

# Booster Seat Law Enforcement



Examples from  
Delaware, New Jersey,  
Pennsylvania, and Washington



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Motor vehicle crashes are this Nation's leading cause of death for children. The most effective strategy for preventing injury and death to children involved in crashes is using age- and size-appropriate restraints. Although 90% of children less under 4 years old are restrained properly (Ye & Pickrell, 2008), only 50% of children 4 to 7 are appropriately restrained in booster seats or child restraints (Glassbrenner & Ye, 2008), despite booster seat laws in most States and the District of Columbia (NHTSA, 2009). In general, increases in child restraint and adult seat belt use come from enforcing occupant restraint laws using large-scale mobilization efforts by thousands of law enforcement agencies (Dewey-Kollen, 2004).

Strategies to promote booster seat use for children 4 to 7 years old include passing legislation and enforcing enhanced child restraint (CR) laws, termed "booster seat laws." Law enforcement officers have identified barriers to enforcement, and potential strategies to promote enforcement of these laws (Decina, Lococo, Ashburn, Hall, & Rose, 2008). This study took the next step and recruited law enforcement agencies to conduct selective enforcement of booster seat laws, and identify characteristics of the most effective enforcement strategies, and methods for their implementation. The following project activities were included in the project and additional discussion of them is included below:

- A literature review focused on evaluations of child restraint law enforcement;
- Communications with State Highway Safety Office (SHSO) representatives and law enforcement agencies to identify and facilitate the recruitment process;
- Recruitment of law enforcement agencies willing to conduct selective booster seat law enforcement programs and participate in debriefings and other information gathering activities;
- Debriefings, site observations, and other information gathering activities with law enforcement agencies; and
- Analysis and summary of all project activities.

### Literature Review

While the literature search revealed studies that reported a significant increase in booster seat use as a result of a State passing a booster seat law (Ehiri, King, Ejere, & Mouzon, 2006; NHTSA 2007), no studies were found that evaluated the effectiveness of a specific program using selective enforcement of booster seat laws. One article recommended that seat belt checkpoints, saturation patrols, and fixed patrols be used as methods to enforce all child restraint laws (Florida Police Chief, 1999). In order to effectively enforce booster seat laws, law enforcement officers would need training, staff resources, and methods to spot violators, and support from top management (Decina, Lococo, Ashburn, Hall, & Rose, 2008). In addition, to effectively evaluate booster seat enforcement, the citations should record the child's age and/or subsection of Child Restraint law code that pertains to the booster seat laws.

## **Recruitment of Law Enforcement Agencies**

Recruitment of law enforcement agencies was initiated by inquiring at SHSOs that had access to NHTSA Section 2011 booster seat grant funds or were able to allocate some Section 405 grant funds to the effort. The SHSOs recommended candidate agencies. Meetings were held with SHSO representatives and the candidate law enforcement agencies to discuss project requirements, activities, and deliverables. Candidate law enforcement agencies submitted enforcement plans to the SHSOs and principal investigator. The law enforcement agencies were selected following review of their plans. The selected agencies represented four States: Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Washington.

In Delaware, law enforcement agencies from the following municipalities participated: Georgetown (Sussex County), Millsboro (Sussex County), and New Castle City (New Castle County). These were small communities with less than 5,000 in population, and near major interstates and highways. In New Jersey, law enforcement agencies from the rural township of Galloway (Atlantic County), suburban township of Westampton (Burlington County); and city of Passaic (Passaic County) participated. The rural and suburban townships had populations of approximately 31,000 and 37,000, respectively. The urban site had a population of approximately 68,000 and was about 50% Latino. In Pennsylvania, law enforcement agencies represented the townships of Exeter (Berks County) and Haverford (Delaware County). These suburban communities had populations of approximately 21,000 and 49,000, respectively. In Washington, the Grant County Sheriff's Office, and other Grant County law enforcement agencies from the cities of Ephrata, Moses Lake, Quincy, and Warden participated. The population in Grant County was about 75,000.

## **Enforcement Activities**

All of the law enforcement agencies participated in training activities; used an enforcement card with a description of all child restraint laws; followed enforcement schedule and reporting requirements, and attended debriefings. Publicity and public events were initiated by the departments, and not a requirement for participating in the study. Many of the departments conducted car seat checkup events and other child passenger safety education programs as part of their regular community initiatives.

Two law enforcement agencies in New Jersey used checkpoints and wrote several booster seat and child restraint law citations. In Passaic, 364 child restraint law tickets (247 for booster seat violations) were written on 244 project hours. In Westampton Township, 232 child restraint law tickets (195 for booster seat violations) were written on 387 project hours. Dedicated roving patrols by the other New Jersey agencies and the Washington departments also produced large numbers of child restraint law and booster seat law tickets. In Galloway Township, 151 child restraint law tickets (129 for booster seat violations) were written on 373 project hours. In Washington, 120 child restraint law tickets were written (booster seat age violations were not segregated from child seat law violations) on 145 project hours.

There were fewer booster seat and other child restraint law tickets written in Pennsylvania and Delaware. In Pennsylvania, Exeter Township wrote 22 child restraint law

tickets (7 for booster seat violations) on 136 project hours. In Haverford Township, 4 child restraint law tickets (1 for booster seat violations) were written on 64 project hours. In Delaware, Georgetown wrote 18 child restraint law tickets (13 for booster seat violations) and 6 back seat law tickets on 108 project hours. Millsboro wrote 6 child restraint law tickets (2 for booster seat violations) on 160 project hours; and New Castle City wrote 21 child restraint law tickets (18 for booster seat violations) and 13 back seat law tickets on 192 project hours.

## **Summary of Debriefings**

In debriefing sessions, officers identified several barriers that can inhibit the enforcement of booster seat and other child restraint laws. This included weak booster seat laws (secondary law); inefficient enforcement methods (routine patrol, limited staff resources); physical barriers (obstructed views from glare, tinted windows); officer discretion issues (extra costs to the drivers associated with multiple child restraint law tickets, inability to identify age of booster-seat-age children, especially 6- and 7-year-olds); and roadway environment.

Officers identified that the most effective approaches for enforcing booster seat laws depend on the following: top management support (and resources to support dedicated booster seat law enforcement programs); primary booster seat law; enforcement methods that are dedicated to booster seats and other child restraint laws and that involve checkpoints, dedicated roving patrols, or stationary spots; training; and enforcement cards.

Increasing fines and penalties for child restraint law violations may have an adverse effect on a department's motivation to enforce the booster seat law if such increases result in more court appearances for police officers when motorists try to lower the fines and penalties. Also, officers indicated that judicial support for booster seat violations would not affect their motivation to write booster seat tickets; if they were directed to enforce booster seat laws, then that directive would be their course of action.

Officers indicated that modifications to the ticket book to separate booster law violations from other child restraint law violations would not increase their likelihood of issuing booster seat violations.

Officers were apprehensive about detaining motorists cited for child restraint violations who did not have child restraints or booster seats in their vehicles. While they stated they had no problem detaining motorists, they believed they should only do so when the enforcement was focused on child restraint laws and when there was a safe place on the roadside to stop the vehicles.

Finally, they felt strongly that the officer writing the ticket should not be involved in educating the driver about child safety seat or booster seat use beyond explaining the reason for the ticket, and possibly distributing information about future seat check events. For enforcement details that include education, they recommended that additional certified staff be used for this purpose.



## **Study Limitations**

The research was conducted to determine the extent to which booster seat laws could be enforced in several jurisdictions across several States, and to identify strategies to overcome barriers to enforcing these laws. It was not conducted to determine whether booster seat use increased following enforcement of booster seat laws. To meet the research goals, a process evaluation was conducted using process evaluation outcome measures (i.e., officers' opinions, enforcement activity, data records) in lieu of a formal before-after study during a pre-intervention and post-intervention period using traffic safety outcome measures (e.g., observed booster seat use). Therefore, no statistical analyses could be performed to determine how effective the booster seat law enforcement strategies were in increasing booster seat use at the study sites, or even which enforcement method was the most effective (in terms of citations per hour worked) from a statistical perspective. Use of the process evaluation method did allow for an assessment of whether the enforcement programs were implemented according to plan, and whether the enforcement methods were successful in identifying and citing violators of these laws.

## **Interpretation of Findings**

Top management support, funding resources, and a dedicated enforcement program are the keys to effective booster seat and child restraint law enforcement programs. Booster seat laws need to be primary laws. Dedicated checkpoints and roving patrols using stationary spots were the most effective approaches. Motorists need to be slowed down—almost to a complete stop—to effectively spot booster seat and other child restraint law violators. Minimal training of 1 to 2 hours on topics relating to best practices for booster seat and child restraint use and child restraint laws is sufficient for officers to enforce these laws. Brief videos and enforcement cards should complement training. Evaluating booster seat enforcement efforts requires collecting data on the specific citations for the child restraint law code, such as the subsection of code relating to booster seat law and the age of child.

Most effective approaches included: dedicated enforcement details; checkpoints; and roving patrols with stationary spots. Education can be delivered with certain enforcement details, provided there are additional officers to handle education and car seat giveaway tasks separately from the enforcement tasks.

## **Future Research**

This research identified several areas of future research. This includes examining how to motivate booster seat law enforcement during routine patrols and identifying dedicated child restraint law enforcement details among routine patrol; identifying alternate enforcement efforts in States that do not allow checkpoints; and evaluating the effectiveness of booster seat law enforcement programs in increasing booster seat use.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Motor vehicle crashes are this Nation's leading cause of death for children. The most effective strategy for preventing injury and death to children involved in crashes is using age- and size-appropriate restraints. This study examined strategies in four States for enforcing booster seat laws, which cover children 4 to 7 years old. (Appendix A covers booster seat definitions and types from NHTSA, 2004).

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

#### Booster Seat Usage

The most recent report of booster seat use comes from NHTSA's *National Survey of the Use of Booster Seats (NSUBS)* on data collected in the summer of 2008. This annual survey is the only probability-based nationwide child restraint use survey that observes restraint use and obtains age by interview. *NSUBS* found that 43% of children 4 to 7 were in booster seats (high-backed or backless); 12% were restrained in child safety seats (CSSs); 34% were in seat belts; and 11% were unrestrained (NHTSA, 2009). These results indicate that as many as half of children age 4 to 7 in the United States are not properly protected (i.e., they are prematurely restrained in seat belts or are unrestrained).

Other national and statewide observational studies within the past few years have found similar booster seat use results for children 4 to 7. The previous year's *NSUBS*, from observations in the summer of 2007, found 37% booster seat use for this age group of children (Glassbrenner & Ye, 2008). A University of Tennessee-sponsored survey from summer 2005 found 39% booster seat use for this age group of children (Gunn, Phillippi, & Cooper, 2007).

#### Interventions to Promote Booster Seat Use

Overall, there is evidence that community-wide information and enhanced enforcement campaigns (checkpoints, blitzes, etc.) are effective in increasing all types of child restraint use and reducing motor vehicle occupant injury (Zaza, Sleet, Thompson, Sosin, & Bolen, 2001; Turner, McClure, Nixon, & Spinks, 2005; Dewey-Kollen, 2004). Recent meta-analysis research found that several types of interventions are effective in increasing booster seat use. Combining incentives or distribution of free booster seats with education increased the use of booster seats; and there was evidence that legislation had a beneficial effect on the use of booster seats (Ehiri, King, Ejere, & Mouzon, 2006).

Most educational programs to increase booster seat use have focused on convincing parents to properly restrain their children. These programs have used several strategies including: rewards (positive reinforcement), one-to-one instruction, and distribution of education material. However, when these programs are not accompanied by booster seat laws, enforcement, or booster seat loaner program, they have had little to mild success (Zaza et al., 2001). Parent education alone is not enough to change children's behavior.

