ISSUE No. 11, JULY 2025
FDOT DISTRICT SIX - TRAFFIC OPERATIONS - SAFETY NEWSLETTER

SAFETY NEWSLETTER

FDOT
DISTRICT SIX - TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

PUT IT DOWN
FDOT SAFETY CAMPAIGN

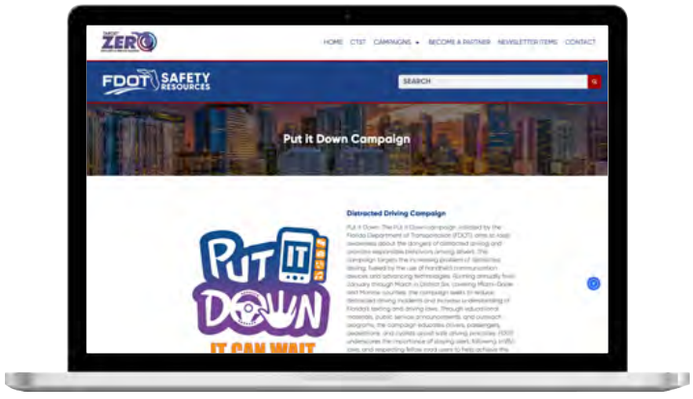
STAYING SAFE BY PUTTING THE PHONE DOWN: WINTER/SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

We kicked-off 2025 with a bang by launching the Put if Down Campaign. The Traffic

Operations Outreach Team conducted targeted community engagement across South Florida from January through April. This effort focused on raising awareness about distracted driving and promoting safe travel behaviors among all road users. We even launched these years with a revamped logo that encompasses distracted driving behaviors beyond texting.

DOWNLOAD THE NEW PUT IT DOWN LOGO AT THE FDOT SAFETY RESOURCES WEBSITE

SEE MORE



https://fdotsafetyresources.com/putitdown/national-distracted-driver-awareness/

In South Florida, the streets never sleep. From Downtown Miami's lively markets to the sun-drenched Keys, beach casual campuses, and vibrant Plazas of North Miami, transportation is more than movement—it's life. But with every movement comes a moment of decision. And one wrong glance at a phone can end a life.

That's why the Florida Department of Transportation's Put It Down campaign doesn't wait for people to come to it. It goes where they are—on campuses, in communities, at fairs, festivals, and in neighborhoods, speaking directly to the hearts and habits of the next generation of drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.

From active door-to-door outreach to engaging safety fairs and school presentations, the "Put It Down" campaign connected directly with thousands of residents, students, and business owners. Here's a look at the completed efforts:

- **Total Events Completed: 40**
- **Door-to-Door & High-Incident Outreach Events: 21**
- **Tabling / Community Event Appearances: 11**
- **Presentations / School Engagement: 8**
- **Media Advertisements Reach: 8+ million**

The "Put It Down" campaign survey garnered feedback from 524 participants, revealing insightful data about distracted driving behaviors in South Florida.

Spotlight Findings:

- Most common phone use: Navigation at 48%
- Frequent distraction: Texting, Making Calls, Browsing Apps at 41%
- Adjusting in-car devices: Occasional distractions for nearly 38%

Overall, the community has demonstrated a strong awareness of the risks associated with distracted driving, with approximately 66% expressing willingness to pledge against distractions while driving. Responses indicate a growing receptiveness to behavioral change, particularly influenced by personal stories and direct community engagement highlighted throughout the campaign.

Why "Put It Down" Matters

The Put It Down campaign doesn't simply hand out flyers—it sparks genuine conversations. It's FDOT District 6 stepping into the heart of Miami and saying, **we see you, we hear you, and we're working to protect you**.

This campaign challenges behaviors. It empowers communities. Every interaction is a step toward safer streets, informed choices, and saved lives.

Together, we're not just urging caution; we're reshaping Miami's driving culture. We're ensuring that everyone who moves through our city, whether on wheels or on foot, can do so safely, confidently, and responsibly.

In a city where everyone is going somewhere, we're helping them get there safely—one reminder, one conversation, one community at a time.

Changing Culture One Interaction at a Time

Campaign staff distributed thousands of materials:

- Florida Texting & Driving Law flyers
- "Put It Down" phone holders
- Tip cards for micromobility users
- High-visibility vests, stickers, sunglasses, tote bags, and even recipe cards to create an approachable entry point for tough conversations

But the real measure of success? A student saying, "I'll speak up if my friend reaches for their phone.” A runner telling us, “I’ve almost been hit too many times. Keep doing this.” A campus officer sharing the selfie frame and saying, “This matters.”

