

"With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility"

Whether you drive a car, truck, bus, minivan, SUV, or ride a motorcycle – you have great power.

- You have the power to help you and your family get home safely
- You have the power to help me and my family get home safely
- You have the power to allow, cause, or prevent great damage, injury, suffering, and even death on our roads

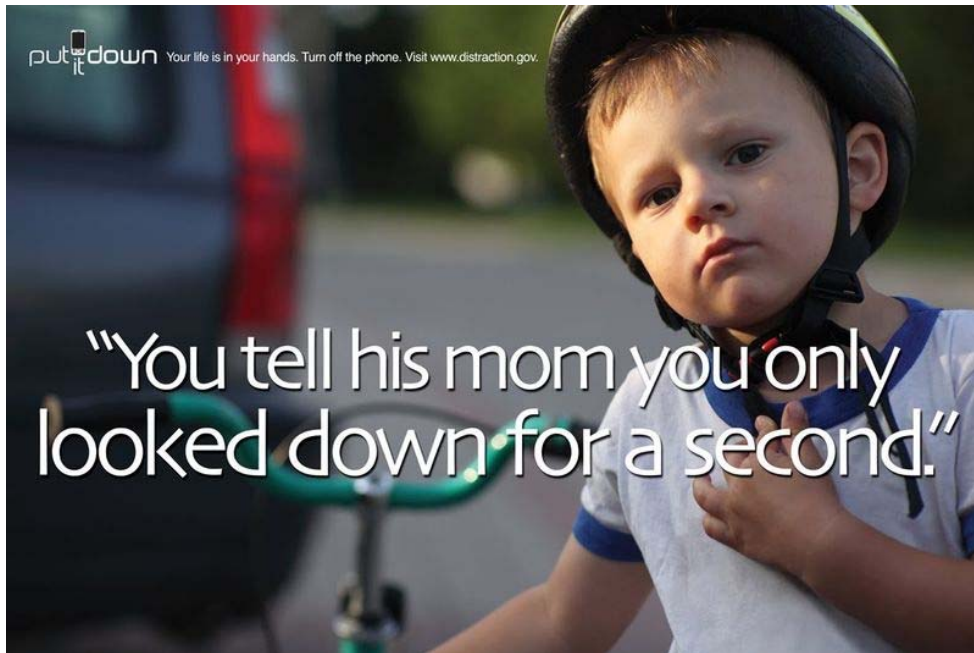
With this power comes the responsibility to use it wisely and with due caution. When a crash happens, many times we hear the phrase “*I didn’t mean to.*” We have to ask ourselves honestly what the difference is between “*I didn’t mean to*” and “*I meant NOT to.*”

‘Meaning NOT to’ says that the driver (or rider) took action and precautions to be prepared for something to go wrong and allowed enough time, space, and attention to be able to prevent a crash. THAT is taking responsibility. Here are just a few examples of things we see every day in traffic that show this responsibility:

- Keeping at least a 2-3 second following distance
- Letting another driver into the traffic flow (courtesy)
- Keeping eyes on the road (and not on a phone, book, laptop, passengers, the radio, etc.)
- Coming to a full stop at a stop sign
- When the light turns green, waiting for the car in front to go BEFORE taking a foot off the brake
- Stopping for pedestrians and bicycles
- Slowing down in school zones
- Ensuring everyone in the car is buckled up (or wearing good riding gear on the motorcycle)

On the other hand, we also see many examples of drivers and riders who have the power, but do not exercise responsibility. Here are just a few examples where the driver or rider may have forgotten that they are responsible for the safety of themselves, their passengers, and the other road users:

- Aggressive driving
- Tailgating
- Driving while distracted
- ‘Rushing’ – this does not mean just speeding, it means being more focused on getting somewhere quickly than getting there safely
- Drinking and driving/riding



(image from AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety)

The holidays are coming up, and I find myself thinking about my family. My wife, my 18 month old son, my parents, my brothers and sisters. I want them all to be safe and sound this holiday season – and I bet you feel the same. When someone on the road is not being responsible for your family's safety, I bet you get upset. Me, too.

Let's all do our part – in cars, and on bikes – to be responsible for each other. The promise of freedom brings with it the burden of responsibility. When we share the road, we are taking on this responsibility.

My promise to you – I will do my part to help keep your family safe. I ask that you do the same.

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