

Building Safe Communities

A Publication of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration



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Time to Go Back to School

The return of children to school in September presents an opportunity for Safe Communities programs to partner with schools or school districts to protect children from transportation-related injuries, whether they commute by foot, bicycle, bus, or car. Several emphasis periods, including International Walk Our Children to School Day and National School Bus Safety Week, can help focus school and public attention on this issue—and it is never too early to involve older students in efforts to reduce the toll of drinking and driving among our youth. This issue of *Building Safe Communities* provides information and resources to help protect students of all ages from traffic-related injuries. In addition, we offer our readers reminders and resources for participating in other important emphasis periods that occur during fall and winter. ■



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International Walk Our Children to School Day



Wednesday, October 4, 2000, marks the fourth annual Walk Our Children to School Day and the first time the event is being held at the international level. In 1999, more than 300,000 children, parents, government officials, health and safety advocates, and community leaders in 170 cities from 34 states participated in Walk Our Children to School Day events. Communities use this event to address multiple issues, including teaching pedestrian safety skills to children, identifying safe pedestrian routes to schools, and promoting walking as a safe and healthy activity that is also good for the environment.

A number of communities have used Walk Our Children to School Day to advocate for changes that will make their communities safer places to

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Drive Safely Work Week

September 11–15, 2000, is Drive Safely Work Week (DSWW), a campaign sponsored by the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS). NETS's mission is to reduce traffic crashes involving American workers and their families by helping employers implement policies, workplace programs, and community activities related to traffic safety.



Nearly 2,300 companies participated in last year's event, reaching more than 2.25 million employees with safe driving messages and materials. This year's DSWW will focus on a different theme each day: Buckle Up! (seat belts, child car seats, and air bags); Courtesy Counts (aggressive driving); Who's Driving? (driver inattention); Give 'Em Some Space (sharing the road with trucks and other large vehicles); and Steer with a Clear Head (impaired driving prevention).

The NETS DSWW toolkit contains everything a community program needs to launch a successful campaign, including detailed implementation instructions; ideas and activities; fact sheets with information and safety tips for each theme; a sample newsletter article; a campaign poster; sticker artwork with slogans for each theme; camera-ready logo art; and a catalog of products and incentives that can be used to support DSWW activities, including T-shirts, hats, pens, and post-it notes that feature campaign slogans. The DSWW toolkit is available for \$25, plus \$6.50 shipping and handling. ■

For more information on NETS and DSWW, contact NETS, 1900 L Street, NW, Suite 705, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: (888) 221-0045; e-mail: <nets@trafficsafety.org> WWW: <www.trafficsafety.org>.

New School Bus Safety Resources

NHTSA will soon release a number of new brochures for school districts and other organizations that purchase and maintain school buses.

Proper Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems in School Buses assists transportation providers in correctly securing preschool-age children in child safety restraint systems and properly securing the systems to school bus seats. The brochure can be used as a teaching aid when training school bus operators and attendants about proper use of child safety restraint systems in school buses; child passenger safety technicians can use this publication when working with schools and child care centers.

Choosing the Correct School Bus discusses the range of issues service providers need to consider when purchasing a school bus to transport preschool-age students, from overall vehicle size to step height, aisle width, seat spacing, and anchorage systems.

The School Bus Driver In-Service Safety Series provides transportation managers with the resources needed to conduct refresher training for bus drivers on the topics of loading and unloading, student management, driver attitude, transporting infants and toddlers, vehicle training, safely crossing highway rail-grade crossings, and knowing the route. Additional modules in this series will address driving under adverse weather conditions and transporting students with special needs. These modules will be available in October 2000. ■

These materials can be obtained from the NHTSA Media and Marketing Division, TSP Resource Center, NTS-21, 400 Seventh Street SW, Washington DC 20590. Orders can also be placed



by telephone at (888) 527-4256 or faxed to (202) 495-2062. Some materials can be ordered or downloaded online at <www.nhtsa.dot.gov>.

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Building Safe Communities

Education Development Center, Inc.

55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02458-1060

☎: (617) 618-2351 Fax: (617) 527-4096

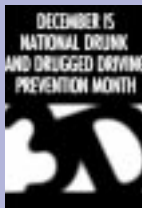
E-mail: mposner@edc.org

National News

❖ Although Thanksgiving and New Year's may seem like the distant future, it's not too early to begin planning for the important campaigns occur during these holidays. **Operation ABC Mobilization** takes place from November 20–26, 2000. This year's mobilization focuses on seat belt use and impaired driving. December is **National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month. You Drink & Drive. You Lose.**



Mobilization takes place from December 15–17, 2000. For information about Operation ABC Mobilization, visit the Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety Campaign website at <www.nsc.org/airbag.htm>.