CITIZEN REQUESTS

The FDOT District Six Traffic Operations Office continues to investigate requests for new or enhanced pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, and school zone signage submitted by citizens, elected officials, and local municipalities in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.

This is achieved through the Correspondence Tracking Program (CTP), a system that manages and documents requests from citizens who recommend improvements to the state's roads. The CTP system documents field observations, crash history data, pedestrian counts, and road conditions to generate reports and data used to identify potential safety and operational improvements.

6

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Concerns were raised about uncontrolled crosswalks with minimal safety measures at offset intersections along a multi-lane road.

0

SCHOOL ZONE

Inquiries included concern about traffic congestion and safety during drop-off and pick-up times.

2

CROSSING FEATURES

Inquiries included concern regarded collisions involving pedestrians and bicycles when they entered a roadway outside of a marked crosswalk.

If you have pedestrian or bicycle safety concerns, contact Eduardo Hernandez, Bike & Pedestrian Traffic Specialist, at eduardo.hernandez@dot.state.fl.us or at 305-470-5467.
We will get back to you as soon as possible.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

THAT SPARK CONVERSATIONS

Behind every safety statistic is a person—a neighbor, a student, a coworker, a friend. That's why **community involvement is at the heart of our traffic safety efforts**. The FDOT District 6 Community Traffic Safety Specialist (CTSP) Team works not just in the community, but with it.

Our mission extends beyond just engineering and enforcement. It's about empowering residents, schools, businesses, and organizations to be **active partners in creating safer streets**. When law enforcement, medical professionals, educators, and neighborhood groups come together—as they did at the recent Motorcycle Safety Kick-Off—true progress becomes possible. The Target Zero initiative gets closer to becoming a reality.

From helmet awareness to scooter education and enforcement support, community partnerships ensure that **solutions are grounded in local reality**. They help us reach the people most at risk with the tools and messages that matter.

Traffic safety isn't just a campaign. It's a shared responsibility. And in communities like ours, the impact is strongest when we act together.

The Put It Down team doesn't just table at events—they ignite discussion. At the Downtown Miami Market & Movie Night, attendees shared chilling testimonies of crashes, confusion about micromobility laws, and curiosity about safer commuting strategies. A student showed scars from an accident, vividly bringing home the campaign's urgency. A resident challenged community misconceptions, stating, "We all think we can multitask behind the wheel. We're wrong."

At the University of Miami, a student asked if glancing at a GPS counts as distracted driving. The question opened the door to education that many didn't even know they needed.

At Hard Rock Stadium's Dolphins Cancer Challenge, the campaign reached over 7,000 people.

Cyclists and runners—some survivors of crashes—voiced support for safer infrastructure and stricter enforcement. Conversations weren't forced. They flowed—naturally, urgently, honestly.

"I see more safety ads in Georgia than Florida. We need this campaign on our roads."
— University of Miami student from Atlanta

RideSMART FLORIDA

CAMPAIGN SNAPSHOTS – RIDE SMART FL COMMUNITY LAUNCH

Since kicking off in May 2025, the Ride Smart FL campaign has been fully deployed across Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, bringing hard-hitting, data-driven safety awareness directly to the people. Backed NW 22nd Ave, Florida NW 22nd Avenue by local crash trends and CUTR research, the campaign is grounded in three critical messages:

1. **Increase awareness of motorcycles**. When you “Watch for Motorcycles,” you see more than the motorcycle. He or she could be your friend, neighbor, or relative.
2. **Wear an FDOT-compliant helmet**. Helmets save lives, particularly in high-speed crashes or impacts involving scooters and motorcycles.
3. **Get properly endorsed**. Any operator of a scooter over 50cc is legally required to have a motorcycle endorsement—a rule too many riders still don’t know.

The campaign has focused on high-traffic corridors, culture-rich neighborhoods, and event-driven environments—bridging data and dialogue in a way that resonates on the ground.

Connections: New Data Informs Next Steps

The FDOT D6 Community Traffic Safety Specialist (CTSP) Team facilitated a regional kick-off meeting to address rising motorcycle fatalities and injuries. The meeting brought together **law enforcement, medical professionals, academic institutions, and community organizations** to review new crash data and strategize next steps.

