



BROOME COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD

NEWSLETTER *Oct/Nov 2009 Issue*

Broome County Health Department 225 Front St. / Binghamton, NY 13905

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Who's Walking in Broome County?

October 7, 2009

International Walk to School Day invites children, parents, teachers and community leaders in all 50 states and over 40 countries to walk or bike to school. Walk to School Day events are aimed at bringing forth permanent change to encourage a more walkable America — one community at a time. Walking or bicycling to school encourages healthy behaviors in children such as physical activity and a sense of responsibility and independence. It promotes a pedestrian friendly environment and improves the quality of our air by reducing traffic congestion. It also creates an opportunity to teach children about pedestrian and bicycle safety. With help from the Broome County Health Department and United Health Services, the Binghamton City School District will be participating in this year's event. Good luck to all walkers and bikers!

Some Halloween Safety Tips for Parents, Drivers and Children



Parents

- Review traffic safety rules with your trick or treaters.
- Establish a route and a return time with your child.
- Make sure the costume is not too long.
- Attach light colored materials or retroreflective tape to clothing and bags.
- Use face paint instead of a mask or make sure the eye, nose and mouth holes of the mask are large enough so that your child can see and breathe.

Motorists

- Watch for children darting out from between cars.
- Watch for children walking on sidewalks, curbs, roads etc...
- Watch for children in dark colored clothing or costumes.
- Be sure to enter and exit driveways and alleys carefully.

Children

- Travel in familiar areas.
- Only stop at well-lit houses.
- Never enter a stranger's house.
- Walk from house to house. Do not run.
- Walk on sidewalks. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic, carrying a flashlight.
- Cross the street only at corners and always look both ways.

New York State Soon to Ban Texting While Driving



Crashes in Broome County Caused by Driver Inattention/Distraction

<u>Year</u>	<u>% of Crashes</u>
2005	21.6%
2006	23.9%
2007	21%

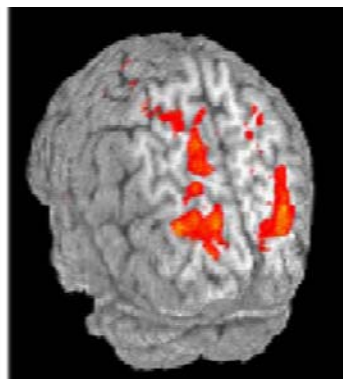
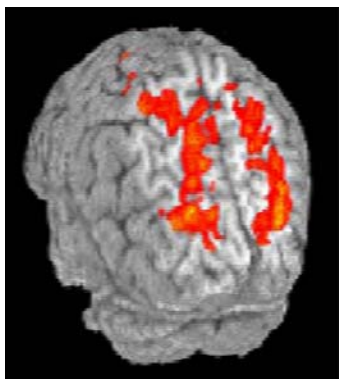
Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research, February 2009



On August 27, 2009, Governor Paterson signed a bill that prohibits using portable electronic devices, such as cell phones and smart phones, PDA's, Blackberry's, etc. to send text messages or e-mails while driving. The penalty for a violation of this new law shall be a fine of up to \$150. It is a secondary law, which means in order for a person to be ticketed for the offense, the driver must have committed a primary enforcement offense such as speeding, disobeying a traffic signal or other violation. *This law, when it takes effect, will replace local laws that were passed banning texting while driving by other jurisdictions in the state.* In other words, this new state law will replace the local primary texting ban signed into law in Broome County back in June of 2009. **This law takes effect on November 1, 2009.** As of the bill signing date, New York joins 17 states that have already passed laws banning texting while driving for all drivers, while nine states ban texting for new drivers. The current law of talking on a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle is not affected by this new legislation and is still a primary enforcement law, meaning a police officer can stop and issue a ticket for anyone observed talking on a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle. See VTL 1225-c 2 (a)

Distractions and the Brain... A study from the Carnegie Mellon University

Most people feel they are good at "multi-tasking," but most don't realize that the quality of work they do declines when they try to do two things at once. A study conducted out of the Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, suggests just that. The study took 29 college age students who were relatively experienced drivers and put them in a virtual reality display roadway. The students were to steer their vehicle using a computer mouse in one hand while listening to true/false questions and answering those questions with a computer mouse in their other hand. Scientists then measured the brain activity of each student while driving alone and while driving and being read to. They found that the part of the brain that is associated with driving, the parietal activation, decreases substantially (by 37%) when listening to someone speak. Scientists also found that when the students were being read to their weaving increased as well as the number of times they hit the side of the road. Driving requires brain power. The brain simply does not have enough resources to devote full attention when doing more than one task. When behind the wheel of the car, focus on one thing – your driving.



