



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

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## PRESS ADVISORY

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### Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, Ford Driving Skills for Life Host “No Distractions – *JUST DRIVE!*” event

Distracted driving is a deadly epidemic on America’s roads. Teens are especially vulnerable because of their inexperience behind the wheel and the peer pressure. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 16 percent of all drivers under age 20 involved in fatal crashes were reported to have been driving while distracted.

NHTSA says distracted driving kills more than 6,000 people each year.

The Patrick-Murray Administration Safe Driving Law went into effect September 30, 2010. It bans texting for all drivers and all cell phone use by drivers under 18 years old. Although legislation is a step in the right direction, public education also plays a critical role in changing driving behaviors.

In an attempt to further reduce fatalities and crashes on Massachusetts roadways, the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security’s Highway Safety Division (EOPSS-HSD), in collaboration with the Ford Motor Company Fund, will address the problem of distracted driving through the “**No Distractions – *JUST DRIVE!*”** event September 24<sup>th</sup> at the Hanover Mall.

The event will bring awareness of the dangers of distracted driving, while providing fun, interactive exercises presented by Ford Driving Skills for Life professional drivers. Students with parental consent will have the chance to drive a course with a professional trainer while learning about the deadly consequences of distracted driving.

Teen drivers are encouraged to complete the Ford Driving Skills for Life Web Academy [www.driving-skillsforlife.com](http://www.driving-skillsforlife.com), which will qualify the young drivers to participate in hands-on training modules that will equip each student with the fundamental skills necessary for safe driving. Spots are limited and will be determined on a first come basis.

In response to growing awareness about teen fatalities and driver distraction, the Ford Motor Company Fund, along with the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) has announced a \$1,000,000 expansion of the Ford Driving Skills for Life (DSFL) program and Hanover has been selected to be on the 30-city national tour to showcase DSFL’s hands-on exercises and web-based trainings.

Vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teenagers. Specifically, the majority of these crashes are attributed to inexperience in four key skills: distractions, vehicle handling, space management and speed management—all areas of concentration in the Ford DSFL program.

## PRESS ADVISORY

**WHO:** The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security Highway Safety Division and Ford Driving Skills for Life

**WHAT:** No Distractions – *JUST DRIVE!*  
Awareness event for teen drivers and parents

**WHEN:** Saturday, September 24, 2011  
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (rain or shine)

**WHERE:** The Hanover Mall – (Macy's back parking lot)  
1775 Washington Street, Hanover, MA 02339

**PARTICIPANTS:** Ford Driving Skills for Life Team  
*Teens get behind the wheel with professional  
Ford Driving Skills for Life instructors and see demonstrations*

In-Control Crash Prevention Driving School  
*Information booth and speaking program*

Massachusetts State Police  
*Rollover Simulator (seat belt use demonstrations)  
BAT Mobile Tours (Breath Alcohol Testing mobile center)*

New England Ford Dealers  
*Activation Team – Driving safety games, prizes*

South Shore YMCA  
*Teen Leadership Program*

South Shore Hospital Trauma Services  
*Information booth and speaking program*

WXKS - KISS 108 FM  
*Kiss Street Team on site*

Risky Business Band  
*Local Hanover High School Rock Band*

- Media must check in at the Registration Booth. Ford DSFL will accommodate requests to ride in a training vehicle with the drivers and students.