**KIA MOTORS AMERICA AND B.R.A.K.E.S. SUPPORT NATIONAL DISTRACTED DRIVER AWARENESS MONTH WITH HANDS-ON DEFENSIVE DRIVING EDUCATION FOR TEENS AND THEIR PARENTS**

***Hundreds of Teens and Their Parents to be Provided With No-Cost, Behind-the-Wheel Training During the Month of April to Raise Awareness for the Dangers of Distracted Driving, Adding to the More Than 15,000 Already Trained***

* Kia and B.R.A.K.E.S. expand geographic reach in 2015, increasing the number of teens that receive this lifesaving training
* An estimated 10 percent of all drivers under the age of 20 involved in fatal crashes are reported as distracted at the time of the crash[[1]](#endnote-1)

**IRVINE, Calif., April 2, 2015** – Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 14-18 year olds in the U.S.[[2]](#endnote-2) To provide teenagers with the training and tools to be safe and responsible behind the wheel, Kia Motors America (KMA) and the B.R.A.K.E.S. (Be Responsible And Keep Everyone Safe) Teen Pro-Active Driving School continue to bring the 501(c)(3) charity’s free advanced driver training to new cities nationwide; including the greater San Francisco area as well the greater Boston area; to increase the number of teens that receive lifesaving training.

B.R.A.K.E.S. will provide hands-on defensive driving instruction for 300 students during the month of April, adding to the more than 15,000 teens that have graduated from B.R.A.K.E.S.’ intensive half-day training courses. Instruction includes a distracted driving exercise, emergency braking using the anti-lock braking system (ABS), evasive maneuvering and skid-control practice. Kia is the Official Vehicle and presenting sponsor of the B.R.A.K.E.S. Teen Pro-Active Driving School.

“Kia is dedicated to making roads safer and giving back to the communities we call home,” said Michael Sprague, executive vice president of sales and marketing, KMA. “We are determined to help reduce the number of distracted driving accidents by working with B.R.A.K.E.S. to provide teens with the tools they need to be safer, better trained drivers behind the wheel.”

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At any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010[[3]](#endnote-3). Drivers under the age of 20 have the largest proportion of fatal accidents involving distracted driving[[4]](#endnote-4). Accidents also remain the leading cause of death for teens in the U.S. Kia and B.R.A.K.E.S. aim to be a catalyst for change by raising awareness among teens and their parents through responsible driving habits.

“B.R.A.K.E.S. prepares teens for the hazardous conditions they will face while on the road by instilling good decisions into their muscle memory,” said Doug Herbert, National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Top Fuel drag racer and founder of B.R.A.K.E.S. “Kia’s support of B.R.A.K.E.S. has helped us scale up our efforts and increase the number of teens that receive hands-on training. Working together, we aim to reduce the number of teen deaths as a result of automobile accidents.”

B.R.A.K.E.S. has provided free safe-driving instruction for more than 15,000 students in 10 states across America. Each school offers nearly four hours of hands-on training with a low three-to-one student-to-teacher ratio to ensure personal attention, and parents participate in the courses alongside their teens to ensure proper driving techniques are reinforced following the session. Teens with parents who set driving rules and monitor their activities are half as likely to crash, 71 percent less likely to drive intoxicated, 30 percent less likely to use a cell phone when driving and less inclined to speed[[5]](#endnote-5).

The B.R.A.K.E.S. Training Curriculum includes the following:

* Accident Avoidance/Slalom: The two-part course simulates an animal or object jumping out in front of a car. It forces students to make a split-second reaction to help negotiate a quick, evasive lane change without losing control of the vehicle. Students must navigate their vehicle around cones while focusing on weight transfer, hand positioning and eye scanning.
* Distracted Driving: In 2009 it was estimated more than 5,400 people died in crashes that were reported to involve a distracted driver and about 448,000 people were injured[[6]](#endnote-6). The course demonstrates the danger that cell phones, text messaging, and other distractions can pose while driving.

