

# Safe Kids Grand Forks

## News You Can Use

(February 2010)



CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY SPECIAL

### Child Passenger Safety Month Celebrated in February

This special edition of the Safe Kids Grand Forks newsletter has been put together in celebration of CPS month to provide you with updated information on this topic. We hope you find it helpful.

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### Always Read the Instructions!



According to the North Dakota Department of Health, information gathered in 2008 indicates that five out of six car seats are used incorrectly. As a result, the department is reminding all parents and caregivers to read and follow the instructions for proper use of their child's car seat.

Each year, car seat check-ups are held throughout the state. At these events, certified trained technicians inspect each car seat to make sure it is appropriate for the age and weight of the child and that the seat is in good condition, free from recalls and not too old. In addition, the technicians teach parents how to install car seats properly and how to secure their children safely.

The most common errors identified at the 2008 check-ups include:

- Car seats were installed too loosely. The car seat should not move more than one inch side to side or front to back when grasped at the belt path.
- Children were not secured snugly in the car seat. Harness straps should lay flat on the chest and over the hips. There should be no slack, and you should not be able to pinch any webbing.
- Caregivers used the wrong harness slots, causing the harnesses to fit the child's body incorrectly. All car

seats are different; follow the instructions to determine which harness slots to use.

- The harness clip was used incorrectly. The harness clip should be centered between the child's armpits.
- Car seats were installed at the wrong angle.
- Caregivers were using expired car seats. Most car seats have an expiration date after six to eight years.

Free car seat check-up events are offered throughout North Dakota all year long. To find out if a check-up will be offered in or near your community or to find information about choosing a car seat for your child, visit [www.ndhealth.gov/injury/](http://www.ndhealth.gov/injury/) or call the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2286, press 1.

This information has been provided by Dawn Mayer, ND Department of Health Child Passenger Safety Coordinator.



# Hyperthermia Deaths in Motor Vehicles



While most of us are using our auto starts to warm our vehicles in this cold weather or looking for a windshield scraper to clear off the windows, it is not too early to think about hyperthermia injuries and deaths. Each year, there are between 30-50 children who die from being left in a vehicle in which the rising temperature causes their death. The graph shown marks the trends seen over the years from this type of death. Sadly, it does not take a 90 degree day for a child to be overcome by the effects of overheating. The average elapsed time and inside vehicle temperature rise compared to ambient temperatures are as follows:

10 minutes = 19 degree increase

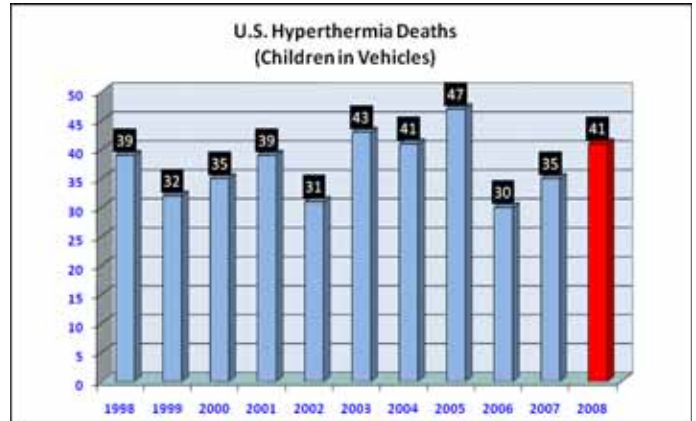
20 minutes = 29 degree increase  
 30 minutes = 34 degree increase  
 1 hour = 43 degree increase

Therefore, on a 60 degree day, the internal temperatures of a vehicle can reach over 100 degrees within one hour. A child's body warms 3-5 times faster than an adult's body. Heatstroke will result when the core body temperature reaches 104 degrees and when the temperature rises to 107 degrees, it is almost always fatal!! Safe Kids Grand Forks has developed an educational flyer on this topic. The flyer comes with a vinyl cling to use as a reminder to watch for children both inside and out of the vehicle. The flyer can be viewed on-line at [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com)

or to request hard copies and the cling, contact [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org).

As we don our gloves and hat and pull up those winter boots, let's think ahead to warmer days

but help to keep those days safe for our precious little ones.



## When You Thought I Wasn't Looking

Following is a message every adult should read because children are watching you and doing as you do, not as you say.

Role modeling is very important in childhood safety, especially with motor vehicle restraints. Read on.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you hang my first painting on the refrigerator, and I immediately wanted to paint another one.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you feed a stray cat, and I learned that it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you make my favorite cake for me, and I learned that the little things

can be the special things in life.

When you thought I wasn't looking I heard you say a prayer, and I knew that there is a God I could always talk to, and I learned to trust in Him.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you make a meal and take it to a friend who was sick, and I learned that we all have to help take care of each other.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you take care of our house and everyone in it, and I learned we have to take care of what we are given.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw how you handled your responsibilities, even when

you didn't feel good, and I learned that I would have to be responsible when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw tears come from your eyes, and I learned that sometimes things hurt, but it's all right to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw that you cared, and I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking I learned most of life's lessons that I need to know to be a good and productive person when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking I looked at you and wanted to say, 'Thanks for all the things I saw when



you thought I wasn't looking.'

