

# Don't Monkey Around with Safety

in a



# Car



For more information on traffic safety:

[www.drsr.info](http://www.drsr.info)  
[www.tmcec.com](http://www.tmcec.com)  
[www.texasre.org](http://www.texasre.org)



by  
**Dawn Fielder**



illustrated by  
**Nathan Jensen**



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Marigold sometimes felt like she lived in the car! Her mom picked her up from school. She popped into her booster seat next to her brother, Milton. They snapped the buckles of their safety belts. Then, the driving would begin.

Sometimes ...

- they drove to the grocery store.
- Marigold had ballet lessons.
- Marigold's little brother Milton had karate.
- Milton and Marigold had music lessons.





One day, they were on the way to dance class. Milton was playing with his video game. Marigold was imagining twirling across the dance floor. She could see herself in her glimmering tutu.









“Oh, no! My tutu!” Marigold cried out. She realized that her sparkily purple tutu was on the floor in her bedroom. “Mom, can you text Daddy and ask him to bring my tutu to dance class?”

Mom shook her head. “I can’t text Daddy, Marigold. I am driving. It is dangerous to text and drive.”


Marigold didn’t want to dance without her tutu.



Marigold sighed deeply, "People text all the time in their cars. I see them when I look out the window." Marigold crossed her arms across her chest.

Milton kept playing his video game and Marigold sulked. Mom told Marigold they would discuss it when they parked the car.





Remind your parents,  
"Don't Text and Drive"

Almost  
there









Marigold closed her eyes. Oh, how she wanted to wear her tutu. She felt the car stop. Mom parked the car and then took off her safety belt. She turned around to talk to Marigold.

“Marigold, driving is a very big job.” Mom’s voice was gentle but serious. “I can’t monkey around when I am driving. It takes both of my hands and all of my brains.”

Marigold nodded but she didn’t say anything.



“Sweetiepie, I know other people text and drive. It is dangerous. But I drive with two treasures in the backseat—you and Milton. I am not willing to do anything dangerous. Our family’s safety is too important.”

Marigold thought about her mom’s words. Her mom called her and Milton treasures. It made her feel good to know that her mom felt that way about her and her brother.









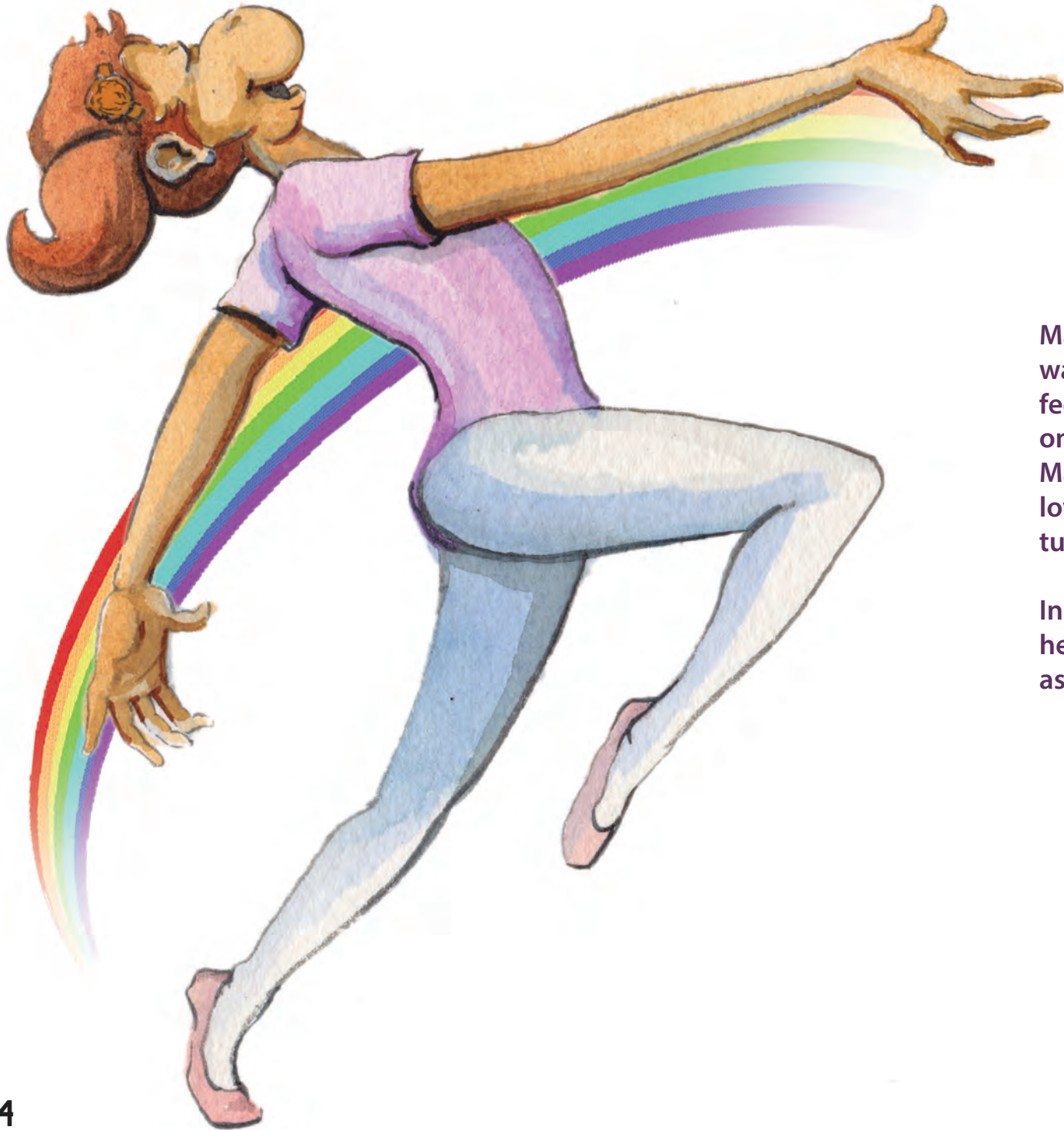
Marigold looked at her mom. "I am sorry I was rude, Mom. I was just disappointed."  
Mom touched Marigold's cheek. "It is okay to be disappointed, but I am glad you apologized."

