



Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

–Childhood Injury Prevention 2004

Putting Knowledge to Work for Georgia Families

The University of Georgia

Cooperative Extension Service

The Problem

- Trauma from unintentional injuries (car crashes, burns, falls, etc.) is the leading killer of Georgia's children and car crashes are the leading type of this trauma (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2002).
- There were 382 passenger vehicle occupant fatalities among children under 4 years of age in the U.S. in 2003 (NHTSA, 2003)
- According to the Department of Transportation, use of child safety seats is the law, but many of Georgia's young children travel unprotected. Nine out of ten children using safety seats use them improperly. Thirty-three children under age 5 were killed in motor vehicle crashes in Georgia in 2000.
- According to the 2004 Georgia County Guide, there were 327,774 traffic crashes, and 1,531 of them were fatal crashes in Georgia in 2002.
- Vehicle crashes cost Georgians nearly \$8 billion annually (NHTSA, 2003).
- According to the Georgia Department of Human Resources, every child safety seat used saves this country \$85 in direct health care costs and an additional \$1,275 in other costs to society.

Research-based Solutions

- The greatest increases in child safety seat use result from:
 - ▶ Clear educational messages about safety seat use.
 - ▶ Ready availability of child safety seats.
 - ▶ Consistent enforcement of primary safety belt and child passenger safety seat laws.
- Parents who use safety seats with their children are more likely to buckle up themselves.
- Children who use safety seats are more likely to continue buckling up as they grow older.
- Every dollar invested in a child safety seat saves \$32 in direct and indirect costs to society (National Safe Kids Campaign, 2002).

Extension's Role

- Teach parents and caregivers how to properly use child safety seats.
- Teach public safety professionals to recognize proper safety seat use and to correct misuse.
- Answer consumer and agency questions on child safety seat installation and best practices.
- Prepare teen drivers and their parents to better prepare for graduated licensing.

Extension's Contribution to Solving the Problem

- Over 143,000 hours of traffic injury prevention education were provided to 33,472 Georgians in 2004.
- 267 Child Passenger Safety Technicians were trained and certified to help prevent traffic injury.
- Distributed 529 child safety seats in 2004.
- Child passenger safety training was provided to 1,314 law enforcement officials and 1,941 child care providers.
- A statewide poster, PSA, and essay contest was conducted to make children aware of traffic injury prevention. This annual contest has generated over 41,000 entrants from all areas of the state.
- Media efforts have been undertaken to increase awareness and prevention of childhood injury: A total of 45 exhibits have reached 12,971 Georgians; 12 newsletter articles have reached more than 4,670 readers; 17 radio spots have been broadcast to a listening audience of nearly 200,000; 18 newspaper columns have gone to a circulation of almost 400,000; and 118 television shows have

targeted to 5 million viewers. Over 1.3 million publications and educational materials were distributed to schools, parents, child care providers, and others.

Impact on Georgians

- 1,683 teens and their parents participated in the *Georgia Teens Ride with P.R.I.D.E.* safety driving education program.
- The Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute, a targeted extension initiative detected and corrected 561 instances of incorrectly used child safety seats.
- Eighteen train-the-trainer classes were conducted resulting in the certification of 244 new *P.R.I.D.E.* trainers in Georgia.
- Ninety-five percent of the participants in the Child Passenger Safety Technician training received certification.
- Use of child safety seats in Georgia rose from 20% to 93% between 1983 and 2004; saving the lives of an estimated 125 Georgia children and reducing injuries for 10,000 children.
- Projected health care savings to Georgia are \$57 million (Estimates by Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety).

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