Each of us (parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, teacher, friend) influences the life of a child.

Be a positive influence on the children that you love and care for. Buckle-up!!! Statistics show that if the adult in the vehicle is buckled-up, the child is most likely properly restrained as well. Be a role model and help keep kids safe: Buckle up!!

## AAP News: Child Passenger Safety & Safe Kids Grand Forks

Information from your Pediatrician and Safe Kids Grand Forks

### Keep your toddler in a rear-facing car seat until age 2 (not 1)

New research indicates that toddlers are more than five times safer riding rear-facing in a car safety seat up to their second birthday. Following are some safety tips for car seat use:

- All infants should ride rear-facing in either an infant car seat or convertible seat.
- If an infant car seat is used, the infant should be switched to a rear-facing convertible car seat once the maximum height (when the infant's head is within 1 inch of the top of the seat) and weight (usually 22-32 pounds) have been reached for that infant seat as suggested by the car seat manufacturer.
- Toddlers should remain rear-facing in a convertible car seat until they have reached the maximum height and weight recommended by the car seat, or at least the age of 2 (usually 30-40 pounds).
- To see if your car seat is installed properly and to find a certified passenger safety technician in your area, visit [www.seatcheck.org](http://www.seatcheck.org) or visit the Safe Kids Grand Forks website at [safekidsgf.com](http://safekidsgf.com).



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Safe Kids Grand Forks and the American Academy of Pediatrics have issued the guideline that children should stay rear facing as long as the seat will allow (usually 30-35#) with the goal of getting to age 2 in a rear-facing seat. The cards found below will be given out by the Pediatricians at Altru Clinic as a reminder of this at all 9 month appointments. Safe Kids will be working hard to spread this message so it becomes the standard of practice.

## Update From Safe Kids Grand Forks Child Passenger Safety Subcommittee Chairperson:

Judy Larson

Carma asked me to write a few words about going to the Leadership Conferences to represent Safe Kids Grand Forks. They are usually held on Washington, D.C. which is an awesome place by itself. One of the highlights at the conference is the class where we learn about the new seats. Each manufacturer comes with their new seats and we get to inspect and learn how to use them. Most of the changes come from suggestions they hear from parents and car seat technicians. Every year they come out with new ideas and additional safety features.

All the folks who work at Safe Kids Worldwide are helpful and very friendly. We are treated as a long-lost family member. They are very willing to help with any problems we may have, and they deserve a big **Thank You** for all they do for us.

I want to **THANK** the Buckle-up team from Safe Kids Grand Forks for their part in the Marine Corps Marathon Race. We did an awesome job. Our team raised over \$2,300 of the \$10,000 total for Safe Kids Grand Forks. Thanks to Sadie Ripley and Jen Beck who c-chaired the team with me. We can be proud of our team.

I would also like to **THANK** all the Buckle-up volunteers who come out to Rydell's each month. It is never hard to get people to volunteer for our events, whether at Rydell's, Crookston, Grafton and the many other requests for check-up events that Carma gets through each year. We told Safe Kids Worldwide that we'd wear the tires off the Buckle-up Van and we are getting close!!! We have noticed a reduction in misuse, which means the public is wanting our expertise and we are being effective. Keep up the good work! - Judy Larson

## Safe Kids Grand Forks Offers Kudos To Newman Outdoor Advertising Company

When driving home from a meeting in Bismarck last week, I noticed the billboard (seen on the lower left) up along I-94 between Bismarck and Fargo. I loved the message as it tells of the dangers Safe Kids Grand Forks is trying to relay about texting and driving. Did you know that if you are texting while driving, your chance of being in a crash is 23 times higher!!!

When I returned home, I contacted Newman Outdoor Advertising to learn more. I was even more impressed that not only had the company created this important safety message, but I was told of a new company policy in which employees are prohibited from texting while driving. I think this sends a profound message that safety, not only for their employees, but others on the road is important.

I hope other companies will follow suit with policies such as this and all vehicle drivers will put down their phone while driving. Distracted driving crashes and deaths are on the rise, especially from texting. Kudos to Newman Outdoor Advertising for the message and the role modeling!!

Carma Hanson  
Safe Kids Grand Forks

### Safe Kids Caution: Dangers of Purchasing Second Hand Car Seats

When purchasing a second hand car seat, it is important to know if the seat has been in a crash. Seats should **NOT** be purchased at a second hand store where this cannot be determined or at a rummage sale where you don't know the seller.

For more information on car seat safety, contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at Altru Health System.



Thanks also to Newman Outdoor Advertising for allowing me to use this graphic in our newsletter. Watch for them in many locations across the state of North Dakota.

