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One of The Top Leading Causes of Death: Reckless Driving

Many people do not realize how deathly driving can be, especially when driving recklessly. It is not only dangerous for the driver, passengers, pedestrians, bike riders, and children are put at risk daily. As drivers develop more experience driving they tend to gain more confidence in their driving which leads to them developing bad habits that can be extremely dangerous for themselves and others. There are many ways drivers drive recklessly such as speeding, driving under the influence, road rage, driving too slow, texting while driving, eating while driving, not using the turn signals, and not obeying the traffic law signs. Driving a car is actually more hazardous than any other transportation, if one thinks about it. It is more safer if one takes the bus, train, or airplane there is less of a chance of car collision taking place. Everyone has been affected by reckless driving, weather it be as simple as a fender bender or a full on collision. There are many factors that play into the tragedies that surround these events. The main one being driving under the influence (alcohol or other). There are different provisions that can be taken into account when looking at this problem. Many lives have been lost or completely changed due to reckless driving, people are not being careful enough when driving. Some solutions are cops patrolling streets more, installing cameras, giving out tickets, installing safety sensors in cars, and switching over to public transportation.

As time kept progressing the usage of cars keep increasing as well, over time problems with driving started creeping up. “Now reckless driving is the fourth leading cause of death in the United States” (Nichols). As drivers gain more experience driving they have a tendency to believe they are fully in control of the wheel and nothing negative can happen to them. Drivers lean more towards breaking the minor traffic laws that can be a risk danger to their own life as well as others. “Not being aware of the dangers that come with driving can heavily impact the risk of an accident tremendously” (Nichols). Many people are not realizing how much bad driving can tragically impact people. According to HIP Slice journal 13, “On April 21, 2019 around 1:35 p.m. - 2:33 p.m. when I was driving to school there was a young man speeding. As I was driving I saw a little girl walking with her dad, the driver almost crashed into them, but luckily he reacted fast. When he got near them he pressed on his brakes hard. The driver was passing a lot of red lights so I slowed down so he can go ahead of me so an accident does not occur. People need to be careful when they are driving since they could get arrested or get killed.” (Popal). Imagine if the young man actually did crash into the little girl and her father, their whole family would have been devastated, the father’s and the little girl’s friends and acquaintances would have been impacted, and slowly the little girl and the father’s death would impact the whole community negatively. Another example from HIP Slice journal 11 is, “On April 20, 2019 3:20 p.m. - 4:15 p.m., KTLA 5 news were talking about how a sixteen year old girl was driving while she was drunk and she crashed into a 19 year old male college student. The college student died after a couple of minutes she crashed into him, it was a tragedy for his family, friends, and the whole community. If the sixteen year old girl did not break multiple laws and made sure she was not driving under the influence, the college student could have had a

bright future ahead of him. If it wasn't for the girl's reckless driving many people would not have to deal with the loss of their loved one." (Popal). Driving recklessly can harm people physically, they can get minor injuries or major life threatening injuries that might lead to death. Usually these individuals believe nothing is going to happen to them or others and they overestimate their own driving ability, by believing they are better behind the wheel than they actually are. Eventually, reckless drivers believe that they are invincible and nothing can hurt them but then reality comes and proves them wrong. Reckless drivers need to realize that they are not the only ones on the road who will be affected by the accident. It has an effect on other individuals' lives too such as, passengers, pedestrians, bike riders, as well as children.

On the other hand, some individuals would say that reckless driving is not a problem in society today, having said that these individuals are usually misinformed or not educated on the topic of car collisions. Generally, these are the people who have not experienced car collision or a near death experience with transportations. Due to the fact, that these individuals have little to no knowledge on car collisions, it is safe to assume that they are a bit on the optimistic side as well as they are not facing reality for their own good. According to HIP Slice journal 13, "I interviewed a man on April 21, 2019 at 2:40 p.m. - 3:30 pm in Starbucks with the question, 'Do you think it would be a good idea for the police to patrol neighborhoods and give out more tickets to reckless drivers?'. The man replied with, 'no, that would mean I would have to drive slower and tickets are expensive.' (Popal). Many people do not realize how deathly driving can be, the man's answer to the interview shows that he believes if he speeds, a collision would not take place and that he is in full control of driving. After the interview I informed the man on some reckless driving statistics, I said, "Reckless driving is a major traffic violation in the