They all got out of the car. Mom gave Marigold a hug and then whispered in her ear. "You have a wonderful imagination, Marigold. Imagine yourself dancing in a rainbow, glittered tutu and have a great class."









Marigold decided that Mom was right. It wasn't making her feel any better to stay focused on being disappointed. Marigold imagined the loveliest, shimmering tutu ever.

In class, Marigold danced her heart out. In ballet, she leaped as high as she could.



During tap, she ball changed with style. And at the end of class when they got to free style, Marigold invented a new dance.





After class, Marigold was all smiles. Mom helped Milton pack up his video game and his books. Then, they loaded into the car.

Before she started the car, Mom checked her phone for texts. She cheered and told the kids that Daddy was bringing home their favorite for dinner, pizza!













Mom dropped her phone in her purse. Then they headed towards home. As they rode home, Milton and Marigold played "I Spy."

Milton said, "I spy... someone doing karate or something over by that police car." Marigold and Milton looked out the window. They were stopped at a stoplight. Someone had crashed a car into a post. The police officer was having the man touch his nose and then the man was trying to walk on a straight line. The man was stumbling.

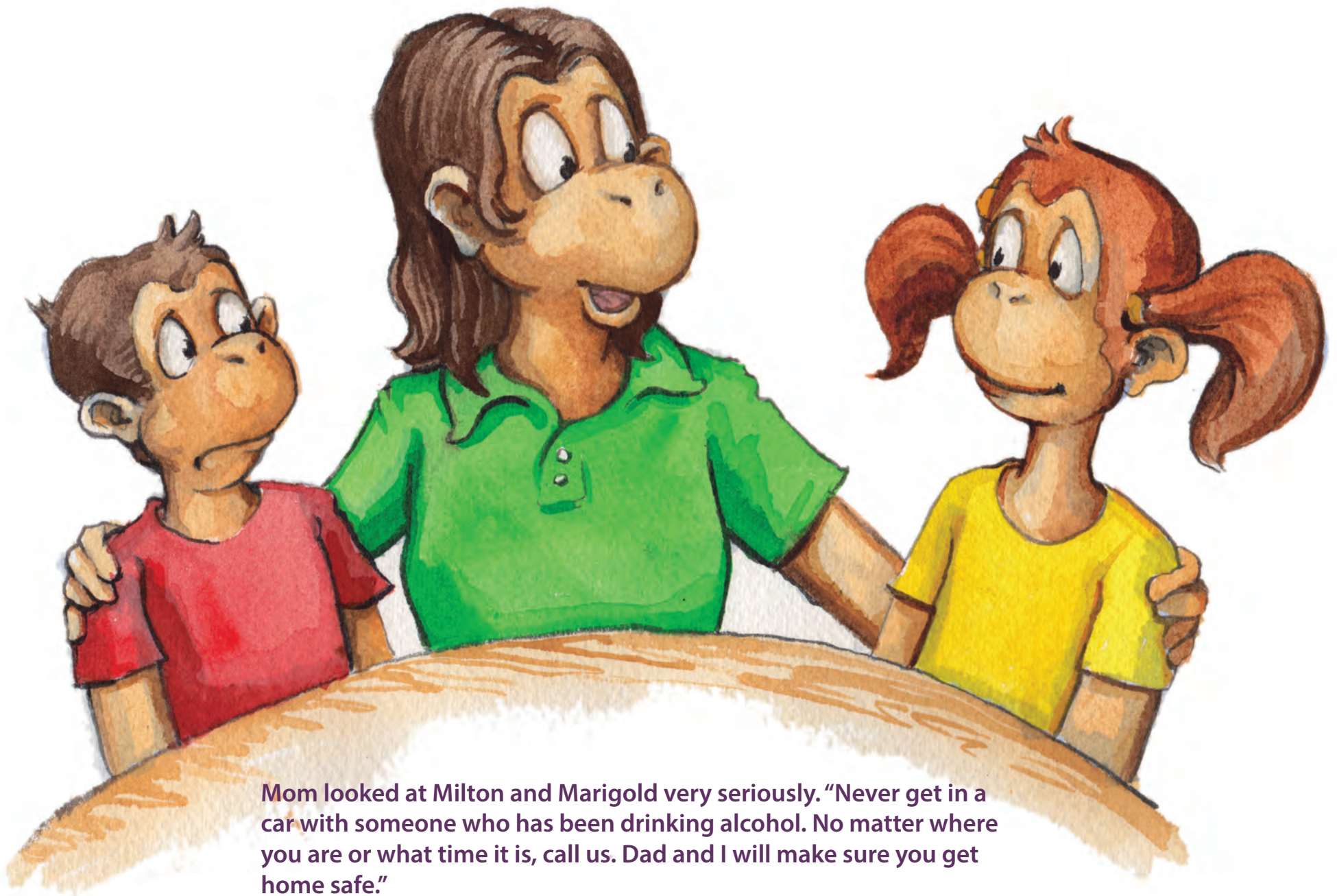
The red light changed to green. They drove the rest of the way home. Marigold and Milton were confused by what they had seen. Mom told them she would explain when they got home.



Later, Marigold and Milton rushed into the house. Dad had the pizza on the table. They hung up their backpacks and got in their places at the table. They told Dad what they had seen on the way home. Dad nodded sadly.

“It sounds like the person who had the wreck may have been drinking alcohol. It is dangerous for someone to drink alcohol and drive.”





Mom looked at Milton and Marigold very seriously. "Never get in a car with someone who has been drinking alcohol. No matter where you are or what time it is, call us. Dad and I will make sure you get home safe."

Marigold and Milton promised that no matter what, they wouldn't get in the car with someone who had been drinking alcohol. They promised to call Mom, Dad, or their Granddad if they needed a ride.







Mom, Dad, Marigold, and Milton enjoyed their pizza. It was a great night. Marigold and Milton finished their dinner and then they took turns pretending to drive a pizza delivery truck. They had all sorts of fun monkeying around.







