

# White Earth Head Start & Parents Work Together to Prevent Injuries

Motor vehicle crashes (MVC's) are the leading cause of death for American Indian children, teens, and adults from 1-44 years of age. Between 1989-1998, the MVC death rate for Minnesota American Indians was almost three times higher than the Minnesota All Races rate. Use of child car seats reduces the risk of mvc-related death by 71% for infants and 54% for toddlers. Yet, surveys show that car seat usage rates are very low in many American Indian communities.

## Buckled for Love!

The White Earth, Minnesota, Head Start began a booster seat program in 2001. They provide parent education and booster seat installation for families enrolled in the Head Start program. Booster seats are obtained from Indian Health Service, the Ford Boost America! Program, and the State of Minnesota.

Mrs. Ruby Hanks and her daughter, Chantel, received their car seat classroom instruction from Head Start in November 2001. After the class, Kay Sunram, Health, Nutrition, & Safety Coordinator selected a Ford Boost America! low-back booster and showed Mrs. Hanks how to install it in her vehicle.

The time and effort taken were rewarded one month later when their vehicle was broad-sided by a tow truck. During the collision, Mrs. Hanks and Chantel were both restrained and received minimal injuries. Another adult in the vehicle was not restrained and was knocked unconscious.



Due to the efforts of the White Earth Head Start and the diligence of Mrs. Hanks, Chantel was spared potentially serious injuries.