# Safe Kids Star



Child Passenger Safety month is observed each year in North Dakota and around the country. Previously, it was celebrated over Valentine's Day; but on the national level, it has moved to September. The N.D. Department of Health and Safe Kids Grand Forks feels there is no better time to spotlight this month than when we are thinking of those we love. To best protect the children and other loved ones in our life, we want to bring attention to this topic.

During CPS month, ND public health agencies, law enforcement officers, Safe Kids Coalitions,

and Safe Communities programs across the state will be reminding children and parents about the importance of using safety restraints on every trip. We will be visiting schools, child care centers and other locations to share the safety message of "Buckle Up in the Back" (each and every trip). The program was designed by the ND Departments of Health and Transportation.

To carry out these training sessions for children, as well as the many car seat check-up events we conduct each year, Safe Kids Grand Forks would like to recognize ALL our child passenger safety technicians as this edition's "Safety Stars". These individuals come from businesses and agencies, from law enforcement to child care centers. Some are stay at home parents or grandparents while others



volunteer after fulfilling full time hours with another job. To each and every one, we thank them for their time and efforts to make sure children are riding safely.

For more information on the state CPS program, contact Dawn Mayer at 701.328.4533 or 1.800.472.2286 and for Grand Forks area information, contact

Safe Kids Grand Forks at [safekids@latru.org](mailto:safekids@latru.org) or 701.780.1489.

Below is a photo of the technicians able to join Safe Kids Grand Forks as we recognized and thanked them for their efforts this past year. Photo was taken on 2-2-2010 at our tech recognition dinner.



## Contact Us!

*Safe Kids Grand Forks has a new email address and is now on Facebook! Become Safe Kids Grand Forks friend on Facebook to keep up with upcoming events, learn great safety tips, and to find out how you can volunteer your time or resources.*

*Safe Kids also has a new email address.*

*Contact us at [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org)*



facebook

# Working With Preteens to Increase Seat Belt Use

Safe Kids Buckle Up started to develop materials and programs for older kids back in 2005. We began originally with a Cub Scout program to reach kids 7-10 to educate them and their parents about what kids of this age needed to be safe in and around cars. The highly successful program saw us reach thousands of scouts and their families at local GM and Chevrolet dealerships. It continues today!

In 2008 we expanded our reach to capture the kids who were 11 and 12 to try to make sure they too were safe both in and around cars, especially as they travel more frequently

without their parents. We learned a lot about this age group from conducting focus groups and an online survey with 1000 adults. We were amazed to learn that the information we taught about riding in the back seat was readily recalled BUT not used across the board. Parents were all too eager to let kids ride in front seats so they could serve as navigators, telephone operators and companions.

Clearly both kids and adults heard our messages but were not following our recommendations. We took our message to the kids through an interactive program with 3-5 stations where kids could be

kids and play as they learned safety messaging. Kids of 11 and 12 still like to have races, search cars for safety clues (labels, markings, symbols) and touch trunk release levers. We developed a parent presentation so they could understand the types of things their preteen was doing at school and with friends.

Today, Safe Kids offers sessions for schools or scouting groups and we encourage them to schedule a *Safest Generation* activity for 11 and 12 year olds. We love to invite our local GM dealer to help at the stations (especially the ones about airbags or OnStar so they can demonstrate this

technology to the students).

More information can be found at [www.safestgeneration.org](http://www.safestgeneration.org). If schools or groups are interested, they can contact Safe Kids Grand Forks. We promise you will have a good time while learning through this interactive, 1 hour program.

*Article Submitted by Lorrie Walker, MS, Training Manager and Technical Advisor, Safe Kids Worldwide*



## Keep Your Teen Driver Safe!

Traffic crashes remain the number one reason teens are killed in North Dakota. Help your teenager become a safer driver by checking out ND Teen Drivers.

[www.ndteendrivers.com](http://www.ndteendrivers.com) is a new website for North Dakota teens to help prepare for their driving permit or to sharpen their driving knowledge and skills. The website includes information on:

- ✦ rules of the road
- ✦ consequences for citations
- ✦ car care
- ✦ top ten mistakes

In addition, Parents LEAD (Parents Listen, Educate And Discuss) provides parents and caregivers information on underage drinking.



## Upcoming Car Seat Check-Up Events

February 11	Grand Forks
February 24	Larimore
March 11	Grand Forks
March 23	Crookston
April 1	Grafton
April 8	Grand Forks
May 13	Grand Forks
May 19	Larimore

Car Seat Check-Up Events are held at the following times:

Grand Forks 4 - 7 p.m.  
Grafton 4 - 6 p.m.  
Larimore 3 - 6 p.m.  
Crookston 4:30 - 6 p.m.

For more information, contact the Safe Kids Grand Forks car seat information line at 701-780-4995 or visit us on-line at [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com)



# Carpool Safety



Busy schedules often put parents and kids on the road for hours every week. One of the best ways to cope is to share the driving with other parents. Call a meeting with all the parents in your carpool and try to agree on these points so that the rules are the same in every car.

\* Be sure drivers all agree to wear seatbelts.

