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TEEN DISTRACTED REALITY AN INTERACTIVE VIRTUAL EDUCATION (D.R.I.V.E.): EXPERIENCE AND IMPACT ON TEENAGE DRIVERS

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Introduction: In 2013, 2,163 teens in the United States ages 16–19 were killed and 243,243 were treated in emergency departments for injuries from motor vehicle crashes. distracted driving (i.e. texting, loud music, or phone conversations) and impaired driving (driving under the influence) play a role in these motor vehicle crashes. Prevention efforts aimed at high-risk teenager driving behavior may encourage safe driving habits.

Methods: The Teen D.R.I.V.E. program is a mobile driving simulator that provides teenagers with distracted and impaired driving scenarios. We administered anonymous surveys from April 2015-April 2016 to obtain demographic data and evaluate the program's impact on their driving behavior. We retrospectively analyzed survey responses using univariate and multivariate statistical analysis.

Results: A total of 1374 participants in the survey, however, 50 did not respond to the driving experience portion of the survey. Most participants (70%) were between 16-17 years of age years old and 51% were males. A majority (76%) of respondents had driving experience (26% permit, and 46% license) or had attended a driver's education course (67%). After experiencing the simulation respondents felt that the consequences of driving distracted (53%) and driving impaired (61%) were worse than previously expected. In addition, participants said that they would never drive distracted (70%) or drive impaired (90%). A majority of participants (72%) feel that simulation is the most effective way to teach driving related topics.

Conclusion: Teen D.R.I.V.E. offers a valuable experience to teenagers, teaching them about the dangers of driving distracted and impaired. Participants are likely to never drive impaired compared or distracted. Most teenagers feel simulation teaches these driving lessons most effectively.

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