

Campaign to ban car hands-free phones

20th November, 2013



A major road-safety campaign is under way in Britain to get hands-free mobile phones banned. The charity Brake is also calling for motorists to switch off their phones while driving. The group said the fines for calling or texting while behind the wheel should also be increased by up to tenfold, to around \$1,600.

This is to provide a greater deterrent than the current penalty of \$160. Brake's suggestions follow a revelation that more than 575,000 British drivers had points on their driving licence for using their phone. A spokeswoman for Brake said: "We're living in an age when being constantly connected is the norm. More and more of us have smartphones, and find it hard to switch off, even for a minute."

Britain's Department for Transport said that although road safety was a "top priority", it had "no plans to change the law around the use of hands-free devices". It added that all penalties were being "kept under review to ensure they are appropriate". Brake said: "While there are enormous benefits to this new technology, it's also posing dangerous temptations to drivers to divert their concentration away from the critical task at hand, often putting our most vulnerable road users in danger." It added: "Many people who wouldn't dream of drink-driving are succumbing to using their phone and other distractions while driving, oblivious that the effect can be similar and the consequences just as horrific."

Sources: BBC / Sky News / Brake.org.uk

Writing

There should be a \$10,000 for people who use their mobile phone while driving. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

major / road safety / campaign / motorist / deterrent / penalty / revelation / connected / transport / top priority / change the law / enormous benefits / concentration / horrific

True / False

- A charity wants car-phone makers to stop manufacturing the devices. T / F
- The charity wants penalties for texting while driving increased tenfold. T / F
- Over half a million U.K. drivers have been caught using phones in cars. T / F
- The charity said everyone can switch off their phone for a few hours. T / F
- The U.K. government said it would change the law for mobile phones. T / F
- The U.K. government said it always checked mobile phone laws. T / F
- The charity said drink-drivers always text while driving. T / F
- The charity said drink-driving and texting while driving are similar. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1. major | a. continually |
| 2. banned | b. attention |
| 3. behind the wheel | c. prohibited |
| 4. revelation | d. prime concern |
| 5. constantly | e. at risk |
| 6. priority | f. important |
| 7. devices | g. disclosure |
| 8. concentration | h. results |
| 9. vulnerable | i. driving |
| 10. consequences | j. gadgets |

Discussion – Student A

- Are hands-free car phones a good idea?
- What can we do to reduce temptations that divert drivers' attention?
- How irresponsible are drivers who text or read texts while driving?
- Is texting while driving as bad as drink-driving?
- Should phone companies ban people who text while driving?
- How important is a mobile phone to you?
- Was driving safer before mobile phones came along?
- What questions would you like to ask the charity Brake?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. A major road-safety campaign | a. of drink-driving |
| 2. switch off their phones | b. the current penalty |
| 3. texting while | c. be similar |
| 4. a greater deterrent than | d. while driving |
| 5. being constantly | e. a "top priority" |
| 6. road safety was | f. is under way |
| 7. enormous | g. at hand |
| 8. the critical task | h. behind the wheel |
| 9. people who wouldn't dream | i. connected is the norm |
| 10. the effect can | j. benefits |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of people who text and drive?
- Do road-safety campaigns like this work?
- How safe or dangerous are the roads in your country?
- Would a \$1,600 fine be an effective deterrent?
- Why do people text and call while driving when they know it's dangerous?
- Should cars be fitted with technology to block mobile phone reception?
- Is it important for you to be constantly connected?
- Can you switch off from smartphones, computers, etc. for a long time?

Spelling

- A major road-safety gcnamaip
- calling for sotirosmt to switch off their phones
- increased by up to fontlde
- provide a greater dtereetrn
- drivers had points on their driving cenclie
- being nlonctatys connected is the norm
- road safety was a top iotrypir
- the use of hands-free svdiece
- ensure they are peitpopaarr
- divert their ccnatnitroneo
- other dinitosscrat while driving
- the neccsuseeong just as horrific

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. c	3. i	4. g	5. a
6. d	7. j	8. b	9. e	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Zero Alcohol

You think zero alcohol is the best solution for road safety. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their solutions. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): wearing seatbelts, having lower speed limits or having more traffic police.

Role B – Wearing Seatbelts

You think wearing seatbelts is the best solution for road safety. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their solutions. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): zero alcohol, having lower speed limits or having more traffic police.

Role C – Lower Speed Limits

You think having lower speed limits is the best solution for road safety. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their solutions. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): wearing seatbelts, zero alcohol or having more traffic police.

Role D – More Traffic Police

You think more traffic police is the best solution for road safety. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their solutions. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): wearing seatbelts, having lower speed limits or zero alcohol.

Speaking – Road Safety

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most important things at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- zero alcohol
- stopping at red lights
- no texting
- keeping distance from car ahead
- seatbelts
- more police and radar
- bicycle lanes
- low speed limits

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.