New data presented by Dr. Chanyoung Lee shows **Miami-Dade County leads Florida in motorcycle fatalities**, while **Monroe County sees a high volume of injury-causing crashes**, especially involving scooters.

Key Findings for Miami-Dade & Monroe:

- **Miami-Dade is #1 statewide in motorcycle deaths**.
- **Scooters account for 38% of crashes in Miami-Dade and 66% in Monroe**, compared to an 11% state average.
- **Post-COVID motorcycle deaths are rising**, with over 600 fatalities expected statewide again in 2025.
- **April and May are peak months** for fatal and serious injury crashes in Miami-Dade and Monroe.

What We've Learned So Far:

- **The laws aren't reaching the streets**. Many riders don't know helmet requirements or endorsement rules.
- **Personal stories hit hardest**. Survivors of crashes offer the most powerful testimony.
- **Community engagement must be tactical**. It's not enough to pass out flyers—we have to meet people where they are, and speak their language.

Tools of the Mission

Across all deployments, Ride Smart FL has equipped residents with:

- "Watch for Motorcycles" safety flyers and Magnets
- Proper gear & visibility vest handouts
- Reflective decals, keychains, and drawstring bags
- Target Zero "Recipe for Safety" cards

Join the Movement. If you're a motorcyclist, gear up and stay visible. If you're a driver, stay aware and share the road. Whether you ride or drive, safety starts with you. Visit Ridesmartflorida.com & TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov to download resources, check your legal knowledge, and help us build a culture of shared responsibility.

Stay Geared. Stay Legal. Stay Alive.

EVENTS

REACHING STUDENTS BEFORE THEY REACH THE ROAD: FDOT PARTNERS WITH MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Educating youth is key to a successful campaign that drives impact and positive behaviors. Whether at South Miami Senior High, Homestead, or Dr. Michael M. Krop, our outreach isn't just about laws—it's about legacy. When students hear real stories, see their reaction times tested, or walk away realizing that "just one text" can kill, a spark is lit.

"I didn't realize how serious the texting and driving law was—now I'm thinking twice about using my phone at all while driving."
— Student at Krop Senior High

“I thought impaired meant alcohol only, but now I see it's bigger than that.”
— Student at Krop Senior High

Awareness became action, **changing daily choices**.

The message is sticking because it’s personal. At TERRA Environmental, STEM students connected distracted driving to roadway engineering. One student realized, “I never knew a simple phone notification could distract me so dangerously.” Another vowed, “I'll call out my friends if they grab their phones while driving.” At Homestead, a student driver instructor assisted the outreach team in handing out stickers that read, “Please be patient – student driver.” It’s safety made practical, visual, and real.

KEY WEST – DOOR-TO-DOOR OUTREACH

On Monday, May 19, 2025, the Ride Smart FL team hit the road to the Florida Keys distributing information from Islamorada to Key West. Boots hit the pavement starting on Duval Street where the local community voiced strong support for the effort and ended at the Key Largo Visitor's Center. The team moved from storefront to storefront—engaging scooter shops, restaurants, and community hangouts.

The mission revealed widespread gaps in awareness, particularly around helmet laws and scooter regulations. Business owners and locals alike were surprised by current legal standards, underscoring the urgent need for public-facing education. With every stop, the team handed out vital resources and reestablished the campaign's grassroots credibility: Ride Smart isn't about preaching—it's about partnering.

HOMESTEAD-MIAMI SPEEDWAY

HOMESTEAD-MIAMI SPEEDWAY – FAST LANE FRIDAY

On Friday, May 30, 2025, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Six teamed up with the Homestead-Miami Speedway for an extended evening of outreach at Fast Lane Friday. Positioned at the fan zone, the Ride Smart FL team met hundreds of attendees at one of the region's premier motorsport gatherings.

The setting was electric and fully fueled—revving engines, glowing track lights, and heartfelt testimonies from riders who've survived crashes or lost friends to unsafe riding. What started as a table with flyers quickly became a circle of shared stories. Riders asked questions, pointed to blind spots in driver awareness, and left the table with more than just a bag—they left with renewed perspective.

