

## Legislation mandates CPR graduation requirement

By Katelynn Mulder & Michal Ruprecht  
ASSISTANT EDITORS

Each year, about 400,000 people suffer cardiac arrests and aren't treated in the hospital, and fewer than 6 percent of them survive, The Washington Post reported in 2015. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation can restore oxygenated blood flow to vital organs if a person stops breathing or a heart stops beating normally—it's the difference between life and death.

However, fewer than 3 percent of the U.S. population receives CPR training. University of Michigan Medicine wrote that the State of Michigan, with a cardiac survival rate of 8 percent, falls behind the national average of 10 percent.

State Sen. Tonya Schuitmaker and Rep. Tom Hooker wanted to change those statistics by introducing Michigan Senate Bill 647, signed in December of 2016 by Gov. Rick Snyder. The new legislation requires students in grades 7-12 to take CPR training and learn how to use an automated external defibrillator in health class before graduating.

Maureen Bur, director of secondary education, said the GPPSS health and physical education curriculums will include CPR and AED training starting in the 2017-18 school year. Although the law doesn't require CPR and AED training in physical education classes (which always have them), Bur said the intent of the bill is good because it provides students and adults instruction that can potentially be life-saving.

"Whether it be at school or at the park, ... you may be able to be that difference in someone having significant, you know, life injury or possibly even death," she said.

According to physical education teacher Bruce Bentley, the instruction



in the courses will be more involved and longer compared to the health class. Michigan isn't the first state to adopt this law. In 1984, Alabama ratified similar legislation, followed by 33 other states. The majority of those states adopted it in the past one to three years.

Based on results from these states, University of Michigan Medicine expects Michigan's cardiac arrest survival rate to double, which will lead to 400 additional lives saved every year. The American Heart Association said the bill will result in about 100,000 more CPR-trained Michiganders every year.

According to Bur, GPPSS may need to buy more equipment. She said the training will be taught by P.E. and health teachers who are certified through the AHA and American Red Cross. Students who took health class before the 2017-18 school year won't have to retake the class.

Because Bentley has seen positive outcomes from the training, he said he wants



PHOTO FROM WWW.REDCROSS.ORG

to continue to teach students. He also said learning CPR early will help prepare students in emergency situations.

"It will save lives. The more people that know CPR, the better it is for each family because seven out of 10 times you have to do CPR on somebody, it's on somebody you know," he said. "The quicker you get to something, the more likely you're going to save one's life. I've actually had kids that have saved lives literally. They had stopped heart beats and they've brought them back to life and it's not just few, it's several. So, it does help and hopefully you never ever have to

use it, but if you have to use it, you'll be glad to know how to use it because most of the time, like I said, it'll be family related."

Junior Sydney Semack, a certified lifeguard, said the legislation can improve preparedness in unprecedented situations.

Although she didn't find much merit in the CPR training in her gym class, she said it could help students get a general idea of it. "It would be better for the whole community that we're all able to help each other out," Semack said. "We would be more aware in being able to help people than just being a bystander in a life or death situation."

## Distracted driving leads to dangerous decisions

By Elizabeth Ballinger & Rory Angott  
STAFF REPORTER & INTERN

Getting a driver's license is a big deal, especially for teenagers. It's one of the first steps toward being independent and responsible. It means they have completed all of the training and are ready to join the more experienced adults on the road—sometimes.

According to www.cdc.gov, 16-19-year-olds are more likely to speed, not recognize a dangerous situation while driving and make more bad decisions than older drivers.

Assistant principal David Reed-Nordwall said that teen drivers are a risk to themselves and anyone else on the road.

This stems from the fact that they think they're better drivers than they actually are. "The problem with a kid that's a year in is that they think they're good drivers, so they get neglectful," Reed-Nordwall said. "As it stands, being anywhere from 16 to 21 is the highest risk for driving. That's a dangerous time to be a driver."

This is especially evident in school parking lots. Whether it's the end of the school day or during off-campus lunch, the parking lot remains one of the most dangerous places to drive.

According to the National Safety Council, roughly 60,000 people are injured annually in parking lot accidents, with 500 or more killed. In order to decrease those numbers, it is important to be keen on what drivers can do.

"Number one is to stick to the 5-mile-an-hour limit. It drives people crazy, but the biggest problem here is that parking lots are the most dangerous place to drive because traffic doesn't flow in only one direction," Reed-Nordwall said. "People are pulling out, people are coming around corners, and people are walking. Statistics show that a high school parking lot, from the hour when kids get out to when the lot clears, is the most dangerous 'roadway' in America."

Another big problem with teen drivers is that they can be easily distracted. The cause can be anything from having friends in the car with

them to checking their phones. Sophomore Liz Alderete recognizes the distractions she faces on a day-to-day basis while driving.

"I think people need to understand that they shouldn't go on their phones while they're driving," Alderete said. "They should just keep looking at the road. That's the main thing you have to do."

