Michigan 4-H Safety Belt Program Toolkit

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Introduction and Acknowledgments

Take a second.
Save a lifetime.

“I had a friend who was like a brother to me . . . I got a call from his mom one night at 3:00 a.m. ‘[He] got in a car accident, and they don’t know if he’ll make it.’ She put the phone up to his ear and I said goodbye. His death happened because he wasn’t wearing his seatbelt. He took his eyes off the road for just a second . . . I know what it feels like to lose someone that’s close for something that’s really stupid. It’s really stupid to not wear your seatbelt. It takes just a second to put it on, and it could save your life.”

– Michigan 4-H Safety Belt Program
teen peer educator

After the death of her friend, this dedicated teen chose to become a Michigan 4-H Safety Belt Program peer educator, providing safety belt education to children and other teens in her community.

The facts

In 2003 more than 5,000 teens were killed in the United States in passenger vehicle crashes and more than 450,000 were injured. Motor vehicles are the number one killer of children aged 2 to 14. Low safety belt use is a major contributing factor to these deaths. Of every 100 children who die in motor vehicle crashes, at least 80 would have survived if they had been properly secured in an approved child safety seat or safety belt (James Madison University, 2004). Safety belt use greatly reduces the risk of serious injuries and fatalities.

Goals, methods and tools

The goal of the Michigan 4-H Safety Belt Program is to increase safety belt use and awareness among Michigan children and teens aged 8 to 19. Through the program, 4-H teen educators, along with adult volunteers, use a variety of interactive activities to teach young people the importance of buckling their safety belts. The activities include safety belt relays, inertia demonstrations, educational videos, crafts and quizzes.

From 2004 to 2006, more than 5,800 kids aged 8 to 12 and 780 teens aged 13 to 19 have been involved in the program as participants or peer educators in four pilot counties: Eaton, Shiawassee, Emmet and Mackinac. Teen educators have taught young people at rural education days, community health fairs, schools, driver education classes, FFA meetings and other community events.

As the program expands, the goal is to increase safety belt use among children and teens across Michigan. This toolkit contains a variety of teaching resources to help community educators accomplish this goal. A series of laminated lesson plans, many of which were written by the pilot team teen educators, describe various safety belt activities you can do with children. “Click It or Ticket” pencils and “Who Knew? The Buckle Up Issue” magazines are provided for you to distribute to young people.

The toolkit contains three educational DVDs, handouts that can be photocopied, “Buckle Up or Eat Glass” stickers, various safety belt brochures, and surveys designed to assess young people’s safety belt usage. The tube accompanying this toolkit contains posters you can display during educational and outreach events or post on a display board. The “Contents and Ordering Information” page tells you how to order more of any of these items.
Thank you for your dedication to increasing safety belt usage among kids and teens in your community, and in the process, potentially saving lives. Please contact us if you have any questions or suggestions, or if you know of people in other communities who would like to be involved in the 4-H Safety Belt Program:

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- The 2005–06 team members, staff and volunteers who worked to develop and revise the learning activities and teaching resources: Jim Barcus, Joyce Belonga, Tyler Bennett, Alex Birsen, Matthew Bogusz, Randi Bond, Diane Brazier, Sara Brocklehurst, Jessica Davis, Briana Edwards, Terry Edwards, Emily Eldred, Katie Eldred, Sarah Harris, Jen Hedrich, Tim Kiesling, Haley Kohn, Jackie Martin, Matthew Ocko, Norm Porter, Paula Ramelis, Erin Roll, Kristen Roll, Kacie Rutledge, Stephanie Shaulis, Heather Troyer, Krystle Troyer, Jennifer Weichel and Ashton Wood.

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MICHIGAN 4-H SAFETY BELT PROGRAM TOOLKIT:

Safety Belt Teams & Staff

Contact Information

If you’re interested in getting involved in the 4-H Safety Belt Program, or for more information, please contact:

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E-mail: olsenj@anr.msu.edu
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4-H Youth Development
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160 Agriculture Hall
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The following pilot counties each have 4-H safety belt teams:

Eaton County MSU Extension
Jackie Martin, 4-H Youth Educator
Phone: 517-543-2310
E-mail: marti623@msu.edu
The Eaton County Safety Belt Team includes about 15 teens from 4 county high schools. As a partnership of 4-H and FFA members in the area, the team has been able to educate more than 1,000 youth through presentations at local elementary schools, high school driver education classes, statewide 4-H and FFA events, and community events such as rural education days.

Emmet County MSU Extension
Diane Brazier, 4-H Program Associate
Phone: 231-348-1770
E-mail: dbrazier@co.emmet.mi.us
Teen educators on the Emmet County Safety Belt Team have created displays for spring achievement days and the Emmet County fair; working with their county sheriff and police departments as partners. They have also made team T-shirts and presented fliers to the Junior Master Gardener after-school program.

Mackinac County MSU Extension
Joyce Belonga, 4-H Youth Educator
Phone: 906-643-7314
E-mail: belonga@msu.edu
Mackinac County 4-H Safety Belt Team members have traveled to three schools, presented materials at a health fair, helped with a drunken driving demonstration at their school, helped to promote safety belt use at 4-H Exploration Days, and brought “BUB” (Buckle Up Bunny, a real bunny!) to 4-H camp. The team has also participated in the Engadine Heritage Days and the Luce/West Mackinac County Fair.