MIAMI GARDENS – DOOR-TO-DOOR OUTREACH

On Friday, June 6, 2025, the campaign was on scene and deployed along NW 27th Avenue, from NW 187th Street to NW 170th Terrace in Miami Gardens—a corridor with deep cultural ties to the local bike community. Known for group rides like "Wheels Up Guns Down," the area carries a living legacy of two-wheeled expression.

Inside barbershops and corner stores, the Ride Smart team engaged up close and personal, sharing the importance of helmets, endorsement compliance, and visibility. This was by far one of the most interactive community corridors. At one stop, a man described how a Harley crash nearly cost him his legs—but his helmet spared his life. These unfiltered moments are the lifeblood of the campaign—proof that safety isn't theoretical. It's personal.

The Mission: **The Importance of Community in Advancing Traffic Safety**

Behind every safety statistic is a person—a neighbor, a student, a coworker, a friend. That's why **community involvement is at the heart of our traffic safety efforts**. The FDOT District 6 Community Traffic Safety Specialist (CTSP) Team works not just in the community, but with it.

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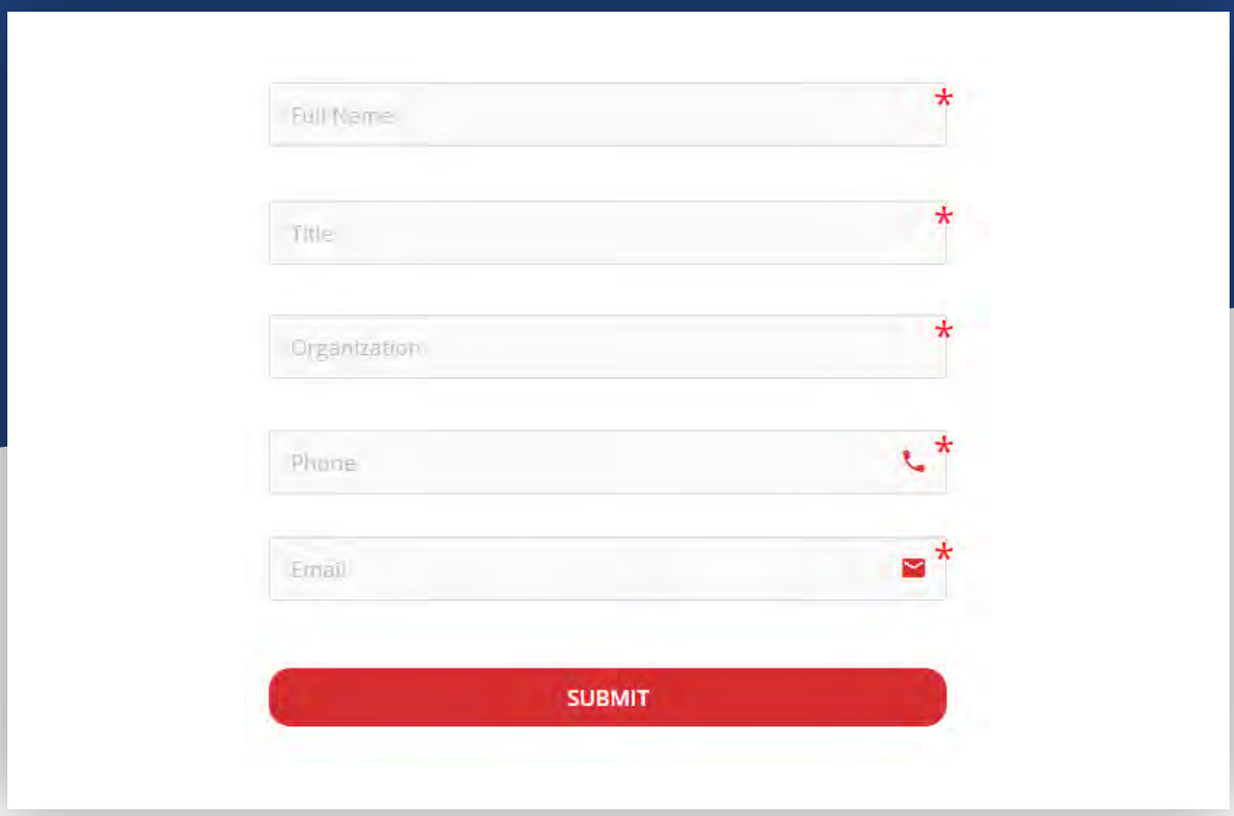
BECOME A SAFETY PARTNER



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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
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