This is a much bigger problem than it's made out to be. According to a recent survey by the NSC, 66 percent of people say they feel comfortable making phone calls while driving in a parking lot. Even 42 percent of those polled said they would be comfortable video chatting while driving. At the same time, according to Rasmussen Reports, 91 percent of Americans support making texting while driving illegal.

Though texting while driving may seem more dangerous than

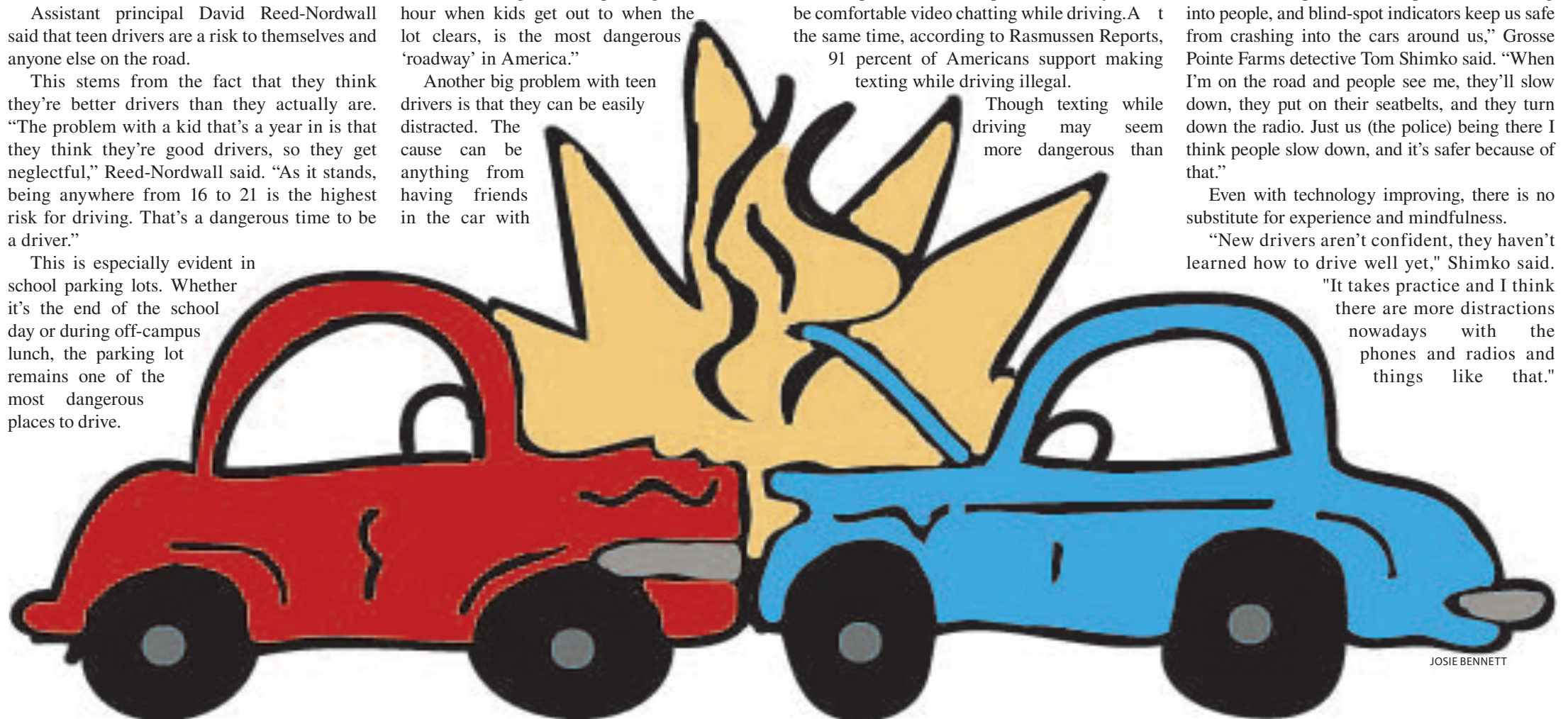
talking on the phone, the behaviors are almost equally risky. While talking on the phone, people tend to drift into their own thoughts unrelated to the things happening outside of the call, especially the things on the road in front of them. That distraction may seem to increase as technologies become more advanced, but car manufacturers have begun to take advantage of them in order to keep people safer. Law enforcement is also making efforts towards achieving safer roads.

"Manufacturers put in place a lot of things. The rear backup cameras keep us from backing into people, and blind-spot indicators keep us safe from crashing into the cars around us," Grosse Pointe Farms detective Tom Shimko said. "When I'm on the road and people see me, they'll slow down, they put on their seatbelts, and they turn down the radio. Just us (the police) being there I think people slow down, and it's safer because of that."

Even with technology improving, there is no substitute for experience and mindfulness.

"New drivers aren't confident, they haven't learned how to drive well yet," Shimko said.

"It takes practice and I think there are more distractions nowadays with the phones and radios and things like that."



JOSIE BENNETT

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