Directions: Below are some common excuses that drivers use to justify using a text-messenger device while they are behind the wheel. In your own words, describe why each of these excuses is NOT a justifiable reason to make an exception to Virginia’s no-texting-while-driving law. When you have completed this, discuss your answers with your parent/instructor.

1) "But I'm just reading a text message, I'm not actually typing a text message."

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

2) "This is really important...."

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

(OVER)
3) "It's okay. I'm stopped at a red light."

Don’t Play Games with Your Life
FOR PARENTS

WORKSHEET: TEXTING WHILE DRIVING

NOTE: Using a text messenger is one of the most dangerous distractions a driver can engage in while behind the wheel of a car. Although the reasons are obvious, countless teenagers as well as adults often engage in this reckless activity while out on the road—and often with tragic consequences. You can talk to your teen until you are blue in the face about not texting while driving, and yet they could still very well find an excuse to break the rule.

Here’s the thing: Your teenager isn’t stupid—he/she is aware that texting while driving is unsafe. The problem is that teenagers often have a sense of “invincibility” that can cause them to push their limits. The purpose of this exercise is to have them think about why texting while driving is dangerous which will help them to better understand the risks that are involved.

This worksheet lists some of the most common excuses that teenagers have for using a text-messenger while driving a car. We have listed these excuses out for your student and have asked hi/her to respond to each excuse in his/her own words. **Allow him/her to write these responses on his/her own.** After your student has completed the worksheet, sit down with him/her and discuss the responses.

Below are some following “talking points” you may wish to use in your discussion with your student:

1) "But I'm just reading a text message, I'm not actually typing a text message...."
So your eyes are not on the road, but on your iPhone instead? When reading a text message, your visibility of the road is decreased to ZERO.

2) "This is really important...."

More important than your life and the lives of your passengers and other motorists and pedestrians who happen to be around? Is that more important than waiting a few minutes until you reach your destination and you’ve turned off your motor vehicle? If you absolutely cannot wait, then pull off the road, find a safe place to park, and text to your heart’s content.

3) "It's okay. I'm stopped at a red light."

Even when stopped at a red light, you'll be tempted to "push" it. If the light turns green and you're almost finished typing your message, you, in all likelihood, will want to finish it as your car begins to move forward into the intersection. Then, whoops! you rear-end the car in front of you, or worse--you strike a mother and her baby who hadn't quite finished crossing the street.

NOTE: Thanks to advancements in technology, there are control functions which can be added to your teenager's cell phone that will actually disable the phone's text-message feature while they are driving! A partial listing of these available safety features can be found in the Virginia Dept. of Education’s 45-Hour Parent-Teen Driving Guide. An online copy is available on the Virginia D.O.E. website at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/driver_education/index.shtml.
AFFIDAVIT
CH. 8 ACTIVITY WORKSHEET
(To be completed by the Parent-Instructor)

INSTRUCTIONS: Please fill in ALL blanks and sign and print your name with today’s date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
After your student has completed the entire course (up to the final exam), please send all activity worksheet affidavits plus the course completion affidavit to the above email address or fax number, all in ONE submission.

I, the undersigned, serving as my child’s instructor for the DriverEdToGo.com Virginia Driver Education Course for home-schooled students, do hereby declare under penalty of perjury that my student, ___________________________ (print name) has successfully completed the Chapter 8 Activity in ____ hour(s). This includes the total of both of the following:

- The time the student spent on answering the worksheet’s questions independently AND
- The time we spent discussing his/her responses.

Parent’s Signature
__________________________________________

Parent’s Name (PRINT)
__________________________________________

Date:
__________________