When children are given information about why they should behave in a certain manner (sitting in a booster seat), they are more likely to demonstrate the desired behavior. Even

rewarding children for booster seat use (verbal praise and small toys) and/or relying on informed parents to insist that their child behave in a certain manner will not result in behavior change. However, the presence of a law enforcement officer delivering the safety message has shown some positive influence in booster seat use. A dissertation study found that the presence of an officer delivering safety information to 4- and 5-year-old children in their school classrooms, combined with increasing the appeal of using a booster seat (e.g., creation of a “booster seat club” with a booster seat sign for their seat with stickers) significantly increased booster seat usage among the children involved in the study (Axelrad, 2002).

The public supports strong child occupant safety laws. NHTSA-sponsored national telephone surveys have shown that a vast majority of Americans favor enforcement of laws requiring that children be restrained; and almost two-thirds of telephone respondents believed that the police should issue a ticket at every opportunity (Boyle & Vanderwolf, 2005).

Recent observational studies have shown that the introduction of enhanced child restraint laws (booster seat laws) to cover children 4 to 7 produces an almost immediate surge (9% to 15%) in booster seat use in those States (NHTSA, 2007; Decina et al., 2008; Gunn et al., 2007; and Raymond, Seifert, Golembiewski, & Knoblauch, 2006). In addition, an evaluation of booster seat use using on-site crash investigation data showed that children 4 to 7 in States with booster seat laws were 39% more likely to be in appropriate restraints than in States without these laws. The results quantified the strong independent effect of booster seat laws on increases in appropriate restraint use by children of this age group (Winston, Kallan, Elliott, Xie, & Durbin, 2007).

Currently 47 States and the District of Columbia have booster seat laws in place. Many States differ on age, weight, and height requirements for booster seat age occupants. Appendix B provides a description of the child restraint laws, including requirements for booster seat age children for each State, as of March 1, 2009.

## **Enforcement of Booster Seat Laws**

In general, the enforcement of occupant restraint laws using large-scale mobilization efforts by thousands of law enforcement agencies has been credited with the increase of seat belt and child restraint use (Dewey-Kollen, 2004). While there have been some published reports of exemplary child passenger safety programs by law enforcement agencies (law enforcement agencies), those activities have centered around educating the officers and educating the public through the media and community events, such as car seat inspections and car seat giveaways. A decade ago, recommendations were published for promoting child restraint use, including specialized stepped-up enforcement activities such as checkpoints, saturation patrols, and fixed patrols<sup>1</sup> (*Florida Police Chief*, 1999).

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<sup>1</sup> Seat belt checkpoints: officers at a fixed location stop all vehicles to determine seat belt and child safety seat use. Saturation patrols: an increased number of law enforcement officers patrol a concentrated geographic area or step up patrols in high-traffic areas. Fixed patrols: an officer patrols a fixed location, such as an intersection or near a high school, shopping center, etc.

A search of recent literature and information in online traffic safety-related databases did not reveal any studies evaluating the effectiveness of selective enforcement of enhanced child restraint laws, termed “booster seat laws.” Booster seat laws are fairly new; the first booster seat law was passed in 2000 in Washington State, and went into effect in 2002 (Winston et al., 2007). By July 2002, 11 States had enacted booster seat laws; by 2005, this had increased to 32 States plus the District of Columbia; by 2007, 38 States plus DC had enacted booster seat laws (Decina et al., 2008); and by March 1, 2009, 45 States plus DC had booster laws in place. Information surrounding these laws has not fully affected law enforcement agencies who, for the most part, have been very inconsistent in promoting and enforcing child restraint laws, as well as in recording specifics of violations that relate to booster seat age. To date, very few booster-seat-law-dedicated enforcement programs exist.

Decina et al. (2008) investigated strategies to improve the effectiveness of booster seat laws. The researchers examined law enforcement officers’ perspectives on booster seat laws and enforcement of these laws. Officers reported that they face many obstacles to enforcing booster seat laws, including: lack of knowledge and experience with booster seats; lack of commitment from management for training and resources for child restraint law enforcement; weakness of booster seat laws (e.g., age limits, secondary law); and even physical barriers in spotting violators (e.g., visibility in vehicles, children seated below sight level). A surprising revelation from these officers was that all of them (48 in the 4 cities) were never instructed to record the subsection of the child restraint law pertaining to booster seat age children. This would make it virtually impossible to evaluate effectiveness of a booster seat law enforcement program if the tickets did not reveal subsections of the child restraint law or there is no indication of age of child passengers in the comment field.

There is some evidence to support this claim at the national level as well. For example, of the 8,793 reporting law enforcement agencies in the 2006 May *Click it or Ticket* (CIOT) Mobilization, there were 34,501 child passenger law citations (Tison, Solomon, Nichols, Gilbert, Siegler, & Cosgrove, 2008). The activity reports, collected to compile the overall mobilization enforcement citations, did not identify the child passenger citations by age of child or by the sections of the child restraint laws that distinguish violations for children less than 4 years old from those 4 to 7 (booster seat age). Like the CIOT mobilization activities, it is highly suspected that law enforcement agencies across the Nation are recording only the primary regulation code for child restraint laws.

While there is evidence that occupant restraint laws and enforcement with publicity promote child restraint and booster seat use, there is a need to better understand the most effective enforcement strategies law enforcement agencies can use to encourage higher levels of booster seat use in their communities. To identify enforcement strategies that are likely to improve the effectiveness of booster seat laws and encourage parents/caregivers to restrain their children according to recommended best practices,<sup>2</sup> information is needed about the

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<sup>2</sup> The best practice recommendations for safely transporting most children 4 to 7 is the use of belt-positioning booster seats (either high back or backless). These seats are for children who have outgrown child safety seats (generally at 40 pounds), and who are not large enough for the vehicle seat belt system alone. Children should use belt-positioning booster seats until they are at least 8 years old, unless they are 4 feet 9 inches tall. Belt-positioning booster seats are always to be used with a vehicle lap/shoulder belt combination. Booster seats are never to be used with a lap-only belt. In addition, these children are safest when properly restrained in the rear seat (NHTSA, 2004).

characteristics of booster seat laws; methods law enforcement agencies use to enforce the booster seat laws; and other intervention strategies that combine with enforcement of the booster seat laws (e.g., publicity, car seat checks/appointments, car seat giveaways).

## **1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF WORK**

The goals of this project were to build upon the findings of recent NHTSA research (Decina et al., 2008) that identified strategies to improve the effectiveness of booster seat laws. This project focused on enforcement strategies to increase booster seat use; and included topics relating to training, logistics, types of techniques, legal issues, socio-demographic and highway safety concerns, education (on and off site), and other issues that can affect law enforcement agencies' abilities to enforce booster seat laws in their communities.

Law enforcement agencies were recruited to develop booster seat law enforcement programs and identify enforcement strategies. They were invited to develop their own enforcement plan detailing their approach, including: training; set-up of enforcement detail (i.e., roles of officers, signs, barricades, number of officers); identification of target groups; education activities (e.g., on-site); record-keeping and other documentation; and scheduling of events. The officers involved with the program agreed to participate in debriefings and on-site visits from the researchers. NHTSA and State grant monies were available for the participating law enforcement agencies.

Specifically, the objectives of the study were as follows:

1. Evaluate the implementation of State booster seat laws (enhanced child restraint laws);
2. Identify what characteristics of booster seat laws make them conducive for enforcement in a targeted program and on routine patrol;
3. Identify the most effective approaches officers employ to enforce booster seat laws (e.g., roving patrols, checkpoints, routine patrols);
4. Identify the most effective techniques officers use to cite drivers for violating booster seat laws (e.g., at the stopped vehicle approaches);
5. Identify minimal levels of training and staff resources necessary to enforce booster seat laws for targeted programs and routine patrol; and
6. Develop documentation methods to distinguish between booster seat law violations and those child restraint law violations that cover children less than 4 years old.

The following tasks provided the background and project evaluation steps necessary to meet the objectives of the study:

1. Conduct a literature review of studies that have evaluated child restraint laws and enforcement of these laws, especially those related to booster seat age children.
2. Hold unstructured interviews with SHSO representatives and law enforcement agencies to identify and facilitate the LEA recruitment process.
3. Recruit law enforcement agencies willing to participate in all activities associated with operating a booster seat law enforcement program over a 6-month period.
4. Conduct qualitative research on booster seat law enforcement programs conducted by willing law enforcement agencies in States with primary and secondary booster seat laws. Collect enforcement data (i.e., booster seat, other child restraint law, and seat belt law violations) from participating law enforcement agencies.
5. Analyze the data collected during the debriefings, at targeted booster seat law checkpoints (observed during site visits), and from discussions with officers involved in the program.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 RECRUITMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The initial plan was to recruit nine law enforcement agencies; three from each State. Initial conversations with NHTSA at the kick-off meeting identified States receiving NHTSA Section 2011 and 405 grant funds, which could be used to facilitate recruitment of law enforcement agencies. A summary of these occupant protection grants follows:

*The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005, Section 2011, established an incentive grant program to make grants available to States that are enforcing a law requiring any child riding in a passenger vehicle who is too large to be secured in a child safety seat to be secured in a child restraint that meets the requirements prescribed under section 3 of Anton's Law (49 USC 30127 note; 116 Stat. 2772). These grant funds may be used only for child safety seat and child restraint programs.*

*States are eligible to receive grants under this section by enacting and enforcing a law requiring any child passenger between the ages of 4 and 8 in a motor vehicle to be secured in a child restraint that meets the requirements prescribed under section 3 of Anton's Law. Exclusions to the law for children who weigh in excess of 65 pounds or who have attained a height of 4 feet, 9 inches or taller are acceptable. Other acceptable exemptions are for children with medical conditions making them unable to use a child restraint system (providing there is written documentation from a physician), and for children riding in a passenger motor vehicle that is not required to be equipped with safety belts.*

*Section 2004 of SAFETEA-LU amended Section 405(a) of Chapter 4 of Title 23 to encourage States to adopt and implement effective programs to reduce deaths and injuries from riding unrestrained or improperly restrained in motor vehicles. A State may use these grant funds only to implement and enforce occupant protection programs. A state is eligible for an incentive grant by adopting or demonstrating that it has implemented at law enforcement agencies 4 of 6 criteria (i.e., a safety belt use law applying to passengers in any seat in the vehicle, a safety belt law providing for primary enforcement, minimum fines or penalty points for safety belt and child safety seat use law violations, a statewide special traffic enforcement program (STEP) for occupant protection that emphasizes publicity, a statewide child passenger protection program that includes education programs about proper seating positions for children in air bag equipped motor vehicles and instruction on how to reduce the improper use of child restraint systems, and a child passenger protection law that requires minors to be properly secured in a child safety seat or other appropriate restraint system).*

With this direction from NHTSA, law enforcement agencies were initially sought in nearby Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Delaware and New Jersey were 2 of 11 States that had NHTSA Section 2011 booster seat grants; and Pennsylvania had access to NHTSA Section 405(a) grant funding that could be used for the study in a minor capacity. Each of the

three State Highway Safety Offices (SHSOs) provided help in identifying candidate law enforcement agencies. An ongoing booster seat law enforcement program in the State of Washington provided an opportunity to add Washington to the project to gain more insight into the issues in this research field.

## **Delaware**

In Delaware, Jana R. Simpler, deputy director, Delaware Office of Highway Safety, recommended three candidate departments that were actively enforcing occupant protection laws and had experience working with NHTSA and State grant programs. Together these departments represented urban, suburban, and rural areas. At a meeting with the three departments at the Delaware Office of Highway Safety in Dover, the training, enforcement, and documentation activities of the project were outlined. These departments had one month to develop a booster seat law enforcement program for the Delaware deputy director and principal investigator (PI) to approve. Law enforcement agencies from two municipalities in small towns, Georgetown (Sussex County) and Millsboro (Sussex County), and from an urban area, New Castle City (New Castle County), participated in this project using NHTSA Section 2011 money to fund their programs.

## **New Jersey**

In New Jersey, Edward J. O'Connor, supervisory program manager, Southern Region New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, recommended three candidate departments that were actively enforcing occupant protection laws and had very active child passenger safety (CPS) education and car seat giveaway programs. Similar to Delaware's candidates, these departments represented urban, suburban, and rural areas. At a meeting with the three departments at an AAA office near Trenton, the training, enforcement, and documentation activities of the project were outlined. The law enforcement agencies had one month to develop their enforcement plans for the PI to approve. Law enforcement agencies from the rural townships of Galloway (Atlantic County), suburban Westampton (Burlington County); and from the city of Passaic (Passaic County) participated in this project using NHTSA Section 2011 funds.