\* Check to be sure all drivers have a valid license, carry insurance, have cars in good working order, do not carry weapons in the car and agree to drive drug and alcohol free. You ultimately would not want a driver to ever have been convicted of a crime against a child. That is a tough question to ask though but is important just the same.

\* Also be sure that drivers do not substitute for themselves with a teenage driver or one you do not know. Asking these questions ahead of time reduces the chance that your child will ride with someone who is not the best choice.

Before you load up the neighborhood kids, set these ground rules for safe carpooling:

\* Plan your route so children can enter and exit the car on the curbside.

\* At each stop, check that everyone is buckled up before putting the car in gear.

\* When dropping off children, wait until they are safely supervised before driving off.

\* Never leave children alone in the car, even for a few minutes.

\* Make it a rule that everyone under 13 rides in a back seat. This is the safest place for preteens and younger children to sit.

\* If a child under 13 must sit in a front seat, disable the airbag should the child not meet the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.

\* Every child must have a safety belt. Sharing seat belts is not safe.

\* Don't allow children to wear shoulder belts under their arm or behind their back.

\* Treat unused seat belts like any other cord. Remind kids not to play with them.

\* If high spirits get out of control, let your riders know you can't drive safely when you are distracted. Pull the car over until they have calmed down.

\* Walk completely around the car looking for kids, toys and pets before entering the car and starting the engine.

*Article Submitted by  
Lorrie Walker, MS.  
Training Manager and  
Technical Advisor, Safe*



## Attention Minnesota Residents!!

If you live in the state of Minnesota and are in need of a car seat but can't afford one, Safe Kids Grand Forks may be able to assist. We have a limited number of car seats that have been provided to our coalition from the State of Minnesota Department of Public Safety - Traffic Safety. These seats are intended for children who need a seat but financially cannot afford one. If clients are on Medicaid, they often times qualify for a seat through that service instead. (Call the number on the back of your card to see if you qualify.)

If you want to take advantage of this service, contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org) (preferred) or by calling 1-800-732-4277 (pager 1389). You will need to set up an appointment to view a 20 minute video on child passenger safety (required by the state in order to give out the seats) and spend time with a technician on installing the new seat in the vehicle.

Remember, each and every child deserves to be protected in motor vehicles. Give us a call today if we can assist.





# Child Passenger Safety Made Simple

Have you ever tried to install a car seat into a vehicle? Do you know how a newborn baby should be placed in their car seat? 4 out of 5 car seats are used incorrectly and we want to assure that you are transporting your "precious cargo" safely after your delivery.

Altru Health System and Safe Kids Grand Forks have teamed up to offer **Child Passenger Safety Made Simple**. This class is designed for expectant parents or those of newborn babies. We would encourage you to take the class prior to your delivery. If you already have purchased a car seat, bring it along and we will provide hands on training on how to properly install the car seat into your vehicle.

## 2010 Class Dates

The classes are offered each month on the following dates:

January 7	February 4	March 4
April 1	May 6	June 3
July 1	August 5	September 2
October 7	November 4	December 2

**Time:**

4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

**Place:**

Behavioral Health Conference Room  
in Building 1 on Medical Park,  
860 South Columbia Road

**Cost:**

Registration fee is included with the other pre-natal class registration fees of \$10.00. To register, please call (701) 780-5179 or log on to [altru.org](http://altru.org). And, please remember to bring your car seat along if you have purchased it already!! (Fee will be waived if this is the only class being taken.)



## Altru Health System Offers Special Needs Car Seats

Often times, children being discharged from Altru Health System will require a special needs car seat. There are several reasons why this may occur. If a baby is born prematurely, they may be too small for a traditional car seat or they may need a car bed that lies down, rather than a traditional upright seat. If a child has a cast put on, this may not allow them to fit into a traditional seat either. Use of other equipment or certain medical conditions may warrant a special needs car seat for a limited amount of time or indefinitely. In either case, Altru Health System has a system in place to assure that we can meet those special needs car seat requests. Thanks to special funds donated by the Altru Alliance and the North Dakota Department of Health, we are fortunate to have not only the car seats in stock but specially trained car seat technicians to assist with special needs requests. Our goal is to assure that the children being discharged are done so safely and that the parents, while may be overwhelmed with the medical care their child is requiring, have the knowledge and skills to properly and safely transport their child. If as a parent or caregiver you are aware of a long-term need for a seat, we are able to work with insurance companies to assist with your needs and the potential purchase of a seat. For short term use, loaner seats are given out by Altru Health System and most are given at no cost or for a small fee (\$16) to cover the cost of replacing the harness system. For more information on our special needs car seat program, contact one of the following: Brittany Keller—NICU Nurse at 701-780-5472 or Melissa Swenson—Pediatric Child Life Specialist at 701-780-5658.

If you are an expectant or new parent or caregiver, we highly encourage you to take this class. It is designed to teach you how to best protect your child in a motor vehicle. With over 200 seats on the market, figuring out car seats is not an easy job. Trained technicians will first teach the basics of motor vehicle safety and then assist parents with installing their seats into the vehicle. Hands on learning, combined with expertise advice helps assure that your baby will be riding safely.