Shiawassee County MSU Extension
Jennifer Weichel, 4-H Youth Educator
Phone: 989-743-2251
E-mail: weichel@msu.edu
The Rambler Teen Angels (RTA) (http://www.freewebs.com/ramblerteenangels) organization is designed to help teens and the community make better choices. It was formed in December 2004 after five local teens were killed in a car crash. The Shiawassee County 4-H Safety Belt Team, with RTA, has presented a safety belt after-school program at Perry Middle School, held a safety belt awareness meeting before the Perry High School prom and conducted safety belt activities at the Shiawassee County fair. They are currently working with the 4-H CARTEENS (Cautious and Responsible Teens) Program.
MICHIGAN 4-H SAFETY BELT PROGRAM TOOLKIT:

Contents and Ordering Information

You can order refills of many of the materials included in the toolkit. Just contact the agency or organization listed with each item for details.

**DVDs and Videos**

“The Back Is Where It’s At” DVD
Featuring Bill Nye the Science Guy, this DVD encourages young people to wear their safety belts and ride in the back seat of any vehicle in which they’re traveling. It’s perfect for young audiences. Available on loan from the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning, along with a variety of other traffic safety videos. Order from the Office of Highway Safety Planning, phone 517-333-2722, e-mail trafficsafety@michigan.gov.

“Safety Belts: Always Wear Them” DVD
Listen to the moving stories of two people whose lives were dramatically affected by car crashes in which they were not wearing safety belts. The DVD was produced by the Michigan State Police and focuses on the personal testimony of safety belt survivors. It and other traffic safety videos are available on loan from the Michigan Resource Center Library, phone 800-626-4636, e-mail info@michiganresourcecenter.org.

“Safety Belts Save Lives” DVD
The safety belt advertisements on this DVD were developed by teens as part of a Minnesota Department of Public Safety contest. Buckle Up, Teens! TV Commercial Contest finalists and honorable mentions can be viewed online at http://www.dps.state.mn.us/ots/teens/voting.asp. The public service announcements on the DVD show the possible consequences of not wearing a safety belt. The PSAs were provided courtesy of the Minnesota Toward Zero Death Initiative, and are available online at http://www.tzd.state.mn.us/resources.html#Public.

**Brochures, Flyers and Other Printed Pieces**

“Belts Are Optional: Seat Belts Aren’t” Card
This 8-inch by 6-inch card (PI-41) targets high school–aged males. An 18-inch by 24-inch poster (PI-42) is also available. Booklets called “How to Conduct a Mock Crash” and “Teens Behind the Wheel” also are available. Items are free; out-of-state requests are limited to one sample of each item. Available from the Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety, phone 651-201-7576.

“Buckle Up or Eat Glass” Brochure
These brochures (item BRO013) encourage rural roadway safety, addressing issues such as unmarked intersections and seat belt use in pickup trucks. They’re $0.50 each; bulk discounts are available. A “Buckle Up or Eat Glass” rural roadway kit also is available. It contains activities, brochures and background information for adolescents. Order from Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, phone 800-423-5437, e-mail tammy@fs4jk.org.
“Click It or Ticket” Flyer
Michigan’s safety belt law is strictly enforced. This flyer provides information about the law, the fine ($65) and how proper use of a safety belt can save your life. It’s also available in Spanish and Arabic. Brochures, flyers, posters and other traffic safety-related items also are available for free. Order from the Michigan State Police Office of Highway Safety Planning, phone 517-333-2722, e-mail trafficsafety@michigan.gov.

“Nine Myths About Safety Belts for Truck Drivers” Brochure
This colorful brochure lists nine common excuses drivers give for not wearing their safety belts, then uses statistics to rebut these myths. It is directed at truck drivers, but the myths and facts apply to everyone. Order from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, phone 800-832-5660.

“Who Knew? The Buckle-Up Issue” Workbook
This youth workbook helps turn every reader into a dedicated buckle-upper with fun opportunities for learning the correct use of safety belts. Readers will discover how safety belts keep riders from close encounters with the dashboard in a crash. The workbook even offers advice on how to save face – and potentially their own lives – when peers ridicule safety belts and booster seats. The workbooks are $1.85 each; bulk discounts are available. Other safety belt booklets, stickers, brochures and posters are also available in English and Spanish. Order from Channing Bete Company, phone 800-477-4776, e-mail custsvcs@channing-bete.com.

Posters

Buckle Up or Eat Glass. Tough Choice, Huh?
There are 40 percent more fatal crashes in rural areas than in urban areas. These rural driving safety posters encourage drivers and passengers to make the right choice and buckle up the next time they’re in a pickup. Order from Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, phone 800-423-5437, e-mail tammy@fs4jk.org.

Friends to the End
This 11-inch by 17-inch poster (PI-394) tells the story of a teen driver who was ejected from his vehicle and killed in a crash. After the crash, his dog refused to leave the body of his owner. Items are free; out-of-state requests are limited to one sample of each item. Order from the Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety, phone 651-201-7576, e-mail desiree.quinn@state.mn.us.

Minor Collision. Major Body Work
This poster sends the message that even a low-speed crash can be deadly and that motorists should always wear their safety belts. Brochures, flyers, posters and other traffic safety-related items also are available for free. Order from the Michigan State Police Office of Highway Safety Planning, phone 517-333-2722, e-mail trafficsafety@michigan.gov.

No Safety Belt? You’ll Be Noticed. Buckle Up or Pay Up
If you’re not wearing your safety belt, you’re going to stick out to law enforcement – much like the driver of the vehicle on this poster. Brochures, flyers, posters and other traffic safety-related items also are available for free. Order from the Michigan State Police Office of Highway Safety Planning, phone 517-333-2722, e-mail trafficsafety@michigan.gov.

1 Seat Belt Ticket Costs 65 Bucks
This poster with a rural safety belt focus reminds drivers that Seat Belt Enforcement Zones are now in effect. If you’re not wearing your seat belt, you can be issued a $65 ticket. Brochures, flyers, posters and other traffic safety-related items also are available for free. Order from the Michigan State Police Office of Highway Safety Planning, phone 517-333-2722, e-mail trafficsafety@michigan.gov.