## **Pennsylvania**

The Pennsylvania Seat Belt Law Enforcement Liaison Coordinators recommended law enforcement agencies based on their seat belt and CPS enforcement records and their activities in CPS education and car seat inspections. At individual meetings with the three candidate departments, the project activities and dates to submit enforcement activity proposals were discussed. These departments were located in urban and suburban areas. The law enforcement agencies had one month to develop their enforcement plans. Eventually, only two departments from the townships of Exeter (Berks County) and Haverford (Delaware County) participated in the project using NHTSA Section 405(a) funds.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The third department was interested, but during the first month of activity the law enforcement agency realized that it could not commit traffic patrol staff to the project.



## Washington

An opportunity presented itself to document a booster seat law enforcement program in Washington. At the Lifesavers 2008 Conference in Portland, Oregon, Jonna Van Dyck, program manager of Washington State Traffic Safety Commission identified a booster seat law enforcement program in Grant County administered by the Central Basin Traffic Safety Task Force. She agreed to participate in this project by having the task force collect booster seat law enforcement data and have participating agencies debrief the project staff at the end of the program. As a result, no site visits were conducted during the initial and mid-program phases of the effort in Washington. Law enforcement agencies in the Grant County Sheriff's Office, and the cities of Ephrata, Moses Lake, Quincy, and Warden (Grant County) participated in the effort documented for this study, using NHTSA Section 2011 funds.

Appendix C includes a profile by State of each of the law enforcement agencies that participated in the study.

## 2.2 ENFORCEMENT PLANS AND ACTIONS

Candidate law enforcement agencies were required to follow a basic set of procedures and identify a basic enforcement plan to participate in the project. All the participating agencies included the following elements in their enforcement plan:

- Participate in a training session<sup>4</sup> covering best practices of booster seats and child restraint systems, child restraint laws of the State, review of experiences enforcing child restraint laws, and viewing of NHTSA's "Booster Seat Roll Call" video.
- Identify the proposed method(s) to enforce booster seat and other child restraint laws.
- Publicize enforcement activities and other child restraint educational events, such as car seat inspections, for the community.
- Develop a child restraint law enforcement card.
- Develop a schedule of enforcement activities and staff resources for a 6-month project period (March to September 2008).
- Document the project enforcement activities.
- Debrief evaluators during their site visits to observe enforcement activities.

Although these elements were the backbone of each department's booster seat law enforcement program, the uniqueness of each law enforcement agencies' proposed enforcement activity plans depended on many factors. These factors included top-management policies and

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<sup>4</sup> Training was conducted by SHSO child passenger safety (CPS) coordinators. The New Jersey officers were also given the NHTSA Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies training program.

decisions; suggestions from their SHSOs; child restraint laws of the States (e.g., primary or secondary); staff availability at the time of the scheduled enforcement period; department philosophy and experience (i.e., passion for child passenger protection, past participation in similar projects, understanding of project requirements).

It should be noted that all of the participating law enforcement agencies had ongoing child passenger safety programs in their communities, including: appointments for car seat inspections, participation in car seat check events, and presentations on occupant protection issues at schools and at other community events. Any publicity promoting the booster seat law enforcement program was up to the discretion of each participating department. Some agencies sent press releases and were interviewed by the media and others did not. The departments provided copies of any publicity surrounding the program. Appendix C includes some examples of program publicity.

## **Delaware**

The Police in Georgetown and Millsboro proposed and used stationary patrols during morning and afternoon rush hours. The police used intersections with traffic control devices (e.g., stop signs) to spot all motorists and occupants. The police chose sites near elementary schools, shopping centers, and in downtown areas (e.g., roundabout/circle in center of town), where they expected to see many booster seat age children riding as passengers in vehicles. In many cases, only one officer worked the 2-hour details. New Castle used a dedicated roving patrol and education mini-cades.<sup>5</sup> Roving patrols involved solo runs by an officer for 2 to 3 hours of time. They also focused on morning and afternoon rush hours.

## **New Jersey**

The rural township of Galloway proposed and used dedicated roving patrols. Officers driving alone, followed their routine patrol paths through the township looking for booster seat law and child restraint law violators during 3- to 4-hour shifts, conducted enforcement waves throughout the day. They carried child restraints and booster seats in their trunks to be distributed at their discretion. In many cases, officers performing roving patrols ended up in stationary positions near elementary schools and shopping centers.

The city of Passaic and suburban township of Westampton proposed and used checkpoints. This involved 4 to 8 officers working on 3-hour shifts to spot violators, write tickets, and act as educators and interpreters (as Passaic has a large Spanish-speaking population). Passaic police established checkpoints on 4-lane city roads (2 lanes in each direction) that had 25 mph (40 km/h) posted speed limits; they used traffic cones to designate a lane to stop cars, write tickets and educate drivers about booster seats. Passaic used a “Slow

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<sup>5</sup> An education mini-cade detail usually involves setting up an officer and vehicle at a point on the road or parking lot area with a “seat belt” or “car seat” sign. The officer stands outside the vehicle and can either observe traffic and just record restraint use of drivers and passengers or slow vehicles down and give verbal warnings and distribute educational literature. These details do not involve ticketing. In Delaware, it was against the law to issue summons on private property, such as a shopping center.

Safety Seat Checkpoint” sign upstream of the checkpoint. Westampton used a 4-lane highway (2 lanes in each direction) that had a 35 mph (56 km/h) posted speed limit; they used traffic cones between the lanes, and directed violators into an unused commercial parking lot to issue tickets. Both departments staggered shifts across morning and afternoon rush hours.

## **Pennsylvania**

Police in Pennsylvania used dedicated roving patrols and stationary patrols to enforce booster seat laws. These departments made efforts to be creative with enforcement of the booster seat law portion of the child restraint law, because it is a secondary violation in the State. Similar to enforcement of the seat belt law, a primary offense would first have to be cited before a booster seat violation could be issued. For seat belt law enforcement, Pennsylvania law enforcement agencies typically set up speed enforcement checkpoints; once police stop motorists for speeding, they would cite them for seat belt law violations. Officers were instructed to enforce occupant restraint laws during their routine patrols, but not at nighttime or during rush hour.

Haverford police used two-person stationary patrols near a shopping center for 3-hour shifts during the afternoon rush period. Police also used 3-hour shifts of solo roving patrols through their routine patrol routes. In Exeter, police set up a single officer stationary patrol posted near elementary schools and shopping centers for 3-hour shifts in the mornings. Police conducted an education mini-cade in conjunction with other departments during the early phases of the project. Like Haverford, officers were instructed to enforce occupant restraint laws on routine patrols, but not at nighttime or during rush hour. Both departments also set up education mini-cades during morning and afternoon rush hours. No enforcement activities were involved.

## **Washington**

Washington used stationary and roving patrols because checkpoints are illegal in the State. Police enforced booster seat laws in two ways. First, the police patrolled streets around schools to enforce school zone speeds as well as booster seat laws. Second, the police were posted in a stationary spot in locations where they could more easily enforce booster seat laws, such as the student drop-off and pick-up areas. Because of a large volume of traffic near the drop-off and pick up zones, most of the contacts with motorists at these stationary spots near schools resulted in educational encounters.

The Central Basin Traffic Safety Task Force (CBTSTF) in Grant County, which was a joint effort with several law enforcement agencies including the county’s sheriff office, provided the majority of the enforcement hours to the booster seat law project. The booster seat law enforcement project was conducted on 5 specific dates throughout a 13-month period during morning and afternoon rush hours. The last 6 months were conducted during this study. Car seat checks and giveaway preceded the enforcement events on the day after the enforcement period.

With every patrol, a CPS-certified technician from either CBTSTF or Safe Kids Grant County rode along with the officers. This gave the technician an opportunity to see the

challenges that law enforcement faces in child restraint law enforcement, as well as providing officers with experience in educating motorists on restraints for children. Each patrol was followed up by a car seat checkup event.

### **2.3 DEBRIEFING SESSIONS**

Midway through the 6-month enforcement period, the project's Principal Investigator visited and debriefed each law enforcement agency in Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Most debriefings included a visit to the enforcement sites to observe checkpoint operations.

The debriefing sessions were used to gain insight about the barriers officers encountered in their efforts to enforce these laws, as well as the enforcement techniques or methods that appeared to be most effective in enforcement of booster seat and child restraint laws. Officers involved in the project were asked questions covering five topic areas: (a) enforcement methods; (b) challenges in enforcing booster seat law; (c) training, reminder cards, and educational resources; (d) strategies to improve enforcement of child restraint laws; and (e) other issues.

Appendix D provides the topic guide used to debrief the police at the midpoint and end of the project.

### **2.4 COLLECTION OF ENFORCEMENT DATA**

During the recruitment visits and project kickoff meetings, the law enforcement agencies were informed that weekly or monthly enforcement activity reports were to be sent to either the State Highway Safety Office, Central Basin Traffic Safety Task Force coordinator (Washington), or directly to the principal investigator. NHTSA mobilization enforcement activity data were sent to the SHSOs and State Law Enforcement Liaison Offices. The PI maintained telephone and e-mail correspondence with the law enforcement agencies throughout the period to gather updates on activities, remind law enforcement agencies about the enforcement activity sheet deliverables, inquire about other related events, and revisit questions asked midway through the project.

### 3.0 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

The enforcement for this project occurred during a 6-month period from March to September 2008. Table 1 identifies the enforcement activities of the participating law enforcement agencies, and includes the name of the agency; number of child restraint law citations issued; percentage of child restraint law citations issued that were booster seat age violations; enforcement hours by staff; and type of enforcement. All of the law enforcement agencies enforced their child restraint laws during the National *Click It or Ticket* high-visibility seat belt enforcement mobilization in May; the age of child was included on all child restraint law citations. The data in table 1 is sorted by the agencies that issued the most child restraint law citations.

**Table 1. Child Restraint Law Enforcement Activity.**

Law Enforcement Agency	Child Restraint Law Citations	% Booster Seat Law Citations	Enforcement Hours	Enforcement Type
Passaic, NJ	364	68%	244	Checkpoints
Westhampton Twp, NJ	232	84%	387	Checkpoints
Galloway Twp, NJ	151	85%	373	Dedicated Roving Patrol
Grant County, WA	120	n/a	145	Dedicated Roving Patrol
Exeter Twp, PA	22	32%	136	Stationary & Roving Patrol
New Castle City, DE	21	86%	192	Dedicated Roving Patrol
Georgetown, DE	18	72%	108	Stationary Patrol
Millsboro, DE	6	33%	160	Stationary Patrol
Haverford Twp, PA	4	25%	64	Stationary & Roving Patrol

Appendix C includes a profile of the participating departments, including the enforcement activities in more detail; it also includes other related information, such as photographs of enforcement operations and publicity about the project. The next section presents the highlights of the booster seat enforcement programs for the participating law enforcement agencies in each State.

#### Delaware

The Georgetown police conducted stationary patrols to enforce the booster seat law in the town’s downtown center roundabout. Several officers participated in the project, two of whom were CPS-certified. They worked 108 enforcement hours and wrote 18 child restraint law violations; 13 of which were related to the booster seat requirements. Police also wrote 6 tickets for back seat law violations, where children less than age 12 were seated in the front seat (regardless of whether they were in booster seats).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Title 21, section 4803(b)(1) of the Delaware Code states that “No child who is 65 inches or less in height and who is under 12 years of age shall occupy the front passenger seat of any vehicle equipped with a passenger-side airbag that has not been deliberately rendered inoperable in conformity with federal law. This subsection shall not apply to vehicles equipped with a passenger-side airbag specifically designed or modified by the vehicle’s manufacturer for use by children and small adults.”