# Childhood Obesity & Child Passenger Safety: Tips for Car Seat Technicians & Parents

America's kids are facing an uphill battle as they and their parents pack on additional pounds and add another dimension to travel safety. Obesity, defined as having a *body mass index* (BMI) at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or greater, is on the rise and it is hard to go a day without hearing about it on the news or reading about it in newspapers. But, no one mentions the challenges America's obese children face as they try to achieve optimum protection in the family vehicle.

First a few facts: obesity affects boys and girls. In the past 30 years, the number of obese kids between the ages of 2-5 and 12-19 doubled and the rate of kids 6-11 tripled. It affects all levels of socioeconomic status. It hits especially hard in those who use the government's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) programs as well as Native American and Hispanic families. The highest obesity rates are in the Southeast but one-third of kids in North and South Dakota are considered obese.

So the problem is big and getting bigger!

What does this mean to the child passenger safety arena? Those people serving as child passenger safety technicians have to get better at helping families provide the best possible safety interventions to their children.

For parents with infants, it means talking to families with large newborns to prepare them to switch to a convertible seat, possibly at 3-4 months, so their baby can ride rear-facing up to the end weight of the larger seat. It's not good enough to provide instruction on the infant only seat when we know that in a few short months, they will need to make a switch to a rear-facing, but larger convertible seat. We have to get darn good at explaining this in prenatal classes, upon hospital discharge, at baptisms and family parties. We have to assume this will be an issue very shortly for each family with a big baby!

For toddlers, we have to make parents aware of the upper weight limits of top tethers and lower anchors,

making sure they understand that they must continue using the harnessed seat rear-facing up to the highest weights/heights and then switching to forward-facing and using the top tether. We have to use that tether as frequently as available BUT only within the confines of manufacturer's instructions. For many families, they will have to make a switch from LATCH to seat belt mid-stream in the weight allowances of their combo seat. That can't be easy to remember when there are a myriad of other issues facing them.

And finally, we have to be sure kids are not switched too soon to the more economical booster seat (40 pound 2 year old) when they would be far better off in the confines of a high weight harness, forward-facing combo seat. Boosters are great but only for kids that are old enough and big enough to use them according to best practice.

So what can you as a technician do? Get educated and know which seats with high weight har-

nesses are available in your area so you can make recommendations. Incorporate seats with high weight harnesses into your grant requests and have a few on hand for every checkup event. We know they are more expensive- that's why many parents do not buy them! Do caregiver education at every opportunity and make sure you provide education to your community through press releases and human interest stories whenever possible! We can help families understand what they need to do as they try to figure out how to beat the obesity problem in their household.

*Article Submitted by  
Lorrie Walker, MS.*

*Training Manager and Technical  
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## Stay Safe on the Road Buckle Up, Every Time

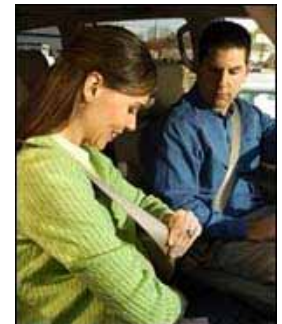
Seat belts can-and do-save lives. Just by buckling up on every trip, drivers and passengers can reduce their risk of being injured or killed in a crash by more than half.

### Reduce Your Risk

By buckling up, you're not only reducing your chances of being stopped and ticketed, you're also increasing your chances of staying alive in a crash. Consider that:

- In 2007, more than 41,000 people lost their lives in motor vehicle crashes. This is an average of 112 deaths a day, or a death every 13 minutes.
- Just by buckling their seat belts, drivers and passengers can reduce their risk of dying in a crash by more than half. In 2007, seat belts saved an estimated 15,000 lives.

This information was provided by the CDC. For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/features/seatbeltsafety/#>.





# Entanglement Issues With Unused Seatbelts

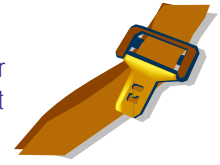
Several years ago, the LATCH system was put into vehicles as a way to install car seats without having to know how to use the vehicle seat belt system. With the advent of LATCH, the seat belt remained unused (it is a misuse to use both systems). Those unused seat belts have posed a safety hazard to children that we want parents and caregivers to be aware of. Since 2005, there have been several incidents reported where children in a forward facing car seat (that has been installed with the LATCH system) have become

entangled in a shoulder belt portion of the seat belt. The children have taken the seat belt and wrapped it around their necks. As the vehicle moves, the switchable retractor pulls the seat belt webbing tight and the child becomes strangled. This happened recently in the state of North Dakota, luckily the quick acting parent was able to cut loose the belt and save the child. Nationally, in October and December 2008, two children (ages 5 and 13) died, strangled by the shoulder belt portion of the seat belt.

