



Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

Childhood Traffic Injury Prevention 2007

Learning for Life

The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension

The Problem

- Trauma from unintentional injuries (crashes, burns, falls, etc.) is the leading killer of Georgia's children, with car crashes leading this type of trauma.¹
- There were 903 passenger vehicle occupant fatalities among children under 8 years of age in the U.S. in 2006.²
- According to the NHTSA, 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-one children under age 5 were killed in motor vehicle crashes in Georgia in 2006.³
- According to NHTSA, there were 331,612 traffic crashes and 1,693 fatalities from crashes in Georgia in 2006.³
- Vehicle crashes cost Georgians nearly \$8 billion annually (NHTSA, 2006).³
- 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.
- Every dollar invested in a child safety seat saves \$32 in direct and indirect costs to society (National Safe Kids Campaign, 2002).

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.

Extension's Role

- Teach parents and caregivers how to properly select and 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 for graduated licensing through the *Georgia Teens Ride with P.R.I.D.E.* safe driving education program.
- Help ensure safer driving by seniors by conducting the Carfit™ program.

Extension's Contribution to Solving the Problem

- Over 7.7 million individuals were reached through educational programs and information provided by the Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute of UGA Cooperative Extension during 2006.
- Nearly 200 Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPST) were trained and certified and 16 CPSTs were recertified to help prevent traffic injury.
- Checked 437 child safety seat users and educated them on using child safety seats correctly. Distributed 188 child safety seats in 2006.
- Over 2,300 parents and teens participated in the *Georgia Teens Ride with P.R.I.D.E.* safe driving education program and 182 new instructors were trained to deliver this program.
- A statewide poster, PSA, and essay contest was conducted to make children aware of traffic injury prevention. This annual contest generated over 30,000 entrants from all areas of the state.

- Media efforts reached almost 6 million Georgians and rollover simulator demonstrations reached almost 71,000. Nearly 1.5 million traffic injury prevention publications and educational materials were distributed to schools, parents, childcare providers, and other Georgia citizens.

Impact on Georgians

- Within one year after attending a *Georgia Teens Ride with P.R.I.D.E.* class, 89% of the parents responding had provided the required 40 hours of supervised driving to their teens.
- The Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute staff detected that 97.4% of the child safety seats checked were being used incorrectly and helped caregivers make the necessary corrections.
- Ninety-one percent (91%) of the participants in the Child Passenger Safety Technician training received certification. Training was conducted in English and Spanish.
- 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

Dr. Don Bower, Professor and Human Development Specialist, (706) 542-7566, dbower@uga.edu, or
Frankie Jones, GTIPI Program Director, (800) 342-9819, fejones@uga.edu,
College of Family and Consumer Sciences, or your local Cooperative Extension office

The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State University,
The U.S. Department of Agriculture and Counties of the State Cooperating. The Cooperative Extension Service offers educational programs,
assistance, and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.
The University of Georgia is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

7/08

¹ Trends in Unintentional Childhood Injury Deaths, Safe Kids Worldwide, 2007.

² Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Fatality Counts and Estimates of People Injured for 2006. NHTSA National Center for Statistics and Analysis, DOT HS 810 837, Sept. 2007.

³ Traffic Safety Facts 2006 – Georgia. NHTSA National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2007.