The Millsboro police used stationary patrols at intersections near the elementary schools, during the arrival and departure times of the students at the beginning and end of the school day. Three traffic unit officers participated in the project, one of whom was CPS-certified. They dedicated 160 hours on this enforcement effort. Six child restraint law violations were written, two of which related to the booster seat law. Police wrote 3 additional tickets for back seat law violations.

Police in New Castle City used roving patrols. They committed to 17 weeks of 2 patrols per week, with each patrol lasting for 3 hours during the first 3 months of the project (March-May, 2008). In the summer, they committed to only 11 weeks of one patrol per week, with each patrol lasting for 3 hours. Other “off-the-street” efforts stationed at parks and schools were also conducted on a limited basis. Five officers participated in the project; two of the officers were CPS-certified. They dedicated 192 hours of time to the project and wrote 21 child restraint law violations; 18 of which related to the booster seat requirements. Police wrote 13 additional tickets for the back seat law violations.

## **New Jersey**

Police in Galloway Township used dedicated roving patrols on 3- to 4-hour shifts. In many cases, stationary positions were set up during the roving patrols, located at sites where a high volume of drivers typically transport young children (e.g., near elementary schools and shopping centers). They dedicated 372 hours to the project. All seven traffic safety unit officers were involved in the study. Six of these officers were CPS-certified. A total of 151 child restraint law violation tickets were written; 129 were related to the booster seat law.

Police in Westampton Township used checkpoints, deploying 4 to 6 officers for each checkpoint detail. They dedicated 387 hours to these checkpoints. Seven traffic unit officers were involved with the checkpoints. Three officers were CPS-certified. A total of 232 child restraint law violation tickets were written; 195 were related to the booster seat law.

Police in Passaic used checkpoints, deploying 4 to 10 officers for each checkpoint detail. They dedicated 244 hours to these checkpoints. A total of 364 child restraint law violation tickets were written; 247 were related to the booster seat law.

## **Pennsylvania**

Exeter Township used dedicated roving patrols and stationary spots. Three officers were used. They dedicated 136 hours to these efforts. Twenty-two child restraint law violation tickets were written; 7 related to the booster seat law.

Haverford Township used dedicated roving patrols, as well as stationary patrols. Five traffic unit officers were involved in the project. They dedicated 64 hours to these efforts. Four child restraint law violations were written; only one was booster seat law related.

## Washington

The Central Basin Traffic Safety Task Force conducted dedicated roving and stationary patrols. For the 5 enforcement-day events spread over 13 months, 32 officers were used on the project. CPS technicians accompanied the officers on these details to provide hands-on education to officers about child restraints and boosters, and also to observe the challenges that officers encounter during enforcement of these laws. Following each patrol and in partnership with Safe Kids, the Traffic Safety Task Force conducts car seat checkup events to provide an opportunity to correct the issues that were noted by the officers and technicians during the patrol. During the patrols, officers distributed handouts to violators containing information about the checkup events as well as technician names and phone numbers in case the violators cannot go to the seat check events. Violators who attend the checkup events are given a copy of the Safe Kids Grant County check up form to take to court, if they choose, to try to get the infraction dropped.

A total of 120 child restraint law violation tickets were written during the 145 hours dedicated to the project. The police did not distinguish booster seat law violations from other child passenger safety violations.

### 3.2 SUMMARY OF DEBRIEFINGS

Feedback gained during mid – and at end-of-period debriefings is grouped into one of three themes: barriers to enforcement, effective approaches, and other related issues.

#### **Barriers to Enforcement**

Officers identified several barriers to enforcing booster seat laws, such as weak booster seat laws, enforcement methods, physical barriers, officer discretion issues, and roadway environment. Many of these barriers also apply to child restraint laws covering children less than 4 years old.

#### **Weak Booster Seat Laws**

Although booster seat laws are considered weak when they do not meet best practices (i.e., if they do not cover children up to 8 years old, or 4 feet 9 inches in height), this study focused on weak laws as it relates to constraints on enforcement.

*Secondary Law Enforcement.* In Pennsylvania, police are constrained by the booster seat law being secondary enforcement. This means that the police must first stop a driver for a traffic violation and write a ticket for that violation before they can issue a booster seat violation, or even a seat belt violation. Police developed their enforcement plans with the intent to find other traffic law violators who might also be candidates for secondary booster seat law violations. This was a challenge. One department targeted elementary schools. Although officers saw possible booster seat law violations, there were very few primary violations near these schools because driver speeds were low; this prevented the opportunity to enforce booster seat laws. During NHTSA mobilizations, law enforcement agencies use speed enforcement checks as an opportunity to cite primary law violators (e.g., speeding); this then allows them to cite violators

for seat belt violations. Police used the same strategy to cite booster seat law violators during this study. However, both departments only found a few booster seat and child restraint law violators among the speeding violators.

### **Enforcement Methods**

*Routine patrol.* Officers stated that routine patrols were not an effective way to pursue violators of booster seat and other child restraint laws. During routine patrols, officers are focused on criminal and domestic investigations (e.g., answering calls) and moving violations that have higher traffic safety crash risks (e.g., red light running violators). Unless police commanders direct police to focus on the child restraint laws, the officers are not inclined to enforce these laws.

In addition, a common complaint that police voiced during the debriefings was that it is often very difficult to see child restraint law violations while driving around on routine patrol. Unless the child is clearly unrestrained (e.g., the officers see the child bouncing up and down on the seats of the vehicle), the police will miss the violation.

*Staff resources.* Booster seat law enforcement details that involved only one or two officers were not effective in reaching many motorists who violate the booster seat and other child restraint laws. In addition, if other violations are to be ticketed (e.g., registration or inspection sticker expired), then opportunities for the officers to ticket child restraint law violators is limited because of the time spent on the other violations. For example, one department had a stationary patrol set up at one intersection with only two officers. They could only process a couple of booster seat and child restraint law violators at a time. They acknowledged the possibility that other child restraint law violators drove by them while they were talking with a stopped motorist or writing up a ticket.

### **Physical Barriers**

*Obstructed view, unable to clearly see in vehicle.* Tinted windows, glare, high back seats in SUVs and minivans, and motorists moving too fast (for officers to see in the windows) were reasons officers provided to explain their difficulties in enforcing the booster seat law. Vehicles with tinted windows often pose difficulties in the officer's ability to see inside the vehicle. Certain vehicles like SUVs and minivans are built with seats higher up on the vehicle floor, which blocks the officers' view of the back seats, and the officer's ability to see small children in the second and third rows.

Enforcement methods where officers slow or stop vehicles to get close enough to peer inside the windows to check for child passengers and child restraint law violations could improve the ability to enforce the child restraint laws. Some of the recommendations for effective enforcement approaches center on the ability to see clearly into the vehicle to determine the age of child passengers.



## **Officer Discretion Issues**

*Fines and costs associated with multiple child restraint law tickets.* Many officers commented that they would not give motorists more than one child restraint law violation ticket at a time because of the cost of the fines and costs associated with multiple child restraint law tickets. Specifically, officers stated they were reluctant to give a mother more than one ticket if they perceived her to be of low socioeconomic status with three young children in the vehicle. One department had a policy of issuing only one child restraint law violation ticket to a motorist. They reasoned that the driver is now “educated” about why they were cited for a child restraint law violation, and there was no need to burden the family with a large fine.

In Pennsylvania, where a booster law violation is secondary, the police reported that if they pull over a motorist for a primary child restraint violation (a child under age 4 not in a child safety seat) and the driver is also transporting a booster-seat-age child who is not restrained in a booster seat, they are reluctant to give more than one child restraint law ticket. Instead, they cite the primary child restraint law violation, not the booster seat law violation.

*Ability to identify age of children.* Many of the officers admitted they had difficulty in estimating the ages of older children who should be in booster seats (age 6 and 7). While this problem relates somewhat to their inability to see in the vehicle clearly, officers indicated they hesitate to stop motorists because of this uncertainty.

## **Roadway Environment**

*Safe observational sites to efficiently enforce booster seat laws.* Many police departments proposed locations for booster seat law enforcement based on how safely they could pull vehicles over and see inside the vehicles. Critical elements to the enforcement detail included selection of streets with lower speed limits, median and island barriers (where officers could stand safely out of the traffic flow), safe and adequate space for vehicle pull-offs, and other roadway environment features. Communities without these roadway environment features limit the motivation for agencies to enforce booster seat and other child restraint laws. In this study, for example, one department had no problem with the concept of enforcing booster seat laws near the community’s elementary schools, where the likelihood of booster law violators would be high; however, there were no side streets or pull-off areas near the schools to safely stop motorists and process tickets. Blocking and detouring traffic were not options for this department.

## **Effective Enforcement Approaches**

### **Top Management Support**

This project confirmed earlier findings that support from traffic patrol commanders or police chiefs is needed to increase participation in occupant restraint law enforcement programs (Decina et al., 2008). Directives from top command are essential to support any dedicated booster seat and other child restraint law enforcement effort. This project confirmed previous focus group findings. At the project’s recruitment meetings, the chiefs of police directed their

officers to participate in this booster seat enforcement project, traffic patrol supervisors developed enforcement plans, and officers implemented and documented the enforcement activities.

However, it is important to recognize that agencies are more willing to participate in programs that do not divert resources from their budgets and can access external funding through grants. Overtime pay through grants for officers willing to participate in occupant restraint law enforcement programs has been a popular and effective method to promote enforcement of these laws, and to increase seat belt and child restraint system use in the Nation.

### **Primary Booster Seat Laws**

Four States have secondary booster seat law provisions (Pennsylvania, Colorado, and Ohio, plus Montana, which is secondary for all children under age 6). The enforcement methods necessary to ticket violators in these States is different than if the booster seat law was primary. When police cannot stop drivers solely for violating the booster seat law, enforcement is inhibited. Primary booster seat laws are the most effective approach to their enforcement.

In Delaware, children less than 12 years old and 65 inches in height must ride in the back seat if there is an operable passenger-side airbag in front seat. However, this is a secondary law violation. This discourages enforcement of the law. Police cannot stop a motor vehicle solely for failing to comply with the back seat law portion of the child restraint law. At the debriefings, police discussed how secondary law inhibits many opportunities to ticket potential booster seat and other child restraint law violators.

### **Interaction with Drivers**

When the police interact with drivers, a brief, formal protocol is most effective. Upon signaling a driver to stop because of a suspected booster seat or other child restraint law violation, the officer asks the driver the age of child passengers, and questions relating to their knowledge of child restraint laws. If the officer is not satisfied with a driver's answer about age of child passengers, then in many cases, the officer will also ask the children themselves the question. This appears to be effective. Weight and height characteristics are not routinely asked, unless the driver points out that the child meets the weight requirements of the seat belt law. At a checkpoint, upon finding a violation, the officer instructs the driver to pull over to a designated parking area. The driver's vehicle and license information are checked; and the ticket is written.

### **Enforcement Methods**

The most effective methods for enforcing booster seat laws began with focusing the detail exclusively on enforcement of booster seat laws (and other child restraint laws).

Checkpoints. In this study, checkpoints were the most effective way to enforce booster seat and other child restraint laws and issue a number of citations over a brief period. To be effective, four to eight officers needed to be deployed. More officers are needed when there is a command to provide education and/or tickets for other violations as well. Sites need to be

selected based on the safety of officers and motorists, and have a high enough volume of traffic and motorists transporting young children; such sites are most likely to be near shopping centers and schools. The departments recommended afternoon rush hour periods as the most effective time for observing child restraint law violators.

The checkpoints need to have adequate space for channeling violators into a safe area to converse with the driver; gather driver license information; explain child restraint law violations; and provide education and other information. Identifying a street or highway where traffic can be slowed down safely is also important. Roadways in urban or suburban areas where the speed limit is 25 mph (40 km/h) are ideal. At higher speed sites, a long column of traffic cones placed along the lane lines will tend to slow motorists' speed. Spotters can more easily peer inside vehicles at these slower speeds.