Left Brain – The red indicates how much brain power is devoted to driving when driving is the only task.

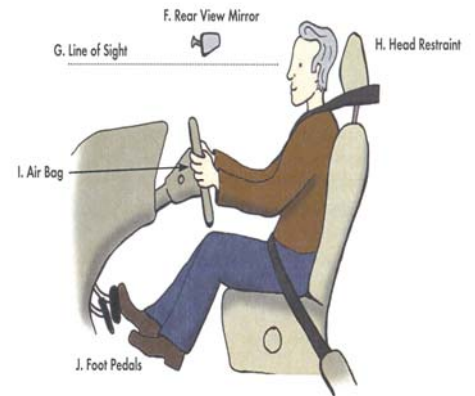
Right Brain – The red indicates how much less brain power is devoted to driving when being read to and trying to drive.

Senior Drive

A Driving Wellness Checklist ©

Brought to you by the Broome County Older Drivers Network

Senior Drive, a Driving Wellness Checklist © is a service to our senior population that encourages continued driving safety. The program consists of a one page checklist administered by trained technicians. The checklist reviews in car positioning, mirror use and vehicle safety with a specialized tire safety check. This individualized private consultation takes approximately 20 minutes within the senior's vehicle and concludes with referral information if needed to a local driver rehabilitation specialist for further remediation. Below are pictures of our Senior Drive Technicians helping a few older drivers at the Broome West Senior Center.



Broome County Child Passenger Safety Program Receives Thanks!

The Broome County Traffic Safety Board would like to recognize Child Passenger Safety Technicians Robin Mastrangelo and Trooper Peter Grunder for going above and beyond the call of duty to help a concerned parent receive an appropriate car seat for their child. This parent attended a child safety seat check event back in August only to find out that their 2-year-old had outgrown their conventional car seat. Too young to transition into a booster seat, Mastrangelo and Grunder were able to locate a high weight harness car seat. The technicians met with the parent later that week to help with in the proper installation of the seat.

Below is a thank you letter from the parent:

*Robin,
Thank you so much for giving my daughter the new car seat.
You took the time out to meet with me and help install the
seat as well. It is encouraging to see that there are people
that care in our community. God Bless you and your
department. You are making a difference.
P.S. Thank the other gentleman as well for his help also!!*



Robin Mastrangelo
Child Passenger Safety Technician

Broome County Traffic Safety Events

Join us for a *Bike Rodeo and Skills Clinic* at the **Broome County Farmer's Market!**

Date: Saturday, October 10, 2009

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Otsiningo Park, Binghamton

Learn important bike handling skills!
Receive a free bike inspection!
Receive a Certificate of Participation and a fun prize!

*Participating children should bring a parent,
a bicycle, and an approved helmet.*



Child Passenger Safety Activities

The Broome County Fitting Station provides free child safety seat inspections for families and caregivers as well as provides education and guidance on child passenger safety.

Fitting Station Dates (by appointment only)

Dates and times are subject to change.

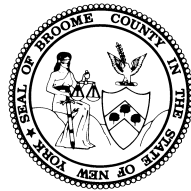
October 14 th	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
October 21 st	1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
November 18 th	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
November 25 th	1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
December 9 th	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
December 23 rd	1 p.m. – 4 p.m.



Location:

Broome County Sheriff's Office
155 Lt. Van Winkle Drive, Binghamton

Please call the Broome County Health Department at (607) 778-2807 to schedule an appointment.



Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive

*Graphics and research provided by the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee
www.safeny.com, Walk to School Day, www.walktoschool.org, the Carnegie Mellon University and the
National Safety Council, www.ncs.org. The production of this newsletter was made possible through
funding from the NYSGTSC.*