For more information about *You Drink & Drive. You Lose.*, visit NHTSA's website at <www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>. *Safe & Sober Planner 25: November 2000–January 2001* contains resources for both emphasis periods. *Planner 25* is available from Campaign *Safe & Sober*, NHTSA, NTS-21, Room 5119E, Washington, DC 20590, or by faxing a request to (202) 495-2062. It is also available on the World Wide Web at <www.safeandsober.org/>.

❖ The **National Organization for Youth Safety (NOYS)** continues to be in the forefront of involving youth in efforts to reduce the number of young people who drink and drive. NOYS is currently focusing on New Year's Eve with its NOYS 2001 campaign. The campaign's goal is to sponsor 2001 parties across the country, offering youth an alcohol-free opportunity to celebrate the New Year. For organizations that register their intent to sponsor such a party, NOYS will provide a Party Planning Kit, including a party planning manual, a poster, a banner, sponsor giveaway offers, coupons, information about NOYS's website and NOYS member organizations' materials. NOYS is also revising its Speak Out and Make NOYS materials. A new "how-to" manual and student manual will be available shortly, and a companion video will be available in the fall. ■



For more information, contact Cheryl Neverman, NOYS program manager, by telephone at (202) 366-2696 or by e-mail at <cneverman@nhtsa.dot.gov>. NOYS can also be found on the Web at <www.noys.org>.

Local Notes



❖ The **Portland Safe Communities Coalition** focuses on preventing traffic injuries in the East End of Maine's largest city. A joint effort of Portland Public Health, the Munjoy Hill Neighborhood Organization, the local Community Policing Center, and the East End Coalition, (collection of social service agencies), Portland Safe Communities has taken a special interest in protecting the children

who travel to and from the neighborhood's two elementary schools. The coalition put together a task force of educators, citizens, and representatives from the city government to survey the routes used by children to travel to the Adams and Jack Elementary schools. Based on this survey, the coalition implemented a comprehensive plan to improve the safety of children during their school commute. In addition to fencing off a dangerous path across an undevel-



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oped and overgrown area adjacent to the Jack Elementary School, Portland Safe Communities worked with the school department, the city government, the police, and the neighborhood association to establish safe walking routes to all the neighborhood's schools. The routes were designed to allow children to cross streets at controlled intersections at which crossing guards were present. The routes will also receive priority snow removal, helping preserve the safety of students and staff traveling to school by bus or car, as well as improving the ability of young pedestrians and motor vehicle drivers to see one another during the winter months.

For more information, contact Maureen Clancy at (207) 874-8774.

❖ The **Lincoln-Lancaster County (Nebraska) Health Department Traffic Safety Program, the School Traffic Education and Enforcement Program, and Lincoln-Lancaster County Safe Communities** have come together to reduce the number of pedestrian injuries among the county's rapidly growing Hispanic population. Three elementary schools with a significant proportion of Hispanic students conducted observational surveys on pedestrian safety in the neighborhoods around the schools. Interventions based on the data gathered in these surveys included multilingual educational materials for parents, peer education activities, and the creation of pedestrian safety videos in both English

and Spanish. Pedestrian safety resource packets were distributed to all 50 public and parochial schools in the county. The program also developed a website that allows the public to report unsafe behaviors of students or motorists around schools, as well as traffic safety assessments to evaluate the safety habits of both young pedestrians and motorists in the vicinity of the schools.

For more information, contact Shannon Fiene Dennis at (402) 441-8000.

❖ **Providence (Rhode Island) Safe Communities Annual Safety Day** included an all-day safety festival with interactive stations where parents, teenagers, and children could learn and demonstrate skills related to pedestrian safety, bicycle helmet use, fire, firearm safety, and stranger safety. Children who completed all safety stations were eligible for prizes. A Spanish-language inter-



preter was available at the festival, which included a bicycle repair clinic, and a passenger safety clinic. More than 500 bicycle helmets were given away to low-income children who could demonstrate safe bicycling skills. The event was attended by more than 1,000 community members. Sponsors included the Region I NHTSA Office, the Coast Guard, the Federal Aviation Administration, WPRO-FM, and Hasbro Children's Hospital. ■

For more information, contact Dr. Scott Berns by telephone at (401) 444-6684 or by e-mail at <sbarns@lifefspan.org>.

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❖ In celebration of May's Buckle Up America Week, **Florida Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)** members participated in a Battle of the Belts campaign to increase safety belt usage rates on high school campuses across the state. Progressive Insurance provided cash awards to the SADD chapters in each county with the highest usage rates, as well as an award to the overall state winner. Each chapter conducted a pre-survey in its high school parking lot and then implemented a school safety belt awareness campaign, which included video public service announcements and mock crash events. A post-survey was conducted to evaluate the campaign's effectiveness. On the average, seat belt usage rates increased 20 percent between the pre- and post-campaign surveys.