Roll Over. Play Dead.
Pickup trucks are twice as likely to roll over as cars. This colorful and informative poster reminds drivers of the danger of truck rollovers, as well as the importance of buckling their safety belts. Order from Buckle Up in Your Truck, e-mail dawn@buckleupinyourtruck.com.

Other Items

“Buckle Up or Eat Glass” Grafeetie Stickers
These bumper stickers (item 85213) stick to the back of shoes and encourage kids and teens to buckle up. They’re $1.10 each; bulk discounts are available. “Buckle Up” tattoo stickers ($0.24 each) are also available. Order from Grafeeties and Company, phone 800-299-3366, e-mail info@grafeeties.com.

“Click It or Ticket” Pencils
Green and white pencils with the “Click It or Ticket” logo remind drivers and passengers to click their safety belts and avoid a $65 ticket. Order from Mahoney and Associates at 517-669-4300.
Learning Activities

The learning activities in the 4-H Safety Belt Toolkit are briefly described here. They’re designed to be used with small groups of children or teens, and may be presented in any order.

The full description of each activity includes the age of its target audience, participant objectives, an estimate of how much time it will take, a list of materials needed, and steps for doing the activity. Questions that help the participants process their experiences are also included. Asking the questions helps you identify whether the participants understand the concepts presented in the activity.

Before using the learning activities, review each one thoroughly, or even practice it. Note that many of the materials require supplies (such as videotapes) that must be ordered well ahead of time, so plan accordingly.

The activities were developed primarily by teens who were members of 4-H safety belt teams in four Michigan counties during 2004-06. These teams have worked with adult volunteers to increase safety belt use and awareness among Michigan children and teens through a variety of educational presentations and activities.

“The Back Is Where It’s At” Video
Age: 12 and under
Use this 12-minute video, which features Bill Nye the Science Guy, to encourage participants to wear their safety belts and ride in the back seat. Follow up with a discussion about proper safety belt usage and the safest place to ride in the car. The video is available for loan from your county MSU Extension office or from the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning, phone 517-333-2722, e-mail trafficsafety@michigan.gov.

Conducting a Traffic Survey
Age: 12 and up
This activity can be used to guide the members of a 4-H safety belt team in putting together statistics on local safety belt use. The team can also use it to help other young people gather such information. The traffic survey is helpful in learning to calculate statistics, make charts for presentations and better understand your community’s specific needs for safety belt programs. (Volunteer note: This activity requires adult supervision.)

“Diana’s Last Message” Video
Age: 12 and up
In this 10-minute video, computer graphics are used to recreate Princess Diana’s fatal crash. In it, the engineers who reconstructed the crash show that Diana might have survived if she had been wearing her safety belt. The video uses Diana’s story and real-life testimony from crash victims to help participants explore common myths and excuses people use about using safety belts, and the facts that dispel these myths. The video is available from the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning, phone 517-333-2722, e-mail trafficsafety@michigan.gov, or from the Michigan Resource Center, online at http://www.michiganresourcecenter.org/.
Egg Vehicle Demonstration  
**Age: 8 and up**  
In this activity, participants watch a brief demonstration in which three eggs – one unbelted, one improperly belted and one securely belted – are placed in a miniature vehicle to demonstrate the effects of a simulated car crash. The group then discusses the potential consequences of not wearing safety belts and of wearing safety belts improperly.

Inertia Bottle Demonstration  
**Age: 6 and up**  
In this activity, participants watch a demonstration of inertia to help them understand how safety belts help protect riders during accidents.

Safety Belt Covers  
**Age: 8 to 11**  
In this activity, participants create safety belt covers with colorful felt, foam stickers and hook-and-loop tape (such as Velcro). In addition to making safety belts more comfortable and stylish, these decorative covers remind young people about the importance of buckling their safety belts.

Safety Belt Relay  
**Age: 10 and up**  
Participants race against the clock in this teamwork activity to see how quickly their team can buckle their safety belts in every seat of the vehicle. The activity is a fun way to remind young people that it only takes a few seconds to buckle their safety belts, and that those few seconds could save a lifetime.

“Safety Belts: Always Wear Them” Video  
**Age: 12 and up**  
This 12-minute video presents the moving stories of two people whose lives were dramatically affected by car crashes in which they were not wearing safety belts. In this activity, watching the video leads into a discussion about the potential effects of a car crash on oneself and on one’s family and friends. The video is available on loan from your county MSU Extension office or from the Michigan Resource Center, online at http://www.michiganresourcercenter.org.
Teaching Resources

You can use the educational teaching resources listed here separately or to supplement many of the learning activities in the Michigan 4-H Safety Belt Toolkit.

Bring a Mascot: Vince, Larry and Click It the Cricket

Vince and Larry, the famous crash test dummy characters, are extremely popular with young people and can generate enthusiasm at almost any safety belt activity or presentation. Click It the Cricket is a new traffic safety mascot who can also help educate children about the importance of wearing their safety belts.

The Vince and Larry costumes are available on loan from several Michigan organizations. Visit http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Vince_Larry_Costumes_122981_7.pdf to find out the location nearest you. You can borrow Click It the Cricket by completing the order form in the online Michigan Traffic Safety Materials Catalog at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/catalog_for_web_127973_7.pdf. Click It the Cricket comes with up to 250 coloring books and stickers for you to distribute during events. If you use any of these costumes, make sure you schedule people to wear the costume in shifts, especially if the temperature is high where the characters will be appearing. Also, think about what other kinds of props and handouts could be useful at the event (such as a steering wheel, a safety belt and bumper stickers).