One of the agencies used the technique of separating out the duties of spotters and ticket writers. Spotters told violators to pull over into the designated lot, where another officer would process the violation. The other agency doing checkpoints did not separate out the duties of spotter and ticket writer. They mentioned the possibility of legal issues. The courts might frown on different officers completing the same ticket. Nevertheless, both techniques of spotting and ticketing in a checkpoint appeared to be effective for detecting and citing booster seat law and other child restraint law violators. Many States, however, prohibit checkpoints.

*Dedicated roving patrols.* Dedicated roving patrols proved quite effective for one of the agencies in New Jersey. Officers participated in 3-hour dedicated roving patrols to enforce the booster seat and other child restraint laws only. On these patrols, officers did not respond to other types of calls from the dispatcher relating to community disturbances or traffic incidents. They did admit that they were able to enforce the laws from stationary positions near elementary schools and shopping centers much easier than when roving around. Over 60% of the child restraint law violation tickets were from stationary spots.

*Stationary spots.* Stationary spots can be effective, providing they are situated at locations that offer a clear view into vehicles, and offer safe pull off locations to make the contact and write the ticket. The method can be extremely effective and efficient in locations where there are many motorists transporting young children and if several officers are used on the detail.

Several of the law enforcement agencies used this method. A spotter officer peered into vehicles as they slowed down upon an approach to an intersection with a traffic control device (e.g., stop sign, traffic signal). A downtown center's circle was also used as a spotting point. Upon observation of a booster seat or other child restraint law violation, the motorist was pulled over and given a citation. Other intersections were near elementary school grounds. The activity was usually conducted during drop-off or pick-up times of the day. To be the most effective, several officers are needed on the detail.

## **Training and Enforcement Cards**

Officers believed that training on the best practice recommendations for safely transporting children from birth through age 7 was important for motivating any type of enforcement of these laws. During the debriefings, the police who were unfamiliar with child restraints or booster seats stated they were inhibited and reluctant to enforce these laws.

In the debriefings, many of the supervisors thought that 1 to 2 hours of training, which would cover a basic knowledge of restraints and how to enforce these laws, would be adequate. They indicated that an audio-visual presentation during roll call or basic training would be useful. Most officers on the project saw the “Booster Seat Roll Call” video developed by NHTSA.

Enforcement cards identifying the child restraint laws and providing illustrations and text on child restraints for each stage (infant, toddler, booster seat-age) were quite useful in helping officers who were unfamiliar with types of child restraints and details of child restraint laws. Officers carried the cards with them on these enforcement details. The police reported that although these cards were useful in the beginning of the project, after a very short time, they really did not need to refer to them during enforcement details.

## **Enforcement-Related Issues**

The debriefings identified other issues of concern by the officers, including: increasing fines and penalties for child restraint law violations; modification to the ticket book; detaining motorists without child restraints in their vehicle; the court system; and educating the public.

### **Increasing Fines and Penalties for Child Restraint Law Violations**

Many police reported that violators were more concerned about how a ticket would affect their driver license status, than they were about the cost of the fine or the safety of their child. Some officers believed that increasing fines and penalties for booster seat violations would increase the number of motorists who would appeal their citations in court, which would result in the police spending more time in the courts. The implications of increased court appearances may discourage law enforcement agencies from participating in booster seat and child restraint law enforcement programs, as well as inhibit routine enforcement of these laws. Small departments, in particular, might not be able to commit staff resources for attendance at these court hearings.

### **Modification to the Ticket Book**

Previous research showed that police are not recording the age of the child or the section of the child restraint law that relates to the booster seat law violation. In this study, officers were instructed to note age in the ticket book. However, many officers do not believe that revising the ticket book to note the child restraint law violation or subsection relating to booster seat law would promote or motivate more ticket writing. Police stated they will follow a direct charge or

command to enforce the child restraint laws. A revised ticket form with a category box for child restraint law violations is not needed to motivate them to enforce the child restraint laws.

### **Detaining Motorists without Child Restraints in Vehicles**

When enforcement is focused on child restraint laws, officers will detain motorists at an enforcement stop when there is no child restraint system or booster seat available in the vehicle for the child occupant(s). However, during routine patrol, the police stated that detaining violators is more difficult because officers need to respond to other incidents. Police were divided in their opinions about detaining motorists who did not have booster seats or child restraints. Specifically, the police were concerned about safety along the side of the road and how long it would take for them to detain each offending motorist.

### **Court System**

Officers were ambivalent about whether their local courts supported booster seat and other child restraint law violations. They reported that they would enforce the law vigorously when they received a directive to enforce booster seat and other child restraint laws. These findings run counter to previous research (Decina et al., 2008), in which chiefs of police at a brainstorming session stated that some judges inhibit enforcement of child restraint laws because they are not knowledgeable about child occupant protection, and they admonish officers for writing “frivolous” tickets, or reduce the fines for fear of constituent disapproval.

### **Educating the Public**

While educational material is important to have as a resource for the community, officers were not regularly distributing material while they were on the enforcement details. The police were focused on spotting violators; making the contact; explaining the reason for the stop; and writing the ticket.

Many officers indicated that distributing literature is an activity that should be done at a community event or during an educational checkpoint or mini-cade, but not during an enforcement detail. However, they did not oppose adding staff at an enforcement detail, such as at a checkpoint, to focus on the education component. The Washington departments were closely associated with follow-up car seat checkup events. After ticketing motorists, they were willing to give out flyers advertising these events. One department (urban site in New Jersey) used additional officers to provide education to motorists after the ticket was issued, and in some cases they gave out booster seats. Another department in New Jersey also distributed booster seats while on roving patrol, after issuing a ticket. Officers transported the booster seats in their trunks while on this detail.

## **4.0 SUMMARY**

### **4.1 STUDY LIMITATIONS**

Evaluations of occupant protection enforcement programs usually focus on high visibility enforcement, which includes implementation of publicity and media events associated with the enforcement activity, and a before-after study design using control sites and traffic safety outcome measures to determine whether the program resulted in improvements in the measure of interest (increased seat belt or child restraint use). In contrast, this study used a process evaluation to evaluate techniques and strategies to enforce booster seat laws. Process evaluations can troubleshoot unsuccessful programs delivering proven countermeasures, but they cannot prove that an intervention works. The goal of this study was to determine whether booster seat law enforcement programs can be implemented as planned, whether they accomplish their objectives, what barriers are encountered, and what strategies might overcome these barriers. As such, no statistical evaluation was planned or conducted to determine which enforcement method was significantly better than another.

Another limitation of this study was that law enforcement agencies were selected out of a convenience sample and not recruited by random selection. The State Highway Safety Offices identified and recruited departments because of their cooperation and level of participation on previous NHTSA occupant protection grant programs. While random selection may have been more scientific, it would have resulted in recruiting less experienced participants with less understanding of the commitment needed to fulfill project requirements. In fact, even with the study's selection process, one department dropped out because of an inability to commit staff resources when the time came to participate in training exercises and conduct the booster seat law enforcement activities.

### **4.2 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

This study showed that law enforcement agencies can effectively enforce booster seat laws when they have support from their management, and adequate funding resources dedicated to employing select enforcement techniques (i.e., checkpoints, dedicated roving patrols, stationary patrols). A critical component of effective booster seat law enforcement is a dedicated effort to enforcing only the booster seat and other child restraint laws. Officers can focus better on enforcing these laws when they are not distracted by finding other traffic violations or responding to community- or traffic-incident-related calls. Dedicated checkpoints and roving patrols that used stationary positions produced the most booster seat and other child restraint law citations in the study. These strategies were effective because officers were making observations with stopped or slow-moving vehicles. They were able to see clearly into the vehicles and observe the restraint status of the child passengers.

Police need a basic education on child passenger restraints that addresses the specifics of their child restraint laws, the proper restraints for a child's age and weight, and the best practices for child restraints and booster seats. This education can and should be accomplished in 1 to 2 hours. Audio-visual presentations (such as brief videos), as well as enforcement cards identifying the child restraint laws and providing illustrations and text on child restraints for each

stage (infant, toddler, booster seat-age) are useful to train officers on the details of child passenger restraints and child restraint laws.

The most effective strategy to enforce booster seat and other child restraint laws involves persuading top management to use dedicated enforcement details in their community. While management is more receptive to this approach when grant money is attached to the detail and overtime can be offered to officers, there is no need to rule out the possibilities of incorporating “part-time” dedicated booster seat and other child restraint law enforcement periods within routine patrols (e.g., during drop-off period near elementary schools).

The most effective enforcement approaches were checkpoints, which required at a minimum, four officers. Designated roles for spotters and ticket writers also proved to be quite efficient. In many cases, more officers were needed if the checkpoints involved educating the drivers or if the detail included enforcement of other violations (e.g., vehicle permit or inspection expiration). Motorists tend to slow down and even stop when approaching the officers in a checkpoint. This makes it easy for officers to make observations of passengers; stop motorists; interact with the driver and child passengers; inform the driver to pull off into a designated area; conduct the license check; and write the ticket. With additional officers in the pull-off area, educating about child restraint laws and even enforcing other traffic laws can be done. The departments had the most success during morning and especially afternoon rush hours (e.g., parents picking up children from school and dropping them off at other activities).

Dedicated roving patrols were effective for some of the departments when the officers positioned themselves in a stationary position with a vantage point where they could easily look into slow-moving or stopped vehicles. Intersections near elementary schools and shopping centers proved to be good locations to set up stationary positions. It was much more difficult to spot violators when driving around on patrol. One department used a dedicated roving motorcycle patrol. The officers from this unit had a much better vantage point from the seats of their motorcycles. They were able to get very close to the vehicle windows and see inside for violators.

While it seems appropriate that law enforcement should educate the public about child restraint laws and the best practices for restraints for young children and booster seat age children, officers prefer to enforce the booster seat laws and keep education a separate assignment. Officers suggested using additional staff to educate the public in the checkpoint’s pull-off areas. Although some officers distributed information on the child restraint law and car seat checkup events, for the most part, the enforcement detail was more effective by focusing on spotting violators, interacting with drivers, and writing up tickets.

Because police have many competing priorities while they are on patrol, enforcing child restraint laws does not have the full attention of officers out on routine patrol. Traffic safety enforcement is one of many concerns; and child restraint law enforcement is one of many traffic safety concerns. Although dedicated booster seat law enforcement programs work, it will be important to investigate how to engage law enforcement agencies to include dedicated booster seat and other child restraint law enforcement programs into routine patrols without the need for external funding and resources.

### **4.3 FUTURE RESEARCH**

Although this study showed that checkpoints are effective in the enforcement of booster seat and other child restraint laws, many States do not allow checkpoints. Therefore, it would be important to study what other enforcement methods are effective to enforce child restraint laws in States that do not allow checkpoints. Methods to examine might include programs that target areas, such as schools and high traffic volume intersections.

A school-based program could combine child passenger education and a well publicized enforcement period to target elementary schools. Initially, the program could provide educational material for students to take home to their parents. This information would (a) provide information on what the laws are regarding child restraints, booster seats, and the rear-seat requirement, and (b) warn parents and children that there will be an upcoming enforcement initiative at their school. Then within a week or so, the police could implement an enforcement campaign at these elementary schools and write tickets for violations. Roving patrols or other community-wide enforcement approaches can complement this effort to reach the parents who bus their children to the schools.

A program focusing on high traffic volume intersections would position a spotter at a location where police can easily see booster seat and other child restraint law violations while the vehicles are stopped at the intersection. As a driver departs from the intersection, officers positioned downstream are alerted to the vehicle and make the stop.

Future research may include booster seat use measures collected before and after a booster seat enforcement program at experimental and control sites to examine whether enforcement can significantly increase booster seat use in a community. Observation surveys would be needed to identify booster seat use at the sites in both pre- and post-enforcement periods.



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## APPENDIX A: BOOSTER SEAT DEFINITIONS AND TYPES

A booster seat is a platform or specially designed seat that elevates the child such that the vehicle safety belt properly fits the child. The safety belt restrains the child in a crash. Booster seats are designed for children who have outgrown child restraint systems at 40 lbs. and are not large enough for a vehicle safety belt. Children should use belt positioning booster seats until they are at least 8 years old or 4'9" tall. The three basic types—belt-positioning booster, combination child restraint, and shield booster—are described below, using definitions provided by Stewart, Lang, and Emery (2005):

- The belt-positioning booster (BPB) raises the child so the vehicle lap and shoulder belts fit better. The vehicle belts actually restrain the child. A BPB may be a low, backless booster or may have a high back that provides head restraint and some support for the child while sleeping.