This issue is not specific to any certain type of vehicle and parents need to be aware of it for all manufacturer styles. Technologically, there is not a single, simple fix for the problem. Instead, here are some tips: Check with the car seat instructions to determine if the seat belt can be buckled in the latch plate even if it is not being use to hold the car seat in place. Again, it is important to know that the LATCH AND seat belt system cannot both be used to hold the car seat in place. The seat belt would simply be buckled in place

BEHIND the car seat prior to installing it with LATCH. This issue must also be handled as a behavioral one. Children need to be taught not to play with any seat belt system and efforts should be made to entertain or distract them from the seat belt when in the vehicle.

For further information or clarification on this issue, contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org).



## Traffic Crash Data: Take Action With Adult Role Modeling

In 2009, 140 people were killed on North Dakota roadways, thirty-six more than the number of traffic deaths reported in 2008. Of those killed, 83 out of the 140 people (60%) were not wearing a seat belt.

A seat belt is the most effective way to protect yourself if you are involved in a traffic

crash. People who buckle up double their chance of surviving a traffic crash compared to those who travel unrestrained. Safety experts are aware that not all traffic crashes are survivable, but to think that over 40 North Dakotans would be alive today if only they made the decision to buckle up.

Of the 140 traffic fatalities, ten were under the age of eighteen. Seventy-five percent of those killed that were less than eighteen years of age were not restrained, six of them were in their teens.

Remember, a child is four times more likely to ride unrestrained when the adult

driver is unrestrained. Like it or not, we are all role models.

This information has been provided by Bill Vasicek—Safe Communities Coalition of the Northern Valley and Community Safety Coordinator



### Government Launches New Distracted Driving Web Site

The federal government has launched a new distracted driving Web site. The site includes statistics and research, media resources, and other information.

<http://www.distraction.gov/>

Check out this site and learn more about the hazards of distracted driving and ways to prevent injuries and deaths from this cause. Deaths from distracted driving are on the rise. Help combat this issue by being informed and taking action!!

## Did You Know???

Grand Forks Public Health has one certified passenger safety technician available on a limited basis for car seat questions. Please call 701-787-8100 for questions, information, or assistance. Safe Kids Grand Forks is proud to have Public Health staff serve as members of our coalition and assist in our child passenger safety efforts.



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# Safety In and Around Cars: Is Your Community Safe?

Safe Kids Buckle Up has been very active in educating kids and adults about the issues that go beyond moving vehicles and child safety. We know that about 10% of child injuries or deaths are in driveways, in trunks or while left unattended in vehicles. Each injury and death could have been prevented in many cases and we want parents and caregivers to know about the hazards kids face when kids of all ages are unattended in or around cars.

## 1. **Never Leave Your**

**Child Alone:** This component of safety seems like it is a “no brainer” but many children are left unattended by accident. Distracted parents may alter their routine when the usual driver gets sick or changes their plans. On sunny days children can be overcome with hyperthermia 3-5 times more quickly than adults. Children of any age should not be left alone. Sometimes parents leave kids “alone for just a minute” and then get in a store and become dis-

tracted. Harrison’s Hope, an organization dedicated to this issue ([www.harrisonshope.org](http://www.harrisonshope.org)), likes to ask parents, “Would you leave cash on your front seat and walk away?” Think of your kids and their worth to you! To remember sleeping babies, place your purse, gym bag or briefcase in the floor well of the back seat. It will force you to open the back door when you try to retrieve your possessions. Call 911 immediately if you see unattended children in cars.

**2. Unused Seat Belts:** Parents and CPS technicians love the switchable retractors found on many seat belts because it makes it so convenient to lock the safety belt through a child restraint. But, when not used that perfectly working shoulder belt can become a strangulation hazard to bored children who like to play “mummy” and wrap the belt around their necks. When possible, buckle the unused seat belt and switch it to the locked position or remind kids to

treat all seat belts as they would any rope or cord. Kids as young as 2 and as old as 13 have been strangled by their shoulder belts. Warn parents of this hazard. The only way to release the belt is to cut it!

**3. Power Windows:** Some unrestrained children are injured in power windows when the motor is running and kids kneel on the armrest and inadvertently activate the power window. Restrain all children in the car. Do not leave motors running and kids unattended. Buy cars that use a reverse mechanism whereby you have to lift a window switch to raise the window.

**4. Spot the Tot:** Adults should have the hand of any child under 4 who is near a vehicle that is moving or may move. Often, kids of all ages play near parked cars and can be unseen by drivers due to the large blind zones around vehicles. Drives frequently get in the vehicle and place it in reverse before checking around the car for “tots.” Safe Kids encourages all

drivers to walk fully around the car looking for kids, toys and pets that may attract kids to the driveway. Children must have a safe place to play away from cars that can move. Have adults designate safe play areas for young children. Do the 5 second walk around every car!

**5. Trunks:** Trunks make great hiding places for kids. If any child who can walk goes missing, check cars and trunks immediately- even before searching the house. Teach older kids about the “glow in the dark” trunk release found in every car made since 2001 so they can get out if they are ever trapped. Better yet, teach all kids to never play in cars. Keep doors locked and keys away from young, inquisitive hands.