Create a Safety Belt Display Board

Have your team design a display board that you can use at events and activities. The board could include photos of your team, information on local or state safety belt use and other information on passenger safety. Once you’ve decided what to place on your board, carefully tape or glue the items securely in place. Be creative and colorful. Include fun items so that people will want to stop and read your display!

Design Team T-Shirts

Promote your team and its work by creating team T-shirts. Work together to decide what you’d like to include on the shirts, such as the name of your team, each team member’s name and logos (such as the 4-H clover). Contact screen printing shops in your area. (You might want to ask for recommendations from your school sports director or sports booster club.) Check on the colors that are available, agree on the T-shirt design and decide when you need the finished shirts. You may even want to check with local organizations or businesses to see if they’d be interested in contributing to the cost of the shirts. Be sure to order early so that you will be “dressed in style” for your team’s first public appearance!
Using Handouts, Quizzes and Surveys

Consider using the following with the groups your team works with:

- **Safety Belt Quiz:** Is it legal to ride in the back of a pickup truck? Use this question and others on this handy quiz to find out how much young people know about safety belt laws. Quiz them before and after you present safety belt activities to see how much they’ve learned. Use the answer key to review the questions with the group after they’ve completed the quiz.

- **Safety Belt Statistics handout:** This handout, which is designed for audiences aged 12 and up, provides statistics on safety belt usage and the consequences of not wearing safety belts. If you prefer, you could pull information from the statistics to use during safety belt activities.

- **What Can You Buy With $65? handout:** Did you know that a ticket for not wearing a safety belt can cost you $65 in Michigan? Use this handout to help young people imagine all the other ways they could spend $65. Remind them that every time they buckle up, they’re not just saving money, but possibly saving their own lives.

- **Youth Survey:** Attach a life saver-shaped candy to this survey and distribute it to young people whenever your team goes into the community. Your group can use the survey to gather information about who does and does not wear their safety belt and why. Use the data to come up with more effective lesson plans and presentations.

More Suggestions for Safety Belt Education

Use these ideas to enrich your 4-H safety belt education experience:

- Do a presentation at a middle school for all kids who will soon be taking driver education.

- Involve more 4-H clubs and FFA chapters as safety belt educators.

- Present to as many elementary schools in your county as you can in a 6-month blitz.

- Do a presentation to a local group of adults.

- Use more bright colors and pictures in your activities.

- Make an electronic slide show presentation about vehicle crashes and safety issues. Use pictures in your show. Consider working with local law enforcement agencies to include crash photos, but be sensitive to the emotions of viewers with personal connections to local accidents.

- Hear testimonials from people who have been saved by safety belts.

- Create more activities for team bonding, such as taking a team camping trip.

- Collect donations of money and materials to support your team’s work.

- Work with a local first-responder group (such as police, fire fighters or emergency medical technicians) to stage a mock crash.

- Work with local law enforcement officers to offer safety belt checks. Provide rewards for those whose vehicles pass the check.

- Bring in guest speakers to help your team and others learn more about the importance of safety belt use.

- Educate teachers and school boards so they have a better understanding of what your group can offer.

- Do demonstrations on correct safety belt use.

- Have a giant safety belt training session or workshop in your community and consider forming partnerships with those in attendance.

- Get more feedback from groups after presenting safety belt activities.

- Collaborate with groups from other counties or states that are doing safety belt education activities.

- Make sure your friends and family buckle up.
MICHIGAN 4-H SAFETY BELT PROGRAM TOOLKIT ACTIVITY:

Conducting a Traffic Survey

OBJECTIVES:
Participants will:
• Learn to gather and compile data.
• Put together local statistics on community safety belt use.
• Better understand the specific needs for safety belt education in their community.

MATERIALS:
☐ Pens or pencils
☐ Clipboards (one per person)
☐ Watch (one per team)
☐ Prepared surveys or notebook paper on which to record data (one per person)
☐ Orange safety vests (one per person, optional)

AGE:
12 and up

TIME:
2 hours (60 minutes to collect data and 60 minutes to compile results)

SETTING:
• A meeting place where group members can sit in a circle and hear instructions
• One or more safe sites where group members can gather traffic data

PROCEDURE:
(Volunteer note: Young people must have adult supervision during the data collection part of this activity!)

Before the meeting:
I. Create a traffic survey form your group can use to keep track of the number of people wearing safety belts. The data sheet can be simple or complicated, depending on the ages and skill levels of your group members and the type of information they want to collect. Your group may choose to keep track of information such as the number of vehicles that pass by, the number of drivers or front seat passengers who are belted, or the number of children in the back seat who are belted or in a child safety seat. Two sample surveys follow.

Sample of a Simple Safety Belt Survey

Date:_________________ Location:_____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Cars Passing By</th>
<th>Number of Drivers Wearing Safety Belts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample of a More Complex Safety Belt Survey

Date:_________________ Time:_____________________

Location:_____________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Cars Passing By</th>
<th>Number of Drivers Wearing Safety Belts</th>
<th>Number of Front Seat Passengers</th>
<th>Number of Front Seat Passengers Wearing Safety Belts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. After you’ve created the survey form, make enough photocopies of it for every person to have one.

3. Depending on the size of your group, identify one or more locations in your area in which it will be safe for the group members to conduct the survey. Make sure that you have enough sites to spread the group members around a bit, but there should be at least two young people at each data collection station. The sites should be fairly busy, such as at an intersection or near a school.

4. Recruit at least one adult to help supervise the data collection at each site. Ask them to visit the sites before the meeting and confirm that they’re safe places for the survey teams to be stationed.

5. You may want to assign the group members to teams before the meeting to take advantage of various members’ skills and abilities. Doing so may also reduce the amount of meeting time it takes to form teams.

