

Federal Ban On Texting While Driving?

Experts Say It's A Deadly Habit, But It's Still Legal In 37 States; Parents Of Texting Driver's Victim Speak Out

Chances are - if you took driver-ed or one of those refresher courses - the instructor told you most accidents are preventable, if only the driver would pay attention.

That's why 13 states now have laws against texting while driving and 17 more are considering them. But some experts say what we really need is a federal ban, as **CBS News correspondent Kelly Cobiella** reports.

The only thing that could prevent one bus driver in San Antonio, Tex. from sending text messages on his phone... was the SUV in front of him. No one was seriously hurt that crash, but the people on a Los Angeles commuter train weren't so lucky.

Twenty-five people were killed in a train collision last fall, including the driver, who was sending text messages moments before the crash.

Russell and Kim Hurd lost their daughter Heather last year. She wasn't texting at the wheel, but a tractor-trailer several cars behind her was. She and another driver were killed instantly in the crash.

"He was not speeding," Kim Hurd said. "He just wasn't looking at the road"

"His poor decisions changed my life forever," added Russell Hurd.

Law enforcement officials say texting at the wheel is one of the most dangerous driving habits - but it's also one of the hardest to resist.

"We see that all the time," said Sgt. Allen Adkins of the Broward County, Fla. sheriff's office

Asked if he had ever done it himself, Adkins replied, "Yeah. I'm not gonna lie to you."

In fact, a nationwide insurance study found one in seven drivers admits sending text messages in the driver's seat. Among 18- to 24-year-old, it's even higher - one out of two drivers.

Some parents are so worried about their text-addicted teens they're installing cameras in cars. These are not hidden cameras - the teens know they're there.

But they're still undeterred.

Some schools, like one in South Florida, are teaching students the dangers of texting and driving by letting them try it - from the safety of an indoor simulator.

"Even if you take your eyes off the road for two seconds you could drive off the road or hit another car," one student said.

Still, some say that even the hands-on lesson in the dangers of distracted driving may not cause them to put down the phone...

"I think I'm gonna definitely limit it but its hard to say I'm gonna completely stop," said student Sondra Schenker.

That's why the Hurd family is pushing for a *federal* ban.

"We've learned not to drink and drive 'cause it's against the law," Russell Hurd said. "We are hoping to do the same thing" - so drivers finally get the message to keep their eyes off the screen and on the road.