



# Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

## –*Childhood Injury Prevention 2005*

### **Learning for Life**

The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension

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### ***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, 2005).
- 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. Twenty-seven children under age 5 were killed in motor vehicle crashes in Georgia in 2004.
- According to the 2005-2006 Georgia County Guide, there were 331,612 traffic crashes and 1,610 people died in crashes in Georgia in 2003.
- 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***

- Nearly 70,000 hours of traffic injury prevention education were provided to 40,600 Georgians in 2005. This includes, 15,760 hours of education provided to 4,359 parents and guardians; 15,250 hours of education provided to 415 law enforcement officials; and 3,420 hours of education provided to 746 child care providers.
- 250 Child Passenger Safety Technicians were trained and certified and 62 CPS technicians were recertified to help prevent traffic injury.
- Checked 558 child safety seat users and educated them to use child safety seats correctly. Distributed 443 child safety seats in 2005.
- 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 12,008 exhibits reached nearly 2 million Georgians; 2 newsletter articles reached more than

5,170 readers; 11 newspaper columns reached a circulation of 94,000 readers; 20 radio spots have been broadcast to a listening audience of nearly 1million; and 32 television shows have targeted to 500,000 viewers. Nearly 500,000 traffic injury prevention publications and educational materials were distributed to schools, parents, child care providers, and others.

### ***Impact on Georgians***

- 1,250 teens and their parents participated in the *Georgia Teens Ride with P.R.I.D.E.* safe driving education program. Within one year after attending a P.R.I.D.E. class, 96% of the parents have provided the supervised driving to teens.
- The Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute, a targeted Extension initiative, detected and corrected 478 instances of incorrectly used child safety seats.
- Twenty-three train-the –trainer classes were conducted resulting in the certification of 234 new *P.R.I.D.E.* trainers in Georgia.
- The Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute certified 225 Child Passenger Safety Technicians.
- 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.

### ***Economic Impact on Georgians***

- Projected health care savings to Georgia are \$57 million (Estimates by Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety).

### ***Contact***

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02/16/06