**Backless Belt-Positioning  
Booster Seat.**



**High-Back Belt-Positioning  
Booster Seat.**

- The combination child restraint is a forward-facing child restraint system that can be transformed into a belt-positioning booster by removing the harness.
- The shield booster is a platform with a wrap-around shield. It is for a child who weighs between 30 and 40 pounds. This type of booster seat is not recommended for use. A child of this weight should be in a forward-facing child restraint system with a harness.



**Shield Booster Seat.**



**Combination  
Child Restraint.**

Graphics: *A Guidebook for Observing Occupant Restraint System Use and Misuse*. (AAAFST, 2005). [www.aafoundation.org/pdf/restraintguidebook.pdf](http://www.aafoundation.org/pdf/restraintguidebook.pdf) and *Are You Using it Right?* (NHTSA, 2004). DOT HS 809 245. [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/childps/AreYouUsing/pages/FFSeatYES.htm](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/childps/AreYouUsing/pages/FFSeatYES.htm)

## **APPENDIX B: SUMMARY AND INVENTORY OF STATE CHILD OCCUPANT RESTRAINT LAWS**

All 50 States and the District of Columbia have child passenger safety laws and 49 States and the District of Columbia have seat belt laws. State laws vary in their definitions of which children must be restrained in which restraint type, and in which vehicle positions they must be restrained. Laws in some States allow children riding in the rear seat to be unrestrained. In some States, children as young as 5 may be restrained using the adult seat belt. These two practices increase the risk for serious injury or death. At the other end of the continuum are laws that require children up to age 9 or 80 pounds or 4'9" tall (or some combination of age, weight, and height) to be restrained in a child restraint or booster seat. Almost 90% of the States have booster seat provisions for children who have outgrown their child restraints, but there are exemptions and limited coverage to many of these laws. One of the most serious gaps that continues is the limited age range covered (sometimes stated as weight and/or height ranges).

A summary of the occupant restraint laws in all 50 States and the District of Columbia in effect as of March 1, 2009, is provided in Table 2.

NHTSA recommends that children who have outgrown their child restraints (at approximately age 4 and/or 40 pounds) be restrained in booster seats until they are least 8 years old, unless they are 4'9" tall (NHTSA, 2002). NHTSA encourages States to adopt laws that provide appropriate restraint usage for all children - including adopting "booster seat" laws that require the use of some type of child restraint for children older than 4 and heavier than 40 pounds. For purposes of this report, a State is considered to have a booster seat law if a child restraint/booster is required for children older than age 4 or heavier than 40 pounds. State laws are considered as having no booster provision if children are allowed to be in a seat belt at 40 pounds or if 4 years old.

As of March 1, 2009, 45 States and the District of Columbia had enacted provisions in their child passenger safety laws requiring the use of an appropriate restraint device or booster seat by children who have outgrown their child restraints but are still too small to use an adult seat belt correctly. Specific provisions vary widely from State to State. All laws include an age limit, but some States also emphasize weight limits, while others stipulate height requirements.

States that have enacted booster seat provisions (by age) in their child restraint laws include:

- Through Age 5 – Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and South Carolina.
- Through Age 6 – Connecticut, Idaho, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, and Rhode Island.
- Through Age 7 – Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.
- Through Age 8 – Tennessee and Wyoming.

Many States have enacted booster seat provisions by including weight in their CPS laws. Nineteen States that have enacted booster seat provisions by weight in their child restraint laws as follow:

- 60-pound maximum weight requirement: Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, and New Mexico.
- 65-pound maximum weight requirement: Delaware, Maryland, and Mississippi.
- 80-pound maximum weight requirement: Kansas, Maine, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Wisconsin.

The remaining 26 States (Alabama, Colorado, District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming) with booster seat provisions do not include weight as a criteria for which children are required to be in a child restraint/booster.

Twenty-one States have enacted booster seat provisions that include a maximum height requirement in their child passenger safety laws. These height requirements range from 53 to 57 inches, as indicated below:

- 49 inches: Kentucky
- 53 inches: Rhode Island.
- 54 inches: Colorado and New Hampshire.
- 56 inches: Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.
- 57 inches: Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, and Tennessee.

The remaining 24 States (Alabama, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, and Wyoming.) with booster seat provisions do not include height as a criteria for which children are required to be in a child restraint/booster.

Eighteen States allow the use of a lap-only belt for the booster-age child, if the vehicle does not have a lap and shoulder seat belt available for using a belt positioning booster (BPB) seat. They are: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Washington.

Table 2. State Occupant Restraint Laws as of: March 1, 2009

State	CPS Law						Seat Belt Law						"Pickup" Provisions
	"Booster" Law	child restraint Required	Enforced	Fine	Points		Belts Required	Enforced	Fine	Points			
					License	Insurance				License	Insurance		
Alabama	Yes	< Age 6	Primary	25	Yes	Yes	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	25	No	No	Yes	
Alaska	No	< Age 4	Primary	50	Yes	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	15	No	No	No	
Arizona	No	< Age 5	Primary	50	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Secondary	25	No	No	No	
Arkansas	Yes	< Age 6 and < 60 lbs	Primary	100	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Secondary	25	No	No	Yes	
California	Yes	< Age 6 and < 60 lbs	Primary	100	Yes	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	20	No	No	Yes	
Colorado	Yes	< Age 6 and < 55"	Conditional	50	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Secondary	15	Yes if less than 17	Yes if less than 17	Yes	
Connecticut	Yes	< Age 7 or < 60 lbs	Primary	60	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	15	No	No	Yes	
Delaware	Yes	< Age 8 and < 65 lbs	Conditional	25	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	25	No	No	No	
District of Columbia	Yes	< Age 8	Primary	75	Yes	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	50	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Florida	No	< Age 4	Primary	60	Yes	Yes	Drivers, all front seat occupants, less than 18 in the rear seat.	Conditional	30	No	No	Yes	
Georgia	Yes	< Age 6 and < 57"	Primary	50	Yes	No	Drivers, all front seat occupants, less than 18 in the rear seat.	Primary	15	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Hawaii	Yes	< Age 6 and < 57"	Primary	100	No	No	Drivers, all front seat occupants, ages 8-17 in the rear seat.	Primary	45	No	No	Yes	
Idaho	Yes	< Age 7	Primary	100	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Secondary	25	No	No	No	
Illinois	Yes	< Age 8	Primary	50	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants if driver is 18 or older; Driver and all occupants if driver is less than 18	Primary	25	No	No	No	
Indiana	Yes	< Age 8	Primary	25	Yes	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	25	No	No	No	
Iowa	Yes	< Age 6	Primary	25	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	25	No	No	No	
Kansas	Yes	< Age 8 and < 80 lbs and < 57"	Primary	60	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Secondary	60	No	No	Yes	
Kentucky	Yes	<7 and <50"	Primary	50	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	25	No	No	No	
Louisiana	Yes	< Age 6 and < 61 lbs	Primary	50	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	25	No	No	Yes	
Maine	Yes	< Age 8 and < 80 lbs and <58"	Primary	50	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	50	No	No	Yes	
Maryland	Yes	< Age 8 and < 57" and < 65 lbs	Primary	25	No	No	Driver and right-front seat occupants	Primary	25	No	No	Yes	

Table 2. State Occupant Restraint Laws as of: March 1, 2009

State	CPS Law						Seat Belt Law						"Pickup" Provisions
	"Booster" Law	child restraint Required	Enforced	Fine	Points		Belts Required	Enforced	Fine	Points			
					License	Insurance				License	Insurance		
Massachusetts	Yes	< Age 8 and < 58"	Primary	25	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Secondary	25	No	No	Yes	
Michigan	Yes	< Age 8 and < 57"	Primary	10	No	No	Driver, all front seat occupants, ages 4-15 in the rear seat.	Primary	25	No	No	Yes	
Minnesota	No	< Age 4	Primary	50	No	No	Driver, all front seat occupants, ages 4-10 in the rear seat.	Secondary	25	No	No	No	
Mississippi	Yes	< Age 7 and < 57" and < 65 lbs	Primary	25	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	25	No	No	No	
Missouri	Yes	< Age 8 and < 80 lbs and < 57"	Primary	50	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Secondary	10	No	No	Yes	
Montana	Yes	< Age 6 and < 60 lbs	Secondary	100	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Secondary	20	No	No	No	
Nebraska	Yes	< Age 6	Primary	25	Yes	No	Driver and front seat occupants; Drivers and all occupants if driven by provisional licensee	Secondary	25	No	No	Yes	
Nevada	Yes	< Age 6 and < 60 lbs	Primary	500	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Secondary	25	unk	unk	Yes	
New Hampshire	Yes	< Age 6 and < 55"	Primary	50	Yes	No	No requirements for drivers or occupants age 18 or older to be restrained.	na	na	na	na	No	
New Jersey	Yes	< Age 8 and < 80 lbs	Primary	100	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	50	No	No	Yes	
New Mexico	Yes	< Age 7 or < 60 lbs	Primary	25	Yes	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	25	Yes	Yes	No	
New York	Yes	< Age 7	Primary	100	Yes	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	50	No	No	Yes	
North Carolina	Yes	< Age 8 and < 80 lbs	Primary	25	Yes	No	Driver and all occupants	Conditional	25	No	No	Yes	
North Dakota	Yes	< Age 7 and < 80 lbs and < 57"	Primary	25	Yes	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Secondary	20	unk	unk	No	
Ohio	Yes	< Age 8 and < 57"	Conditional	75	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Secondary	30	No	No	Yes	
Oklahoma	Yes	< Age 6	Primary	50	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	20	No	No	No	
Oregon	Yes	< Age 8 and < 57"	Primary	77	Yes	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	90	No	No	Yes	
Pennsylvania	Yes	< Age 8	Conditional	100	No	No	Drivers, all front seat occupants, less than 18 in the rear seat.	Secondary	10	No	No	Yes	
Rhode Island	Yes	< Age 7 and < 80 lbs and < 54"	Primary	75	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Secondary	75	No	No	Yes	
South Carolina	Yes	< Age 6 and < 80 lbs	Primary	150	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	25	No	No	Yes	
South Dakota	No	< Age 5 and < 40 lbs	Primary	20	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Secondary	20	No	No	No	
Tennessee	Yes	< Age 9 and < 57"	Primary	50	No	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Primary	50	No	No	Yes	