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* Drop Wheel/Off Road Recovery: The drop-wheel recovery course teaches students how to effectively recover when one or more of their wheels veers off the road surface and onto the shoulder, regaining control of the car and safely returning to the roadway.
* Panic Stop: Teens often lack the experience needed to judge a safe following distance. The panic stop course instructs students on proper braking techniques to help stop a vehicle in the shortest distance possible while maintaining control. Students experience firsthand the pulsating brake pedal effects of ABS and how to control the vehicle when ABS in engaged.
* Car Control and Recovery: A wet skid pad simulates wet-road conditions. Students learn how to recover from both over-steer (rear wheel) and under-steer (front wheel) skids.
* Other learning experiences vary by school but can include an eye-opening view from the driver’s seat of a big-rig truck with a discussion about safe zones and blind spots, as well as demonstrations from police and fire-rescue agencies.

Upcoming training dates include:

* April 11 – April 12 in Concord, North Carolina
* April 25 – April 26 in Pomona, California
* April 25 – April 26 in Raleigh, North Carolina
* May 16 – May 17 at Alameda Point, California
* June 6 – June 7 in Concord, North Carolina
* July 11 – July 12 in Pomona, California
* Aug. 1 – Aug. 2 in Manheim, Pennsylvania
* Aug. 22 – Aug. 23 in Concord, North Carolina
* Sept. 26 – Sept. 27 in Concord, North Carolina
* Oct. 3 – Oct. 4 in Ocoee, Florida
* Oct. 17 – Oct. 18 in Raleigh, North Carolina
* Oct. 24 – Oct. 25 in Concord, North Carolina
* Oct. 31 – Nov. 1 in Epping, New Hampshire
* Nov. 14 – Nov. 15 in Concord, North Carolina

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* Nov. 21 – Nov. 22 in Commerce, Georgia
* Dec. 5 – Dec. 6 in Concord, North Carolina
* Dec. 19 – Dec. 20 in Pomona, California

Visit <http://putonthebrakes.org/schedule> to reserve a seat today and check back often as new schools are continually added.

**About Kia Motors America**

Kia Motors America (KMA) is the marketing and distribution arm of Kia Motors Corporation based in Seoul, South Korea, and in 2014 was the #1 ranked mainstream brand according to Strategic Vision’s Total Quality Index. KMA proudly serves as the "Official Automotive Partner" of the NBA and LPGA and set an all-time annual sales record in 2014, surpassing the 500,000 unit mark for the third consecutive year. KMA offers a complete line of vehicles, including the rear-drive K900[[7]](#endnote-7) flagship sedan, Cadenza premium sedan, Sorento CUV, Soul urban passenger vehicle, Soul Electric Vehicle[[8]](#endnote-8), Sportage compact CUV, Optima midsize sedan, Optima Hybrid, the Forte compact sedan, Forte5 and Forte Koup, Rio and Rio 5-door subcompacts and the Sedona midsize multi-purpose vehicle, through a network of more than 765 dealers across the United States. Kia’s U.S. manufacturing plant in West Point, Georgia, builds the Optima\* and Sorento\* and is responsible for the creation of more than 14,000 plant and supplier jobs.

Information about KMA and its full vehicle line-up is available at www.kia.com. For media information, including photography, visit www.kiamedia.com. To receive custom email notifications for press releases the moment they are published, subscribe at www.kiamedia.com/us/en/newsalert.

**About B.R.A.K.E.S.**  
 B.R.A.K.E.S. (Be Responsible And Keep Everyone Safe), is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded by NHRA Mello Yello Series Top Fuel drag racer Doug Herbert in memory of his two sons, Jon and James, who were tragically killed in a car accident. The B.R.A.K.E.S. Teen Pro-Active Driving School is a free, defensive driving program. By training and educating teenage drivers and their parents, the program aims to promote safe driving in an attempt to prevent injuries and save lives. To volunteer, obtain more information or donate please visit [www.putonthebrakes.org](http://www.putonthebrakes.org).

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1. **\* The Sorento and Optima GDI (EX, SX & Limited and certain LX Trims only) are assembled in the United States from U.S. and globally sourced parts**

   http://www.distraction.gov/stats-research-laws/facts-and-statistics.html [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. See http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/teens [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811719.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. http://www.distraction.gov/stats-research-laws/facts-and-statistics.htm [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. See http://www.ghsa.org/html/media/pressreleases/2013/20131017ntdsw.html [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811379.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. 2015 K900 V8 available in select trims and in select markets with limited availability. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. 2015 Soul EV in select markets with limited availability. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)