For more information, contact Terry Henry, Buckle Up Florida, by telephone at (850) 475-7071 or by e-mail at <tshenry@uwf.edu>.

Resources



❖ NHTSA's new *Getting to School Safely Community*

Action Kit includes information on identifying safety problems associated with students traveling to school by foot, bicycle, automobile, and bus, as well as guidance for creating programs to address these issues. The kit includes fact sheets, examples of successful programs, a calendar of transportation safety events, "drop-in" newspaper articles on school transportation safety topics, sample proclamations on school transportation safety, a catalog of school transportation safety materials, reproducible student activity sheets, and a list of national, state, and local resources. To order a kit, fax your request to (202) 366-7721, Attention: Arlene.

❖ **New publications from NHTSA** can help Safe Communities programs assist people to consider safety when they purchase a new

motor vehicle. *Buying a Safer Car 2000* summarizes crash test results, safety ratings, cost considerations, and the purpose and value of new safety features. *Buying a Safer Car for Child Passengers* describes safety features specific to these passengers, and includes a "Family Car Checklist" to take to automobile dealerships when shopping for a vehicle. A new version of *Questions and Answers Regarding Antilock Brake Systems* will be available later this year. *Adapting Motor Vehicles for People with Disabilities* assists people with disabilities in selecting the vehicle most appropriate for their needs and choosing a qualified dealer to modify the vehicle. It also contains information on licensing requirements, organizations to



contact for help, and suggestions for those who transport passengers with disabilities.

Copies of these publications can be downloaded from the NHTSA website at <www.nhtsa.dot.gov> (click on "Car Safety") or ordered from the DOT Hotline at (888) DASH-2-DOT. For bulk quantities, call (202) 366-0842.

❖ Also new from NHTSA is *You Drink and Drive. You Lose. A Guide for Building a Comprehensive Impaired Driving Program*. This brochure discusses strategies and action steps in seven areas: public education, individual responsibility, the health care community, business and employers, legislation, enforcement and adjudication, and technology. It can be ordered by telephone at (888) 327-4236 or by fax at (202) 493-2062. ■



International Walk Our Children to School Day

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walk. The city government in Hyrum, Utah, is using walkability checklists from the 1999 event to help determine how a \$100,000 grant for pedestrian safety facility improvements can best be used. Columbus, Ohio, has leveraged the enthusiasm and concern generated by its annual event by establishing a pedestrian coordinator's position in its traffic engineering department.

International Walk Our Children to School Day is sponsored by a coalition coordinated by the Partnership for a

Walkable America, which can provide communities with resources and advice on how to participate in this event, including walkability checklists, press releases, suggested activities, and brochures. Also available is *Walking with a Mission*, a report on 1999 activities. ■

For more information, see the *International Walk Our Children to School Day* website at <www.walktoschool-usa.org> or contact Harold Thompson at 1 (800) 621-7615, ext. 2585, or Sarah Latta at (919) 962-7419.

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Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02458-1060

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Safe Communities Calendar

September 2000: *National Youth Summit to Prevent Underage Drinking* (Washington, DC); for more information, contact Bobby Heard, MADD, 511 E. John Carpenter Freeway, #700, Irving, TX 75062; telephone: (214) 744-MADD; WWW: <www.madd.org>



September 5–8, 2000: *Pro Bike/Pro Walk International Conference on Bicycling and Walking* (Philadelphia); for more information, contact the National Center for Bicycling and Walking, 1506 21st Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036; WWW: <www.bikewalk.org>; e-mail: <conference@bikewalk.org>

September 11–15, 2000: *Drive Safely Work Week*

October 4, 2000: *International Walk Our Children to School Day*

October 15–21, 2000: *National School Bus Safety Week*; for more information, contact the National School Transportation Association, 625 Slaters Lane, Suite 205, Alexandria, VA 22314; telephone: (703) 684-3200; WWW: <www.schooltrans.com/home.html>; e-mail: <info@schooltrans.com>

November 20–26, 2000: *Operation ABC Mobilization*

December 2000: *National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month*

December 15–17, 2000: *You Drink & Drive. You Lose. Mobilization*

What's New

at the
Safe Communities
Service Center

Visit the SCSC website!
Here's what's new:

- * The Partnership Emporium now includes links to more than 40 Safe Communities websites. If your Safe Communities website is not linked to the Emporium, please contact the SCSC.
- * The Town Square Directory now includes contact information for more than 900 Safe Communities programs. If your Safe Communities program is not included in this directory, please contact the SCSC.
- * Local, national, and United States Department of Transportation news and other new up-to-date features are also available.

Safe Communities Service Center
NHTSA Region VI
819 Taylor Street, Room 8A38
Fort Worth, TX 76102
(817) 978-3853 • Fax (817) 978-8339
Safe.Communities@nhtsa.dot.gov
www.nhtsa.dot.gov/safecommunities

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Safe Communities programs as of
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