Table 2. State Occupant Restraint Laws as of: March 1, 2009

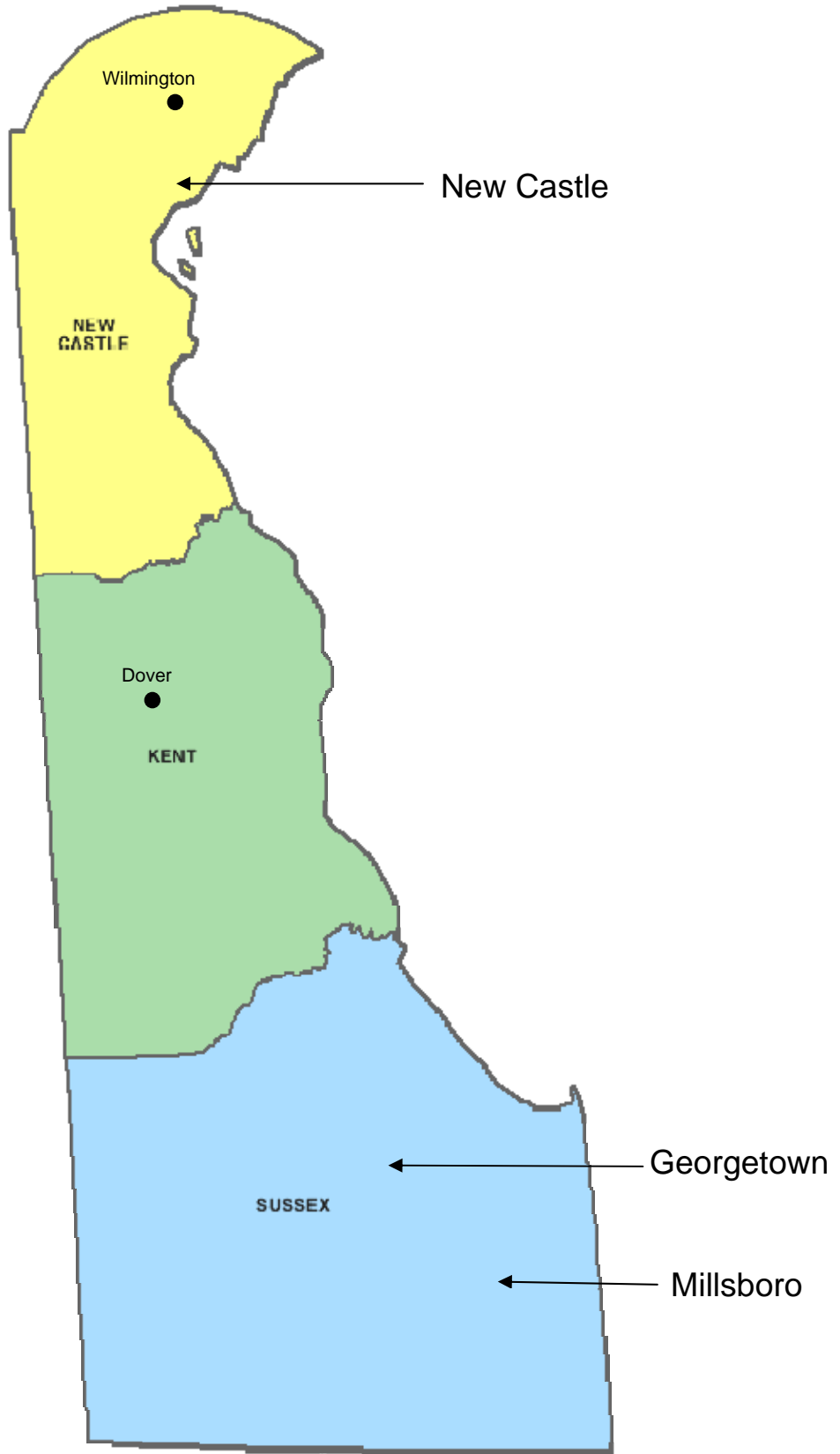
State	CPS Law						Seat Belt Law						"Pickup" Provisions
	"Booster" Law	child restraint Required	Enforced	Fine	Points		Belts Required	Enforced	Fine	Points			
					License	Insurance				License	Insurance		
Texas	No	< Age 5 and < 36"	Primary	200	Yes	No	Drivers, all front seat occupants, less than 17 in the rear seat.	Primary	200	No	No	Yes	
Utah	Yes	< Age 8 and < 57"	Primary	45	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Conditional	45	No	No	No	
Vermont	Yes	< Age 8	Primary	25	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Secondary	25	unk	unk	No	
Virginia	Yes	< Age 8	Primary	50	Yes	No	Driver and front seat occupants	Secondary	25	No	No	Yes	
Washington	Yes	< Age 8 and < 57"	Primary	124	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Primary	124	No	No	No	
West Virginia	Yes	< Age 8 and < 57"	Primary	20	No	No	Drivers, all front seat occupants, less than 18 in the rear seat.	Secondary	25	No	No	No	
Wisconsin	Yes	< Age 8 and < 80 lbs and < 57"	Primary	75	No	No	Driver and all front seat occupants and occupants of rear seats with lap and shoulder belts.	Secondary	10	No	No	Yes	
Wyoming	Yes	< Age 9	Primary	50	No	No	Driver and all occupants	Secondary	25	No	No	No	



**APPENDIX C: PROFILES OF PARTICIPATING LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

**DELAWARE  
NEW JERSEY  
PENNSYLVANIA  
WASHINGTON**

# DELAWARE



**Georgetown Police Department  
Georgetown, Delaware (Sussex County)**

Coverage Area	4.1 square miles
Setting	Rural town setting between high-volume U.S. Rte. 113 and shore points
Population	4,643 (2000 U.S. Census)
Median Household Income	\$31, 875
Racial Composition	56.2% White 20.9% African-American 2.1% Native American 0.3% Asian 0.4% Pacific Islander 18.03% Other Races 2.5% from 2 or more races  Hispanic or Latino of any race constitutes 31.73% of the population.
Number of Officers/Type	Total Number: 19 Patrol Officers: 12 CPS-certified Officers: 2
Enforcement Methods	Stationary patrols at designated sites near town center and elementary schools
Hours Dedicated	108
Child Restraint Law Citations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 - 8 yrs. old (booster seat-specific): 13</li> <li>• Up to 4 yrs. old (child restraint-specific): 5</li> <li>• Air bag/front seat violations: 6</li> </ul>
Seat Belt Law Citations	39
Other Moving and Non-Moving Citations	70
Enforcement Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stationary patrols were used.</li> <li>• Focused on downtown's center circle. The Stop sign leading into the circle was a good vantage point to observe violators of child restraint/booster seat laws.</li> <li>• Other stationary locations near the town's elementary schools were also used.</li> <li>• Participated in May '08 <i>Click It or Ticket</i> mobilization and ticketed seat belt (45) and child restraint law (3) violators.</li> </ul>

**Millsboro Police Department  
Millsboro, Delaware (Sussex County)**

Coverage Area	1.9 square miles
Setting	Rural town setting between high-volume U.S. Rte. 113 and shore points
Population	2,360 (2000 U.S. Census)
Median Household Income	\$27,379
Racial Composition	73.6% White 19.4% African-American 0.8% Native American 3.3% Asian 1.61% Other Races 1.27% from 2 or more races  Hispanic or Latino of any race constitutes 3.1% of the population.
Number of Officers/Type	Total Number: 15 Traffic Unit Officers: 3 CPS-certified Officers: 1
Enforcement Methods	Stationary patrols at designated sites near U.S. Rte. 113 and elementary schools
Hours Dedicated	160
Child Restraint Law Citations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4- 8 yrs. old (booster seat-specific): 2</li> <li>• Up to 4 yrs. old (child restraint-specific): 4</li> <li>• Air bag/front seat violations: 3</li> </ul>
Seat Belt Law Citations	38
Other Moving and Non-Moving Citations	26
Enforcement Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stationary patrols were used.</li> <li>• Enforcement details were set up at intersections and stop signs near the town's elementary schools. These activities were conducted during morning drop-off and afternoon pick up periods.</li> <li>• Participated in May '08 <i>Click It or Ticket</i> mobilization and ticketed seat belt (74) and child restraint law (2) violators.</li> </ul>

**City of New Castle Police Department  
City of New Castle, Delaware (New Castle County)**

Coverage Area	3.2 square miles
Setting	Urban/suburban industrial town near Interstate 95, within Wilmington SMSA
Population	4,836 (2000 U.S. Census)
Median Household Income	\$52,449
Racial Composition	77.5% White 20.2% African-American 0.3% Native American 0.4% Asian 0.8% Other Races 0.8% from 2 or more races  Hispanic or Latino of any race constitutes 2.4% of the population.
Number of Officers/Type	Total Number: 17 (5 participated on project), Traffic Unit Officers: 0 CPS-Certified Officers: 2
Enforcement Methods	Roving patrols and mini-cades (education-only)
Hours Dedicated	192
Child Restraint Law Citations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 - 8 yrs. old (booster-seat-specific): 18</li> <li>• Up to 4 yrs. old (child-restraint-specific): 3</li> <li>• Air bag/front seat violations: 13</li> </ul>
Seat Belt Law Citations	31
Other Moving and Non-Moving Citations	17
Enforcement Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used roving patrols.</li> <li>• Also conducted stationary set-ups near intersections where they were able to clearly see into the vehicles. They conducted these details at morning and evening rush hour. Some details were also near the town's elementary schools.</li> <li>• Participated in May '08 <i>Click It or Ticket</i> mobilization and ticketed seat belt (41) and child restraint law (1) violators.</li> <li>• The department also conducted mini-cades as part of the program. This is a checkpoint style educational event, which includes an observational component that identifies child restraint and booster seat use in the community. The mini-cades were conducted on private property. (State law prohibits enforcement activities on private property.)</li> </ul>

# Delaware Child Passenger Safety Law

[Title 21, section 4803(a)]

## A Guide for Law Enforcement

	UNDER 1 YR	1-3 YRS	4-7 YRS	8-16 YRS
LESS THAN 20 LBS	REAR-FACING SAFETY SEAT	REAR-FACING SAFETY SEAT		
20-40 LBS	REAR-FACING SAFETY SEAT	FRONT-FACING SAFETY SEAT	BOOSTER + LAP & SHOULDER BELT	
OVER 40 LBS AND UNDER 57"		BOOSTER + LAP & SHOULDER BELT	BOOSTER + LAP & SHOULDER BELT	SEATBELT
OVER 65 LBS OR OVER 57"			SEATBELT	SEATBELT

No child younger than 12 years of age and less than 5'5" in height shall occupy the front passenger seat of any vehicle with an active passenger-side airbag. [Title 21, section 4803(b)(1)]

Failure to provide a child restraint system or seatbelt for more than 1 child in the same vehicle at the same time shall be treated as a separate offense. [Title 21, section 4803(c)]

# Secure your most precious cargo

Parents can have their child safety seat inspected for free at the following locations:

## New Castle County

Wilmington DMV: Rt. 13 South In New Castle

Call 302.434.3234 for an appointment.

## Kent County

Dover DMV: Rt. 113 South In Dover

Call 302.744.2749 for an appointment.

## Sussex County

Georgetown DMV: Rt. 113 In Georgetown

C.P. Diver: Rt. 1 North In Lewes (Thursdays only)

Call 302.853.1014 for an appointment.

[www.ohs.delaware.gov](http://www.ohs.delaware.gov)



# NEW JERSEY



**Galloway Township Police Department  
Atlantic County, New Jersey**

Coverage Area	114.8 square miles
Setting	Rural township in New Jersey Pine Barrens, near seashore towns
Population	31, 209 (2000 U.S. Census)
Median Household Income	\$51, 592
Racial Composition	77.2% White 9.8% African-American 0.2% Native American 8.0% Asian 0.1% Pacific Islander 2.6% Other Races 2.2% from 2 or more races  Hispanic or Latino of any race constitutes 6.2% of the population.
Number of Officers/Type	Total Number: 57 Traffic Unit Officers: 4 CPS-certified Officers: 7
Enforcement Methods	Roving and stationary patrols
Hours Dedicated	372
Child Restraint Law Citations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 - 8 yrs. old (booster seat-specific): 129</li> <li>• Up to 4 yrs. old (child restraint-specific): 22 (70% of violators had unrestrained children; 30% of violators had child restraint/booster seat misuse)</li> </ul>
Seat Belt Law Citations	22
Other Moving and Non-Moving Citations	52
Enforcement Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated roving patrols were used.</li> <li>• Officers went out on 3- to 4-hour patrols specific to the enforcement of child restraint or booster seat law. The officers were not “on duty” to respond to other township police-involved matters. The officers often situated themselves at spots with good viewing angles into vehicles near locations where parents were driving children (e.g., shopping centers and elementary schools).</li> <li>• Sixty-three percent of violators were cited from a stationary position.</li> <li>• The police also had a policy to detain drivers with young children at the enforcement stop who did not have a child safety seat or booster seat in the vehicle until they had someone bring one to them or the police were able to give them a seat.</li> <li>• Participated in May '08 <i>Click It or Ticket</i> mobilization and ticketed seat belt (190) and child restraint law (24) violators during 20 hours of roving patrol and 10 hours of fixed checkpoint activity.</li> </ul>



**Press Release  
Galloway Township Police Department**

**GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP POLICE** in cooperation with the **NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION (NHTSA)** and the **NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF TRAFFIC HIGHWAY SAFETY (NJDTHS)** will be conducting a **CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY BOOSTER SEAT ENFORCEMENT CAMPAIGN**.

