

## Are cell phones destroying us?

...I know that I am not the only one who has, and is, noticing that cell phones are creating quite a problem in our society. Well, let me rephrase that- it is not cell phones themselves, yet rather the people who use them. I can't blame cell phones any more than I can blame spoons for making people fat.

Every day, at least one time, I am sitting at a stoplight and it turns green. The car in front of me doesn't accelerate when the car in front of it does. Why? I can see the driver interacting with their phone.

Next time you are at a stoplight, look at the drivers in the cars around you. I guarantee that half of them will be looking down and interacting with their phones.

It's the same thing I experience at Target or Walmart; people are slowly pushing their carts while interacting with their phones. These people get in the way because they aren't paying attention to the world around them. Next time you visit a grocery store, watch the people that are walking into the store from the parking lot. A lot of them are on their phones, and many of them don't look up- when crossing where cars drive in front of the store.

Like you, I have seen many people walk into traffic while on their phones, while not looking up to see if there are cars. I have seen two people nearly get struck by a vehicle.

This has prompted governments to action to protect people from themselves. Cities in Germany, Holland, the Netherlands, and Australia have installed special traffic lights in the pavement, which are designed to catch the eye of pedestrians who are looking down at their phones. A city employee in Augsburg, Germany said, "We realized that the normal traffic light isn't in the line of sight of many pedestrians these days."

In contrast, the cities of Montclair, California and Honolulu, Hawaii have banned crossing a street when using a phone or headphones.

In 2016, the Wall Street Journal reported that emergency room visits involving distracted pedestrians, using cellphones, were up 124% in 2014 from 2010—and up 10-fold from 2006.

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration reported that pedestrian fatalities increased 27% from 2007-2016, while all other traffic deaths **decreased** by 14%.

According to a Governors Highway Safety Association report, there were nearly 6,000 pedestrian fatalities, in 2017, attributable to mobile device distraction.

47 states ban text messaging for all drivers, 36 states ban all cell phone use by newer drivers, 19 states prohibit any cell phone use by school bus drivers if children are present, and 15 states prohibit all drivers from using cell phones while driving.

...want to hear the entire (8-minute) Podcast to learn more? Click on the following link:

Episode 76: Are cell phones destroying us?

<https://youtu.be/p9TjwAj791o>