During the meeting:

1. Explain to the group that they’ll be acting as data collectors to find out about safety belt use in the community. Tell them where they’ll be stationed, what kind of information they’ll need to collect and how long to do the collecting.

2. If they’ll be working in teams on a fairly complex survey, you may want to suggest that they split up the tasks (by having one person count the total number of vehicles that go by, for example, and another team member count the drivers wearing safety belts). Emphasize that they must conduct the surveys with safety in mind, and make sure that each location is supervised by an adult.

3. Distribute the surveys or notebook paper, clipboards, pens or pencils, and orange safety vests (if you have them). Walk or drive the teams to the data collection site or sites. Leave at least one adult with each group and make sure that at least one team member has a working watch before you leave them. Remind them of what time you will return to pick them up.

4. After an hour of data collecting, bring the teams back together to compile their findings.

5. Help them generate statistics such as the percentage of people who were not wearing their safety belts as they passed by the data collection sites. (To do this, take the number of residents who weren’t wearing their safety belts and divide it by the total number of people surveyed, then move the decimal point two places to the right.)

6. Encourage the group to make charts with the data they’ve collected. They could compare the local findings with state and national statistics. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/) and the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (http://www.michigan.gov/msp/0,1607,7-123-1593_3504---,00.html) are good resources for such information.

7. Decide how to present your results to the community or other youth groups, such as through newspaper articles or in conjunction with another safety belt activity. If your team presents the data to another group, ask the group the following questions (add more if you’d like):
   - Why do you think some of the residents of our community don’t wear safety belts?
   - What can we do to encourage more people to wear safety belts?
   - Why do you think our community’s percentage of safety belt users is different from the national average?

TALKING IT OVER:

Ask your group the following questions:

- What worked well when you collected safety belt data?
- Did you encounter any problems while collecting data? How did you handle those challenges?
- Is there anything you might do differently on another data collecting trip?
- What is one thing you learned from doing this activity?
OBJECTIVES:
Participants will:
• Realize the purpose of safety belts and how they help save lives.
• View an example of a real-life situation in which a safety belt could have saved someone’s life.

MATERIALS:
- “Diana’s Last Message” video (order loan copy in advance from the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning or the Michigan Resource Center)
- Television and video player (VCR or DVD player depending on the type of video you’re borrowing)

AGE:
12 and up

TIME:
20 minutes

SETTING:
A room in which your group can comfortably watch a video

PROCEDURE:
Before the meeting:
1. Gather the supplies and equipment you will need for the activity.
3. Set up the television and video player. Cue the video.

During the meeting:
1. Ask the group if anyone knows a person whose life was saved by a safety belt. Give them time to share their stories.
2. Tell the group that they’re going to watch a video called “Diana’s Last Message” that’s about real-life experiences with safety belts, including that of Diana, Princess of Wales, who was killed in a car crash in 1997.
3. Show the video.

TALKING IT OVER:
After they’ve watched the video, ask the group the following questions:
• What did you learn from watching this video?
• How did the stories in the video affect you?
• When a person is thrown from a vehicle during a crash, how many more times likely are they to die than a person who stays in the vehicle? (4 times more likely)
• Is it safer to be “thrown clear of the crash”? Why or why not? (No. More fatal injuries occur this way than when people are held in the vehicle by safety belts.)
• Will this video influence the way you view your family or friends’ safety belt use? How?
Egg Vehicle Demonstration

OBJECTIVES:
Participants will explore the consequences of not wearing a safety belt or of wearing one improperly.

MATERIALS:
☐ 1 large wheeled toy car made of plastic building bricks (such as Legos)
☐ 1 empty egg carton
☐ At least 3 raw eggs, in shells
☐ 4 or 5 rubber bands
☐ Scissors
☐ Tape
☐ 3 or 4 thick books
☐ 1 sheet of cardboard, poster board or similar material
☐ Rags or paper towels

AGE:
8 and up

TIME:
20 minutes

SETTING:
A room with a flat surface on which to build a small ramp and space for everyone to watch the demonstration

PROCEDURE:
Before the meeting:
1. Before the group arrives, set up a demonstration station. Stack the books on a flat surface and set the cardboard at an angle on the books to create a steep ramp.
2. Cut an individual egg compartment from the egg carton, then use tape to attach the egg compartment to the top of the car to create a “seat.”
3. You may want to test the angle of the ramp and your technique before the group arrives to make sure your efforts achieve the desired effect. (That is, the egg falls out of the toy car when you want it to, and doesn’t fall out when you don’t.)

During the meeting:
1. Have the group sit in a circle. Introduce the activity by telling them they’re going to watch a simulated car crash in which eggs will “sit in” for the car’s passengers.
2. Place the first egg in the “car seat,” then push the car forward so that it travels down the ramp. As the car travels down the ramp, the egg should shift and fall out.
3. Place the second egg in the “seat,” but this time wrap the egg with a rubber band “safety belt.” Now push the car down the ramp. As the car travels down the ramp this time, the egg will likely shift and fall out because the “safety belt” isn’t securely fastened.
4. Now place the third egg in the “seat.” This time use tape to secure the rubber band to the car and the egg compartment, then wrap the rubber band around the egg. Use a second rubber band for more stability. Push the car down the ramp. The egg should safely make it to the bottom of the ramp.
5. Repeat the demonstration as desired, then clean up any broken eggs and watch your hands thoroughly with warm, soapy water.