United States. According to Fisher and Talwar, ‘ thirty percent of car accident fatalities are attributed to speeding. Reckless driving accounts for thirty three percent of all deaths involving major car accidents.’ This results in sixty three percent of death related to the major traffic violation, reckless driving. Many lives have been lost and families have suffered due to bad driving. Do you still think it is a bad idea for police patrolling driving more often?”(Popal). The man replied, “Wow, I did not know that, now that you have mentioned that, I guess I should be more careful with my driving.” (Popal). After the interview, I realized many people do not know how much impact reckless driving has on society. If individuals try to inform each other about the safety precautions and dangers of driving more often, there would be more safe drivers on the road. If more and more people realize that “Three million people are injured every year in car accidents in America. Around two million drivers experience permanent injuries every year from car accidents. Forty thousand people lose their lives every year due to major accidents while driving. Forty percent of all deaths caused by car accidents involve alcohol and thirty percent of car accident fatalities are attributed to speeding.” (Talwar and Fisher) they would not complain about traffic laws being upheld more strictly and technology that prevents car collisions from taking place. Another reason why some individuals in society are against the police giving out tickets are they do not have enough money to pay off the tickets so they would have to work harder so they can provide a living for themselves and their families. According to Fisher and Talwar, “Automobile accidents are often associated with financial struggles because of the inability of the injured person to work and the difficulties paying for medical bills and property damage.” (Fisher and Talwar). If one looks at it from a different perspective it might be good if reckless driving causes individuals in society to have financial problems. Once they realize

reckless driving equals financial problems people would be more careful about driving so they do not risk receiving a ticket. If people in society continue having this mentality, the percentage of minor injuries, major injuries including death due to reckless driving would cause the percentage to decrease tremendously because more and more people become safe drivers.

Some possible solutions to reduce the amount of car collisions are, “Raising awareness of, legislating and enforcing laws governing speed limits, alcohol impairment, seat-belt use, child restraints and safety helmets. Formulating and implementing transport and land-use policies that promote safer and more efficient trips; encouraging the use of safer modes of travel, such as public transport; and incorporating injury prevention measures into traffic management and road design. Making vehicles more protective and visible for occupants, pedestrians and cyclists; using daytime running lights, high-mounted brake lights and reflective materials on cycles, carts, rickshaws and other non-motorized forms of transport.”(ASIRT). In other words, the solutions are cops patrolling streets more, installing cameras, giving out tickets, installing safety sensors in cars, and switching over to public transportation. According to ASIRT, “Road safety is a shared responsibility. Reducing risk in the world’s road traffic systems requires commitment and informed decision-making by government, industry, non-governmental organizations and international agencies. It also requires the participation of people from many different disciplines, including road engineers, motor vehicle designers, law enforcement officers, health professionals, educators, and community groups.” (ASIRT). According to the HIP Slice journal 15, “One thing I have noticed is when drivers make a turn or U-turn they do not make a complete stop or look around properly. There have been several times where cars have almost crashed due to this problem. I would suggest for new cars to have car sensors that beeps when a

car is too close to your car or if it senses a possible car crash. I think this will alert the drivers so they can make sure when it is the right time to turn. Another solution I have is installing cameras that take pictures of license plates like toll roads then they send the tickets to the driver's home and has them pay for it online." (Popal). Some more solutions to decrease the amount of car collisions that occur in society is, "leave the house on time when trying to reach the final destination, always wear your contacts or glasses while driving if you need them, keep your road rage in check, be aware of your surroundings, keep a safe distance, do not drive when distracted, follow traffic laws, and keep your positioned correctly on the steering wheel. (Maloney)." (Popal). It is most important to leave early so there is enough time to reach one's final destination on time. Most of the time, when there is little to no time to reach one's final destination without being late, the driver tends to speed and break minor laws which is also known as reckless driving. According to Maloney, "speeding accounted for more than 10,000 accident fatalities on U.S. roads. By giving yourself plenty of time to complete your trip, you're cutting down on the likelihood that you will speed, putting yourself and others on the road in serious danger." (Maloney). The benefits of these solutions are more lives of individuals will be saved, drivers would be less prone to minor and major injuries, families would not suffer from losses as often due to car collisions, and the community would be more happy. Everyone in society would have to contribute to decrease the amount of car collisions that occur, but mostly the government would have to add some changes to the laws and car companies would have to add more safety car sensors to prevent drivers and pedestrians from getting injured.

All things considered, many individuals in society do not realize how dangerous reckless driving can be, it is not only dangerous for the driver, it is also dangerous for pedestrians. Drivers

tend to gain more confidence when they drive for years without a car collision taking place.

When drivers gain confidence in their driving they tend to break minor driving laws that increases the chances of car collisions. There are many factors that play into this tragic event such as speeding, driving under the influence, not being aware of one's surroundings, and trying to multitask in the car while driving. To decrease the amount of car collisions occurring the law can enforce traffic laws more strictly, adding safety car sensors, installing cameras, and switching over to public transportation.

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