

TEAM TALKS

Driving Safety

Facilitator Note: You might consider taking your team out to stand around a vehicle while giving this talk. One aspect of our guidance involves performing a visual check to see if the vehicle is safe to drive. Being near a vehicle could provide an opportunity to demonstrate what types of things your team should look for before hitting the road.

Let's begin today's talk with a quick survey. Please raise your hand if you've ever:

- Driven a group of coworkers to an off-site lunch meeting
- Traveled via car to a work-related meeting at a different branch or offsite meeting and driven back to work
- Run out to the store to get supplies needed for a team event

If you've done any of these things, then you've technically driven "on the job."

Working for a youth-serving organization means you wear a lot of hats, and driving during work hours is often a reality of our day-to-day responsibilities. That's why it's important to know the policy about using your personal vehicle in the course and scope of employment. As an organization that focuses so hard on keeping our kids, staff and community safe within our walls, we also want to make sure that you're keeping that same safety focus on you. Let's do everything we can to not only practice mindful, safe driving ourselves, but to enforce it with our fellow team members.

NOTES

Team Talks are intended to provide ready-to-use content for facilitated safety discussions on key topics. Whether you use this copy as an exact script, or as a set of talking points for creating your own talk, is up to you. We hope it provides a useful starting point for discussion. As always, we would love to hear feedback on how your talk goes, and what more we can do to support you in creating a true culture of safety.

The Redwoods Group

Know your organization's rules of the road:

NOTES

1. MINIMUM DRIVING REQUIREMENTS

Before getting behind the wheel (or jumping in a car with someone who is driving) ensure that whoever is driving is:

- Licensed to drive the vehicle
- Well-rested and alert
- Wearing corrective lenses (if prescribed by a doctor)
- NOT under the influence of alcohol or drugs (legal or illegal)
- KNOWS the destination and how to get there, OR is using a hands-free navigational device

2. DEDICATED SUPERVISION FOR CHILDREN

Are there children riding in the vehicle? If so, there must be dedicated supervision for them. The driver's ONLY job is to transport the group safely.

3. VEHICLE SAFETY CHECK

Ensure the vehicle being driven is road-safe and fit to drive. From this list, is there anything you don't know how to do? If so, let's have someone walk us through how to check it.

- Check the tires
- Check fluids (oil, water, gasoline, brake fluid, windshield washer fluid)
- Check lights (headlights, taillights, turn signals, brake lights)
- Test brakes / horn / wipers / defroster / heater
- Verify cleanliness (especially floor around brakes/fuel pedal)
- Verify seatbelt presence/condition
- Verify emergency readiness (first aid kit/cell phone or other communication device)

4. MINDFUL DRIVING NOTES

Good to go? Excellent. Now comes the hard part—driving. Our guidance all boils down to one issue—mindfulness.

Mindfulness is defined as “focusing one’s awareness on the present moment.” This sounds easy, but think back to all the times you’ve gone into the kitchen to get something, gone back to your living room and realized you didn’t get what you set out to. Or you’ve forgotten where you placed something just the day before. Our minds run a million miles a minute, and more often than not, your thoughts are somewhere your body isn’t.

5. NO PHONES OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Be aware of your surroundings. DO NOT use mobile phones or any other electronic devices while you are sitting in the drivers seat. If you need:

- Directions
- Music
- Emergency assistance
- To make or take a phone call, send a text or email
- To finish your sandwich

Wait until you are in a safe place to pull over and take care of what you needed to do while the car is stopped.

Driving is a great responsibility, especially when we are entrusted with other lives in our vehicles. As team members of a mission-focused organization, when we drive on the job, driving safely is an integral part of delivering on that mission.

Distracted Driving

You know the excuses: I was at a stoplight, I was in a traffic jam, I had to text such-and-such about such-and-such and it was urgent, my Instagram followers were desperately awaiting a photo of my lunch, etc.

There. Is. No. Excuse. If you have trouble resisting the urge to text while on the road, you need to place your phone in an out-of-reach location in the car. Distracted driving caused by cell phone usage continues to rise year-after-year, with young drivers putting themselves at the most risk.

Ready for a quick true or false test on safe driving?

NOTES

Texting and driving is against the law for all commercial drivers.

TRUE – This law was passed in 2010 and many states have also made it against the law for ALL drivers.

When driving children, the only adult needed in the car is the driver.

FALSE – If children are in the vehicle, the driver's only job is to drive safely. Dedicated supervision must be available to the children.

Distracted driving does not include eating.

FALSE – Eating food while driving is considered a distracted driving offense.