TALKING IT OVER:
Ask the group the following questions:
• What happened when the egg wasn’t wearing the safety belt? (It fell out of the car and broke.)
• What happened when the egg was wearing the safety belt properly? (It was protected and remained securely in the car.)
• What happened when the egg wasn’t wearing the safety belt properly? (Discuss the momentum gained from the ramp, any collision effects, and the danger of wearing only the shoulder strap or lap safety belt.)
• What could happen if this was a person in a vehicle? What might be the consequences? (The person could be thrown from the vehicle, suffer severe injuries or even die.)
MICHIGAN 4-H SAFETY BELT PROGRAM ACTIVITY:

Inertia Bottle Demonstration

OBJECTIVES:
Participants will:
• Explore the concept of inertia.
• Understand the role of inertia in vehicle crashes and why safety belts are necessary.

MATERIALS:
- Two 2-liter or 20-ounce plastic pop bottles
- 2 small plastic toy people (such as Legos) or other small plastic figures that will fit into the bottles
- Water
- Freezer

AGE: 6 and up
TIME: 10 minutes

PROCEDURE:
Before the meeting:
1. Gather the supplies and equipment needed for the activity. Find two clean, 2-liter or 20-ounce plastic pop bottles and remove the labels.
2. Fill the bottles three-quarters full of water and insert one toy “person” into each of the bottles. Place one bottle in the freezer long enough for the water in it to freeze solid.

During the meeting:
1. Tell the group they’re going to learn about a scientific term called “inertia,” and how it can affect people in a vehicle crash.
2. Ask the group members what they know about inertia. Explain that inertia is the tendency of a body in motion to stay in motion unless acted on by an outside force.
3. Start the demonstration by holding up both plastic bottles so everyone can see them. Point out the small plastic figures inside each bottle. Explain that the bottles represent vehicles. The toy figure inside the bottle with water in it represents someone who is not wearing a safety belt. The figure in the frozen bottle represents someone who is wearing a safety belt.
4. Tell the group to watch the bottles, the substances inside them and the figures closely. Now either spin the bottles and stop them quickly with your hand or crash them into each other to simulate a vehicle crash.

TALKING IT OVER:
After you’ve caused several toy crashes, ask the group the following questions:
• What happened to the “people” in the “vehicles”? (The frozen bottle, which represents the person with the safety belt on, held the person in place, while the unbelted person in the liquid continued to move even after the bottle stopped.)
• What might have happened if these were actual vehicles? (The person without the safety belt on could have been severely hurt by hitting something inside the car or by flying through one of the windows and into a more dangerous situation.)
• Is it better to wear your safety belt or go without? Why? (It’s much better to wear your safety belt. Doing so keeps you in place inside the vehicle.)
• What could happen if you weren’t wearing your safety belt in an accident? (You could be thrown from the vehicle and suffer severe, even fatal, injuries.)
• What could you say to a friend who isn’t wearing his or her safety belt?
MICHIGAN 4-H SAFETY BELT PROGRAM ACTIVITY:

Safety Belt Covers

OBJECTIVES:
Participants will:
• Create covers to make their safety belts more comfortable and stylish.
• Explore why wearing safety belts is important.

MATERIALS:
- 8.5-inch by 5.5-inch felt rectangles (one per person)
- Craft foam stickers (at least three per person)
- Glow-in-the-dark craft foam stickers (one or two per person, optional)
- Self-adhesive hook-and-loop tape squares (three per person)
- Scissors (one pair for every two or three people)
- Ruler or measuring tape (one for every two or three people, optional)
- “Safety Belt Quiz” or “Safety Belt Statistics” handouts (one per person, optional)

AGE:
8 to 11 (can also be used for older or younger audiences)

TIME:
10 to 20 minutes

SETTING:
A room with tables and chairs and space for the group to spread out and work on a craft project

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:
1. Gather the supplies and equipment you will need for the activity. If you intend to use them, make one photocopy of the “Safety Belt Quiz” or “Safety Belt Statistics” handout for each person.

(Volunteer note: Depending on the ages and skill levels of your group members and the amount of time you have for the activity, you may want to either make one safety belt cover that the group can use as a pattern or make all of the safety belt covers ahead of time and let the group members decorate them. It would probably be helpful to recruit one or two extra volunteers to help the group with this craft activity.)

2. To make a safety belt cover, start by cutting the felt rectangles to a finished size of about 8.5-inches by 5.5-inches.
3. With a short edge of the felt facing you, apply three self-adhesive pieces of hook-and-loop tape (such as Velcro) to the far right edge.

4. Next, flip the felt over and apply the matching hook-and-loop pieces along the right side.
5. Fold the left side toward the middle and fold the right side on top of it so that the hook-and-loop pieces match up. This will allow the cover to wrap around the safety belt and connect.
6. Use the craft foam stickers to decorate the basic safety belt cover.

During the meeting:
1. Begin by asking the group the following questions:
   - Do you wear your safety belt every time you’re in a vehicle?
   - Do you know people who don’t buckle up? If you do, what are their excuses?
2. Lead a discussion on some of the reasons people don’t wear safety belts. Explain that wearing a safety belt is very important to help prevent injury or death during a crash.

3. Next, tell the group they’re going to make decorative safety belt covers. Explain that the covers will help remind them to wear their safety belts.

4. It may be helpful to divide the group into smaller teams and assign an adult or older teen helper to each group. If you made the basic safety belt covers before the meeting, pass them out now and have the group use the stickers to decorate the covers as they choose. If the group will be making their own covers, pass out the supplies and walk the group through the steps for making and decorating the covers.

5. Have the participants take turns sharing their designs with the group.

6. Complete the activity by discussing with the group why safety belt use is important. You may want to distribute the “Safety Belt Statistics” or “Safety Belt Quiz” handouts.

TRY THIS, TOO:
If you have time and the resources, provide other craft supplies such as fabric paint or markers, ribbon, sequins and glue-on jewels for the participants to use in decorating their safety belt covers. Be creative!