*Article Submitted by  
Lorrie Walker, MS.  
Training Manager and  
Technical Advisor, Safe Kids  
Worldwide*

## StartSmart With Your Teen!

Car crashes kill more than 4,000 teens in the United States each year, making them the leading cause of death for teenagers. To address this problem, AAA has made teen driving safety its top advocacy priority for 2010. In North Dakota, AAA has a number of resources and programs available to help inform teens, parents, educators and others of the dangers teen drivers face and how to prevent crashes.

Some of the resources available to traffic safety organizations and educators are:

- A rollover simulator, which demonstrates the importance of wearing a seat belt.
- A driving simulator that can be used to teach teens the dangers of distracted and impaired driving.
- Mini grants to support high school traffic safety initiatives.
- Free brochures covering a wide variety of topics.

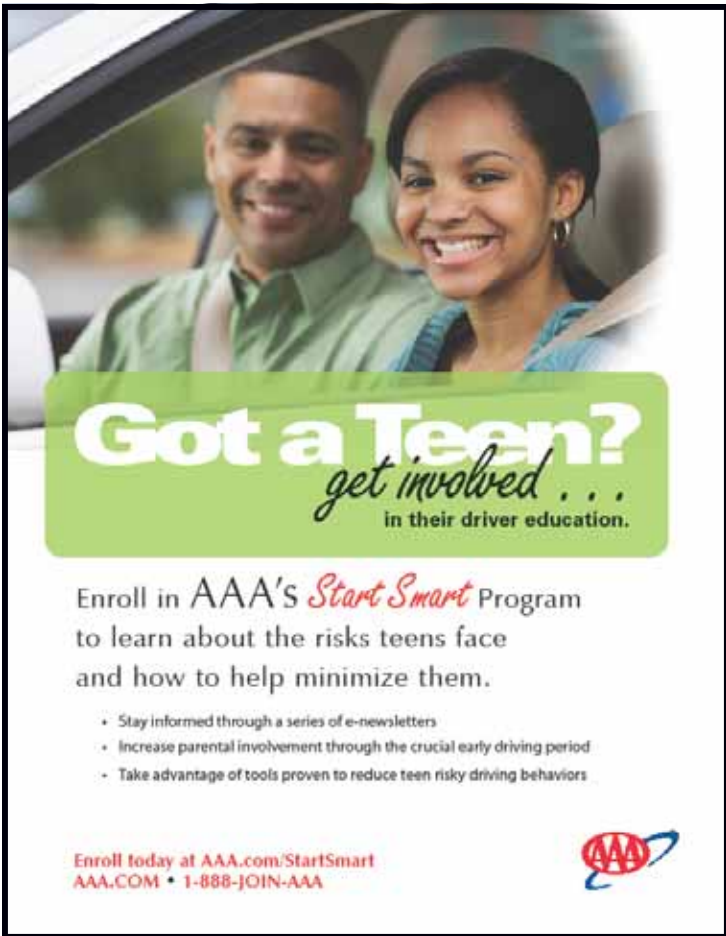
Resources available to parents and teens include:

- StartSmart, a newsletter system designed to help families get through the crucial period when teens are learning to drive ([AAA.com/StartSmart](http://AAA.com/StartSmart)).
- DriverZed, interactive DVD to help novice drivers understand and master the complex privilege of driving.
- Dare To Prepare, a pre-permit presentations for parents and teens.
- Teen driver brochure series.



For additional information on teen drivers, log onto [AAA.com/teens](http://AAA.com/teens) or [AAApublicaffairs.com](http://AAApublicaffairs.com). For information on any of the resources or programs available in North Dakota, contact Gene LaDoucer, AAA community outreach and safety representative, at 701-282-6222 x274, or [eladoucer@aaand.com](mailto:eladoucer@aaand.com)

(Safe Kids Grand Forks is grateful for the partnership we have with AAA of ND and Mr. LaDoucer. They have provided us with support over the years and we thank them for their efforts in keeping both kids and adults safe on the roads.)




**Got a Teen?**  
*get involved...*  
in their driver education.

Enroll in AAA's *Start Smart* Program to learn about the risks teens face and how to help minimize them.

- Stay informed through a series of e-newsletters
- Increase parental involvement through the crucial early driving period
- Take advantage of tools proven to reduce teen risky driving behaviors

Enroll today at [AAA.com/StartSmart](http://AAA.com/StartSmart)  
AAA.COM • 1-888-JOIN-AAA



## Interested In Becoming A Car Seat Technician and/or Helping Safe Kids Grand Forks in our CPS Efforts?

To make our events a success, we need well trained and eager volunteers to assist at our car seat check-up events. There are no pre-requisites for who can become a tech so if you have the passion to work with parents and children, we would love to have your join our group.