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## **About Driving on the Right Side of the Road**

This publication is a part of the Driving on the Right Side of the Road (DRSR) program, developed by the Law-Related Education Department of the State Bar of Texas, Law Focused Education, Inc., and the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center with funding from the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals and the Texas Department of Transportation. These organizations are very concerned about traffic safety in Texas communities. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 5-20 year olds in the United States. Young children are often hurt if they do not sit in a booster seat, do not wear their safety belt, do not obey traffic signals, or fail to wear protective equipment when bicycling, rollerblading, or skateboarding. The purpose of the DRSR program is to offer a preventive educational resource to encourage responsible decision-making and adherence to safe practices when children are in a car, on the street, or out in public.

DRSR has created a series of lessons for social studies classes at the elementary and secondary levels on citizenship education and traffic safety. The program is aligned with the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), which all students are tested on in Texas public schools. Upper grade level lessons use student-centered, interactive strategies to teach traffic safety while studying city, state, and national government, the three branches of government, and the responsibilities of citizenship. Elementary lessons also use traffic safety content to teach language arts and math skills. Traffic safety games and information are also available on the DRSR website.

DRSR's Information Sheets provide teachers with background information about traffic laws and municipal court. DRSR can assist teachers in contacting local municipal judges, court support personnel, and city prosecutors to ask them to serve as resource persons in the classroom. Resource persons can bring the lessons alive by providing real life or hypothetical examples, accurate descriptions of what the law requires, and serve as positive role models for students.

We thank you for using these materials in your classrooms.

**For more information and resources, please visit:**  
**[www.drsr.info](http://www.drsr.info)      [www.texaslre.org](http://www.texaslre.org)      [www.tmcec.com](http://www.tmcec.com)**