the US. The goal of this project is to empower youth to launch a movement where they are taking action to prevent pedestrian, bicyclist, passenger and driver distractions. In 2018 an estimated 40,000 people died in motor vehicle crashes, a decrease of almost one percent from 2017 (NHTSA). During daylight hours, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones while driving. That creates enormous potential for deaths and injuries on U.S. roads. Teens were the largest age group reported as distracted at the time of fatal crashes according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Young people use electronic devices more frequently than other age groups and ten percent of all drivers 15 to 19 years old involved in fatal crashes were reported to be distracted at the time of the crash (NHTSA). The focus of this project is to make the use of technology and other distractions socially unacceptable when driving motor vehicles. Perceptions about traffic safety are developed by observing the driving behavior of parents, peers and their communities. Using the strong influence of youth to reinforce lessons about focusing attention on the roadway will help to build a foundation of lifelong safe driving skills, attitudes, and behavior.

For more information, contact: Gail Kelly, Safety Center Incorporated at 916.438.3381 or [gail@safetycenter.org](mailto:gail@safetycenter.org), [www.safetycenter.org](http://www.safetycenter.org)

#### About Safety Center

Safety Center Incorporated is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization founded in 1934 whose mission is to reduce injuries and save lives by empowering our community to make positive life changing decisions. For more information, visit [www.safetycenter.org](http://www.safetycenter.org).

#### About The Allstate Foundation

Established in 1952, The Allstate Foundation is an independent, charitable organization made possible by subsidiaries of The Allstate Corporation ([NYSE: ALL](#)). Through partnerships with nonprofit organizations across the country, The Allstate Foundation brings the relationships, reputation and resources of Allstate to support innovative and lasting solutions that enhance people's well-being and prosperity. With a focus on building financial independence for domestic violence survivors, empowering youth and celebrating the charitable community involvement of Allstate agency owners and employees, The Allstate Foundation works to bring out the good in people's lives. For more information, visit [www.AllstateFoundation.org](http://www.AllstateFoundation.org).

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