TALKING IT OVER:
Ask the group the following questions:
• Why is it important to always wear your safety belt?
• What are some ways your life might change if you were injured in a crash after not wearing your safety belt?
• What could you say to a friend or family member who isn’t wearing a safety belt to encourage the person to buckle up?
Safety Belt Quiz

Please complete questions 1 through 8.

1. Can a police officer stop and ticket a driver for not wearing a safety belt?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Children should ride in the back seat of a vehicle until the age of:
   - 5
   - 13
   - 2
   - 8

3. Do you need to wear your safety belt if your vehicle has an air bag?
   - Yes
   - No

4. Is it legal to ride in the back end (the bed) of a pickup truck?
   - Yes
   - No

5. During a crash, a safety belt stops the inertia and keeps you in your seat.
   - True
   - False

6. The safest place to ride in a vehicle is the middle of the back seat.
   - True
   - False

7. Airbags are dangerous for kids shorter than 4 feet tall.
   - True
   - False

8. What is the proper way to wear your safety belt?
   - With your back against the seat back and your knees bent over the seat edge.
   - With the lap belt fitting snuggly and low across your lap, not over your stomach.
   - With the shoulder belt snugly across your chest, resting between your shoulder and neck.
   - All of the above.

MICHIGAN 4-H SAFETY BELT PROGRAM ACTIVITY:

Safety Belt Relay

OBJECTIVES:
Participants will:
• Learn how quickly a safety belt can be properly buckled.
• Refute the excuse that it takes too much time to put on a safety belt.

MATERIALS:
☐ 1 four-door vehicle
☐ Towels or cushioning foam
☐ 4 safety cones (milk or other large plastic beverage jugs partly filled with sand or water will do if you don’t have traffic cones)
☐ Stopwatch or a watch with a second hand
☐ Whistle
☐ Tape that won’t damage vehicle paint
☐ Large sheet of paper (optional)
☐ Marker (optional)

AGE:
10 and up

TIME:
15 to 20 minutes

SETTING:
A flat, open, grassy area where it is safe (and legal!) to park a car and run around

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:
1. Gather the supplies and equipment you will need for this activity. Find a vehicle with four doors whose owner is willing to let you tape towels or foam cushioning material to the door frames and allow many young people to climb in and out of it in a hurry.
2. Scout a location near your regular meeting place that is suitable for this activity. Look for a flat (preferably grassy) area where it legal to park a car and that has space to run around it safely.
3. Park the vehicle and place the four safety cones about 4 or 5 feet out from each corner of it to keep the participants within the designated area and any spectators a safe distance away from the action. Attach towels or cushioning foam to the rear part of all of the door frames (being careful not to damage the vehicle’s paint) to protect the car from damage caused by the safety belts swinging out of the vehicle when participants unbuckle (see the illustration).

4. Recruit one or two adult or older teen helpers for the activity. It may also be helpful to recruit a four-person team of participants to arrive a little early so you can teach them how to play the game and they can demonstrate it to the rest of the group.

During the meeting:
1. Tell the group that they’re going to do a safety belt relay to demonstrate that lack of time is no excuse for not using a safety belt. Divide the group into four-person teams.
2. If you were able to train a team before the meeting, ask them to come up and demonstrate the game. If not, ask for one team to volunteer.
3. Have the demonstration team get into the vehicle, with one person in each front seat and one person in each of the outer two back seats, and put on their safety belts correctly. Tell them to throw their hands up in the air when they have their belts on correctly.
4. Explain to the group that an adult or teen “referee” will stand in front of the vehicle and blow a whistle when all the team members have their safety belts on properly and their hands in the air. That’s the signal for the team members to get out of the vehicle and move to the next seat clockwise from their current position. Point out that it’s very important for the team to leave the vehicle doors open at all times!

5. When they’re in the next seat, the team members will quickly buckle their safety belts and once again throw their hands into the air. Explain that they’ll repeat these steps until each person has returned to his or her original seat.

6. Tell the group that each team will be timed from the opening whistle until they have all successfully buckled into their original seats. Answer any questions the group may have about how to play.

7. Have all the teams take a turn at the relay. You may want to record their times on a large sheet of paper where everyone can see them.

**TALKING IT OVER:**

After each team has completed at least one round of the relay, bring the group back together and ask the following questions:

- Were you surprised by anything you discovered in playing this game? *How little time it really takes to buckle up.*
- What did you learn from this activity? *It only takes a few seconds to buckle your safety belt.*
- How can you apply this to real life? *If it takes EVERYONE less than a minute to put their safety belt on in EVERY seat, then it only takes one person a few seconds. Those few seconds could save your life, so BUCKLE UP! Time is NEVER an excuse!*

**TRY THIS, TOO:**

This activity can also be done inside using regular chairs and lots of imagination!
MICHIGAN 4-H SAFETY BELT PROGRAM ACTIVITY:

“Safety Belts: Always Wear Them” Video

OBJECTIVES:
Participants will:
• Understand the severity of the potential consequences of not wearing safety belts.
• Discuss possible life changes that could result after vehicle crashes.

MATERIALS:
- “Safety Belts: Always Wear Them” video (order loan copy in advance from your county MSU Extension office or the Michigan Resource Center)
- Television and video player (VCR or DVD player depending on the type of video you’re borrowing)

AGE: 12 and up

TIME: 15 minutes

SETTING: A room in which your group can comfortably watch a video

PROCEDURE:
Before the meeting:
1. Gather the supplies and equipment you will need for the activity.
2. Reserve a loan copy of “Safety Belts: Always Wear Them” from your county MSU Extension office or the Michigan Resource Center.
3. Set up the television and video player. Cue the video.

During the meeting:
1. Ask the group if anyone knows a person who was in a vehicle crash and who wasn’t wearing a seatbelt. Give them time to share stories.
2. Explain to the group that they’re going to watch a video called “Safety Belts: Always Wear Them.” Show the video.