Safe Kids Grand Forks will host a 4-day child passenger safety technician training

May 17—20, 2010

8:00—5:00 p.m. each day (32 hour course)

Cost: \$75 for 2 years of certification

To register, visit

<http://www.safekids.org/certification/>

Class size is limited to 20 attendees so don't delay. If you want to learn more or attend an event to see what we do, please contact Safe Kids Coordinator, Carma Hanson at [chanson@altru.org](mailto:chanson@altru.org)



This class will be offered in Grand Forks on Sunday, March 21, 2010 from 4:00—8:00 p.m. It will be held at the Grand Forks Police Department at 122 South 5th Street. To register, visit [www.ndsc.org](http://www.ndsc.org) and select the Alive at 25 logo.

A complete list of all our check-up event flyers and class schedules is available on our Safe Kids Grand Forks web site. Visit us at [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com) for full event schedules and details.



## PROTECT YOUR YOUNG DRIVER BEFORE before the accident... before the ticket... before lives are lost...

Vehicle crashes are the #1 cause of death for young adults ages 14-24!

Enroll your young driver in ALIVE AT 25 today!



Alive at 25 is an interactive classroom course that encourages young drivers to take responsibility for their driving behavior to help keep them safer on the road. Plus, the Alive at 25 course is approved for point reduction and possibly an insurance discount.

**This course could reduce your young driver's likelihood of being in a car crash!**

Register at [www.ndsc.org](http://www.ndsc.org), by selecting the Alive at 25 logo, and following the simple steps!

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
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For questions about the Alive at 25 course, contact Terry Weaver with the NDSC at 701-223-6372, 800-932-8890 or [terryw@ndsc.org](mailto:terryw@ndsc.org)

# Why don't school buses have seat belts?

Shouldn't school buses have the same safety features on cars, trucks and SUVs? Not necessarily.

**To buckle up** - The National Coalition for Seatbelts on School Buses lists the following reasons why all large school buses should have seatbelts. (Smaller school buses that weigh less than 10,000 pounds are already required to have them.)

If a crash occurs, the use of seat belts will reduce the probability of death and the severity of injuries to children correctly seated in school buses.

Seat belt usage improves passenger behavior and reduces driver distractions.

Seat belts offer protection against injuries in rollover or side impact crashes.

Seat belt usage in school buses reinforces good safety habits.

The cost to install seat belts is nominal.

**Or not to buckle up** – Opponents of seat belts on large buses disagree, saying that they are not only unnecessary, but could also be hazardous. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration state:

Seat belts are of no value in the majority of fatal accidents.

More children are killed around school buses – walking to and from the school bus stop – than inside school buses.

School buses are specifically designed with safety in mind. They are heavier and experience less crash force than smaller cars and trucks. School buses also have high padded seats specifically design to absorb impact.

There is no guarantee that once installed students will use seatbelts. Studies have shown that mixed and improper use of seat belts can increase the risk of injuries.

There is concern that seat belts could be used as weapons to strike or choke other passengers.

Money proposed for seat belt installation could be better spent on other safety measures.

Information submitted by: Mary Barrett, RN  
East Grand Forks Head Start Center Manager

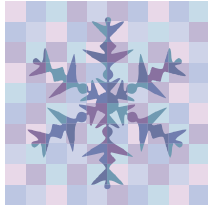


Safe Kids additionally offers these suggestions to keep kids safe when riding on school buses:

- Assure that children stay seated, facing forward in their seats at all times, keeping the aisles open.
- Children should remain quiet and respectful of the driver, not participating in distracting behaviors.
- If seat belts are available on the bus, have children properly use them at all times.
- When children are waiting for the bus or getting off, make sure they get at least 6 giant steps away from the bus to they can be seen. There are large blind zones around a school bus and the driver may not be able to see children (see graphic).
- If children forget something on the bus, have them wave at the driver to get their attention before they head back onto the bus.

Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Safe Kids Grand Forks would like to thank our business partners that allow us to use their shop/garage space for conducting our routine check-up events. Without this space and their cooperation, we would not be able to host event year-round secondary to our cold weather conditions. These locations also help us with advertising and getting the word out about child passenger safety. We thank them for their space, for their willingness to support our program and for their commitment to their customers and the community in which they live and work!!



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LARIMORE AMBULANCE  
AND RESCUE SERVICE

Live at the Grand Forks Air Force Base and need your car seat checked???

Safe Kids Grand Forks and the New Parent Support Center can help!!!

A car seat fitting station is conducted monthly at the Auto Skills Hobby Shop located on the corner of Holzapple Street and 7th Avenue. The event is from 11 a.m.—1 p.m. on the 3rd Monday of each month. Appointments are required. To schedule an appointment time, contact Paula at 701.747.6806. They will assist with expectant parents or those with seats already installed.



Live near East Grand Forks and need car seat assistance or maybe you just missed the event at Rydells. . . . . We have you covered there too!!

Safe Kids Grand Forks and the East Grand Forks Police Department hold monthly fitting stations there as well.

Appointments can be scheduled by calling 701.780.1489 or 780.1639. Dates of these events are the 4th Tuesday of each month from 11 a.m.—1 p.m. Remember, if you plan to attend, call for an appointment.