



Speaker tells teenagers they're not invincible

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by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Mayes, 101st Sustainment Brigade

Army wife Kelly Narowski concluded her three-day visit to the 101st Sustainment Brigade Saturday with a presentation about At-Risk Behavior aimed specifically at teens.

She touched on some very familiar themes-speeding, drinking and driving, and wearing a seatbelt while operating a vehicle- but she also included a special message about the danger of driving while texting.

The main point she wanted to get across to teens: "You're not invincible."

"I hope they realize that ...they can be disabled or hurt really bad from a car crash if they don't think first," Narowski said. "I'm a live, rolling example of why you should always wear your seatbelt, and why you should not drink and drive."

Narowski, paralyzed from the chest down as a result of a driving accident 11 years ago, called driving while texting a "huge cognitive distraction."

"It's completely ridiculous to think that you can text and drive," she said. "It's important that we convince them not to do that because it's extremely dangerous."

She presented her final presentation at the Family Resource Center Saturday morning, complete with the graphic British Driving while Texting Public Service Announcement .

"I asked one of the students what they thought of the presentation, and they said it was much more effective than what they were shown in school," she said. "I saw a girl in tears when she saw that piece."

I asked one student what should I change about my presentation, and he said absolutely nothing."

Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD) and Liberty Mutual Insurance Company in 2007 released results of a national survey conducted with more than 900 teens with driver's licenses from 26 high schools across the country. The survey revealed 37 percent of those surveyed actually engaged in instant or texting while driving.

Narowski said texting while driving currently is illegal in 18 states and the District of Columbia in the U.S, and believes it will be illegal in all 50 states.

Narowski said she believes there are several factors as to why teens text while driving, including decision-making skills and life experiences.

“A teenager doesn't have the same decision-making skills as someone who's older, and their judgment isn't as good sometimes,” she said. “Secondly, when you're young, you haven't seen a lot of tragedy. So you feel invincible and that nothing bad can ever happen to you. It's happens to other people, to other groups, but not me.”