TALKING IT OVER:
After they’ve watched the video, ask the group the following questions:
• What were some of the feelings you experienced while watching the video?
• What were some consequences of not wearing a safety belt that you saw during the video? (Both of the men’s families were affected; the second man was paralyzed, and severe injuries were involved.)
• What are some other ways your daily life might change if you were injured in a vehicle crash? (Examples include changes at school, sports, home and work.)
• When you choose not to wear your safety belt, who else could it affect, and how? (It could affect your family, friends and pets. They could lose you forever or you may not be able to care for them.)
• Think back to the examples that you shared before we watched the video. What aspects of life changed as a result of those crashes?
# Safety Belt Statistics

**In the United States alone:**

- 42,636 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2004.
- Approximately 35,000 people die in motor vehicle crashes each year. About 50 percent (17,000) of these people could have been saved if they had been wearing their safety belts.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among people aged 44 and younger and the number one cause of head and spinal cord injury.
- For every 1 percent increase in safety belt use, 172 lives and close to $100 million in annual injury and death costs could be saved.
- Of every 100 children who die in motor vehicle crashes, at least 80 would have survived if they had been properly secured in an approved child safety seat or safety belts.
- Failure to wear a safety belt contributes to more fatalities than any other single traffic safety-related behavior. (63 percent of people killed in accidents in 1999 were not wearing safety belts.)
- On average, inpatient hospital care costs for an unbelted crash victim are 50 percent higher than those for a belted crash victim. Society, not the individuals involved in the crash, bears 85 percent of those costs. Every American pays about $580 a year toward the cost of crashes. If everyone buckled up, this figure would drop significantly.
- Teens have the lowest safety belt use rate of all drivers, and this rate becomes even worse when other teens are passengers in the vehicle.
- Safety belts and child restraints are credited with saving the lives of more than 11,000 vehicle passengers over the age of 4 during 2002.
- The percentage of youths aged 16 to 24 using safety belts increased from 53 percent in 1994 to 78 percent in 2005.

**Sources**


MICHIGAN 4-H SAFETY BELT PROGRAM ACTIVITY:

“The Back Is Where It’s At” Video

OBJECTIVES:
Participants will:
• Understand how and why they should wear safety belts.
• Understand how important it is for children to ride in the back seat.
• Learn how air bags and safety belts work together.

MATERIALS:
• “The Back Is Where It’s At” video (order loan copy in advance from your county MSU Extension office or the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning)
• Television and video player (VCR or DVD player depending on the type of video you’re borrowing)
• Educational materials to hand out such as “Who Knew? The Buckle Up Issue” or Click It or Ticket pencils (optional)

AGE:
12 and under

TIME:
20 minutes

SETTING:
A room in which your group can comfortably watch a video

PROCEDURE:
Before the meeting:
1. Gather the supplies and equipment you will need for the activity.
2. Reserve a loan copy of “The Back Is Where It’s At” from your county MSU Extension office or the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning.
3. Set up the television and video player. Cue the video.

During the meeting:
1. Ask the group what they already know about safety belts and why wearing them is important. (They protect you in case of a crash.)
2. Explain to the group that they’re going to watch a video called “The Back Is Where It’s At” that will explain why young people are safer riding securely belted or buckled into a child booster seat in the back seat of a vehicle.
3. Show the video.

TALKING IT OVER:
After they’ve watched the video, ask the group the following questions about riding in the back seat and airbags:
• Where is the safest place to ride in a vehicle? (In the back seat, buckled in properly or buckled into a child booster seat.)
• Why should young people like you ride in the back seat? (The airbags in the front seat are designed for the average-sized adult and could be dangerous to a young person if they inflate during a crash. The middle of the back seat is also likely to be the least affected during a crash.)
• How do safety belts and airbags work together? (Safety belts hold you in place, while airbags protect you from hitting objects in front of you when your momentum throws you forward.)
• What is the correct way to wear your safety belt? (Wear the shoulder belt snuggly resting between your shoulder and neck, not under your arm or behind your back. Wear the lap belt low and snug across your lap, not your stomach. Keep your legs in front of you with your knees bent.)

The back seat is “where its at” for young people.
What can you buy with $65?

What would you rather spend your $65 on?
2 Play Station 2 games!
Dinner for 2 at an expensive restaurant!
4 DVDs for your viewing pleasure!
4 or more books for your reading pleasure!
5 CDs for your listening pleasure!
500 anytime minutes and unlimited nights and weekends on a cell phone plan!

OR...
One ticket for not wearing a safety belt.

In Michigan, if the driver or front-seat passenger in a vehicle is not buckled up, they can be ticketed and fined up to $65! So buckle up!

It's your turn! What could YOU buy with $65?
1. Age: _________
2. Please circle: Girl / Boy
3. I wear my safety belt (check one):
   a. ____ All the time
   b. ____ Most of the time
   c. ____ Not very often
   d. ____ Never
4. I wear my safety belt because (check all that apply):
   a. ____ It’s a habit
   b. ____ I want to avoid serious injury
   c. ____ It’s the law
   d. ____ I’m uncomfortable without it
   e. ____ Other (please specify):
5. Sometimes I don’t wear my safety belt because (check all that apply):
   a. ____ I’m only going a short distance
   b. ____ I’m in a hurry
   c. ____ I forget to put it on
   d. ____ The people I’m with aren’t wearing their safety belts
   e. ____ Other (please specify):
6. Who tells you about the importance of wearing your safety belt?
   (check all that apply)
   a. ____ Parents
   b. ____ Friends
   c. ____ Teachers or school staff
   d. ____ Television or other media
   e. ____ Other (please specify):