Commencing on May 9<sup>th</sup> and running through September 30<sup>th</sup> 2008, officers will be working added patrol tours. These tours will be to identify and cite vehicle operators who are not obeying New Jersey's child seat laws. Traffic collisions remain the leading cause of unintentional childhood deaths and injuries across the country. Officers, working off a federal grant, will be actively seeking these specific violations and issuing appropriate traffic citations. The **GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT** was one of only three police departments selected in the state. The department has an active interest with a number of officers trained as **CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY SEAT TECHNICIANS**. As recognition to this dedication, the state has chosen our department over many other police agencies for this campaign.

As the summer months approach, we suggest you have your child safety seat checked by one of our technicians or by attending a **CHILD SAFETY SEAT FITTING STATION**. You may make an appointment with the department for this service by calling our non-emergency number **(609)652-3705 ext 320**. If you choose to attend a fitting station, there are two to choose from;

**BENNETT CHEVYLAND  
BLACK HORSE PIKE, EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP  
(EVERY 2<sup>ND</sup> SATURDAY OF THE MONTH 10:00AM TO 2:00PM)**

**OR**

**HAMMONTON VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY  
WHITE HORSE PIKE, HAMMONTON  
(EVERY 3<sup>RD</sup> SATURDAY OF THE MONTH 10:00AM TO 2:00PM)**

Our department is steadfast in our community's *quality of life* assurances. *Please help us help you,*

**“BUCKLE UP! EVERY ONE, EVERY RIDE”**

# Police want every child to be safely secured

By **STEVE PRISAMENT**  
Staff Writer

**GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP** – Some people may view using child safety seats as an inconvenience – and getting cited with a \$54 ticket for failing to properly secure a child while driving can be an annoyance, too.

Police Lt. John Bieniakowski said he sees it as a matter of life or death.

“Though it may seem like a minor

issue, nationally we lose 1,500 to 1,700 children a year in accidents,” he said. “And for each one who dies there are about 45 who are hospitalized. Injuries don’t get as much attention as deaths.”

Bieniakowski said in an interview Monday, June 2 that child seat safety checks are being conducted in part to find out why noncompliance with the law is a continuing problem.

See **SEATS** on Page 16

# Seats

Continued from Page 1

"We are trying to increase awareness as far as people using booster seats," he said. "We have received grant money to conduct safety checks due to our commitment to having people use the seats and use them properly."

The local commitment includes having six child passenger safety seat technicians on the police force.

"They go through about 40 hours of training on booster seat installation, the results of having children safely secured, and causes for people to not properly use booster seats," said Biemakowski, who is a certified instructor. "They are available to the public on an appointment basis. People can come here with their child and booster seat and learn how to secure the seat and properly fit the child in it."

The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety has divided a national grant to promote booster seat awareness between three police departments in the state, he said, with Galloway Township being the only one in southern

New Jersey.

"They've distributed \$20,000 to each of the departments that is involved with child safety," Biemakowski said. "This is only to be used for enforcement details — which means issuing summons."

The officers are working one four-hour shift a week between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m.

"They've been instructed to direct their patrols where children are picked up and dropped off frequently," Biemakowski said. "So they're near day care centers, athletic fields, and strip malls with ice cream parlors or pizzerias."

The checkpoints which began May 12 will continue through Sept. 20, according to Biemakowski. A summons can result in a \$30 fine and \$24 court cost.

"We've partnered with the Atlantic County Sheriff's Office and the South Jersey Traffic Safety Alliance," he said. "We get safety seats from the sheriff. We've issued about 15 seats to individuals who didn't have them or didn't have proper seats. The safety alliance has been publicizing the issue for us."

He said promotional campaigns and enforcement of laws have been effective in the past.

"Seat belt usage was estimated at 70 percent before not using one became a primary offense," Biemakowski said. "Now we estimate about 90 percent seat belt usage. So it appears that education backed with enforcement works."

Child safety seats are required for children who are either under 8 years old or weigh less than 80 pounds. Violation is a primary offense, which means that drivers can be stopped and ticketed for no reason other than transporting a child improperly.

"The two biggest reasons people give for not having their child seated properly is that they did not know, followed by they were in a rush," Biemakowski said. "We're trying to make sure people know. We've promoted booster seats on the banner in front of the Municipal Complex and on GTV."

He said police often aren't quick enough to issue a safety seat summons.

"They don't want to give a young parent a ticket over

possibly a child misbehaving," Biemakowski said. "But show a parallel to DWI — an officer would take that person off the roadway. These are both safety issues. We want to make sure he gets it correct."

Other area departments with child safety seat technicians include Hamilton Township police and the county Sheriff's Office.

"People can make appointments with any of us," the lieutenant said. "There's also a fitting station at Bennett Chevrolet on the Black Horse Pike in Egg Harbor Township every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. People can bring their seat and have the size checked and learn about placement and any other issues."

He said technicians at all sites will gather information on the seat and check for manufacturer recalls, check the installation and discuss positions. The most common accidents are front-end collisions; the most lethal are side impact, he noted.

For information or to make an appointment with a Galloway Township police technician call (609) 652-3703, ext. 320.

**Passaic Police Department  
Passaic, New Jersey (Passaic County)**

Coverage Area	3.2 square miles
Setting	Urban location in north New Jersey across from New York City
Population	67,861 (U.S. census 2000)
Median Household Income	\$33, 594
Racial Composition	<p>35.4% White  13.8% African-American  0.8% Native American  5.5% Asian  0.04% Pacific Islander  39.4% Other Races  5.0% from 2 or more races</p> <p>Hispanic or Latino of any race constitutes 62.5% of the population.</p>
Number of Officers/Type	<p>Total Number: 200  Traffic Unit Officers: 7  CPS-Certified officers: 6</p>
Enforcement Methods	Checkpoints
Hours Dedicated	244
Child Restraint Law Citations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 - 8 yrs. old (booster-seat-specific): 247</li> <li>• Up to 4 yrs. old (child-restraint-specific): 117</li> </ul>
Seat Belt Law Citations	88
Other Moving and Non-Moving Citations	68
Enforcement Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several locations in the city were used to conduct CPS law enforcement checkpoints. Most of the details were conducted between 3 and 7 p.m. Checkpoints used streets with two lanes in at law enforcement agencies one direction so that one of the lanes could be partitioned off with cones and used as the parking area to process the violators. They also deployed a large “car seat checkpoint” sign (orange) upstream of the checkpoint. The checkpoints specifically enforced child restraint laws only. Teams were usually deployed with 4 officers. They assumed both spotter and ticket writer roles.</li> <li>• The officers also provided a “car seat check” as well for the drivers; and helped secure the child in the proper way if a car seat or booster seat was actually in the vehicle. They also gave out child safety seats or booster seats to some of the drivers, if the seats observed needed replacing or if there was no seat in the vehicle.</li> <li>• Participated in May '08 <i>Click It or Ticket</i> mobilization and ticketed seat belt (237) and child restraint (25) law violators, during 60 roving patrol hours and 20 checkpoint hours.</li> </ul>



**Enforcement Activity in Passaic County, NJ.**

(Photograph courtesy of Sue Menichella, Passaic Police Department)



# Child Passenger Safety Event

## **Child Seat Inspection Checkpoint**

Date: Saturday, September 6, 2008  
Time: 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM  
Place: Passaic City Hall Employee Parking Lot

ACROSS FROM:  
City of Passaic Municipal Complex  
330 Passaic Street, Passaic, New Jersey 07055

Hosted By:

Mayor Gary Schaer  
Mayor of the City of Passaic

Chief Daniel Paton  
Chief of the City of Passaic Police Department

Lieutenant Thomas Paranto  
Commander of the Traffic Division, City of Passaic Police Department

PBA Local No. 14  
Passaic Police Benevolent Association

Safe Kids, USA



FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TO HAVE YOUR CHILD'S CAR SEAT CHECKED,  
PLEASE CONTACT THE PASSAIC POLICE DEPARTMENT TRAFFIC DIVISION, AT (973)365-3920.

**Westampton Township Police Department  
Burlington County, New Jersey**

Coverage Area	11.2 square miles
Setting	Suburban location near Mt. Holly (county seat) in south New Jersey and near two major highways (N.J. Turnpike and Interstate 295).
Population	36, 915 (U.S. census 2000)
Median Household Income	\$63, 973
Racial Composition	70.8% White 21.3% African-American 0.3% Native American 3.0% Asian 0.04% Pacific Islander 1.8% Other Races 2.7% from 2 or more races
Number of Officers/Type	Hispanic or Latino of any race constitutes 6.21% of the population. Total Number: 16 Traffic Unit Officers: 7 CPS-certified Officers: 3
Enforcement Methods	Checkpoints
Hours Dedicated	387
Child Restraint Law Citations	• 4 - 8 yrs. old (booster-seat-specific): 195
Seat Belt Law Citations	• Up to 4 yrs. old (child-restraint-specific): 37
Other Moving and Non-Moving Citations	176
Enforcement Techniques	212
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law enforcement agencies focused on two sites for stationary enforcement checkpoints: County Route 541, a 4-lane highway with a center concrete barrier separating direction of traffic, which connects Mt. Holly (the county seat) to Interstate 295 and the New Jersey Turnpike; and Rancocas Rd., a 2-lane undivided suburban/rural road (County Route 626) that connects Mt. Holly to Willingboro.</li> <li>• Teams were deployed using spotters and ticket writers. Cones were spread out on the road lane markings leading up to the checkpoint. When drivers reached the spotter's station, the officers checked each vehicle for child passengers. Drivers were asked age of children; and if view was obstructed, officers opened the side doors and more closely checked the restraint use and misuse disposition of the child passengers.</li> <li>• Upon observing occupant restraint or other violations (e.g., inspection sticker expired, cell phone law), the spotters put a note on the windshield (identifying the violation) and told the driver to pull over into a parking lot for issuance of the ticket. While some violations were under the discretion of the ticket writers, Law enforcement agencies were instructed to issue tickets to child restraint and booster seat law violators, and not to issue warnings for these violation types.</li> <li>• Participated in a nighttime May '08 <i>Click It or Ticket</i> mobilization and ticketed seat belt (169) and child restraint law (11) violators during 10 hours of roving patrols and 5 hours of checkpoint activity.</li> </ul>



**Enforcement Activity in Westampton Township.**  
 (Photograph courtesy of Sandy Sinclair, U.S.DOT/NHTSA).

## PENNSYLVANIA

RECOGNIZING PROPER OCCUPANT PROTECTION USE IN NEW JERSEY			
Age: Birth to 1 year	Age: 1 to 4 years	Age: 4 to 8 years	Age: 8 years and up
Type of seat: Infant only or convertible in rear facing position	Type of seat: Forward facing with internal harness	Type of seat: Booster seat (high or low back) with vehicle lap and shoulder belt	Type of seat: Adult lap and shoulder belt (use seat belt fit test to check if child is big enough)
Weight: 0 lbs. to 20 lbs.	Weight: 20 lbs. to 40 lbs.	Weight: 41 lbs. to 80 lbs.	Weight: 80 lbs. and above

THESE ARE GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY. PLEASE VISIT [WWW.NJSAFEROADS.COM](http://WWW.NJSAFEROADS.COM) FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION. CHECK SEAT LABELS FOR MAXIMUM HEIGHT AND WEIGHT LIMITS.

### NEW JERSEY CHILD RESTRAINT LAW OVERVIEW

The driver shall secure all passengers under 8 years old or under 80 lbs. in Child Passenger Restraint System (CRS) or booster in the rear seat. If there is no rear seat, CRS must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.	All passengers 8 years old or over 80 lbs., as well as the driver and front seat passenger of an automobile, must wear a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt system. The driver is responsible for all passengers under 18 years of age.
See N.J.S.A. 39:3-76.2a for the complete statute.	See N.J.S.A. 39:3-76.2f for the complete statute.



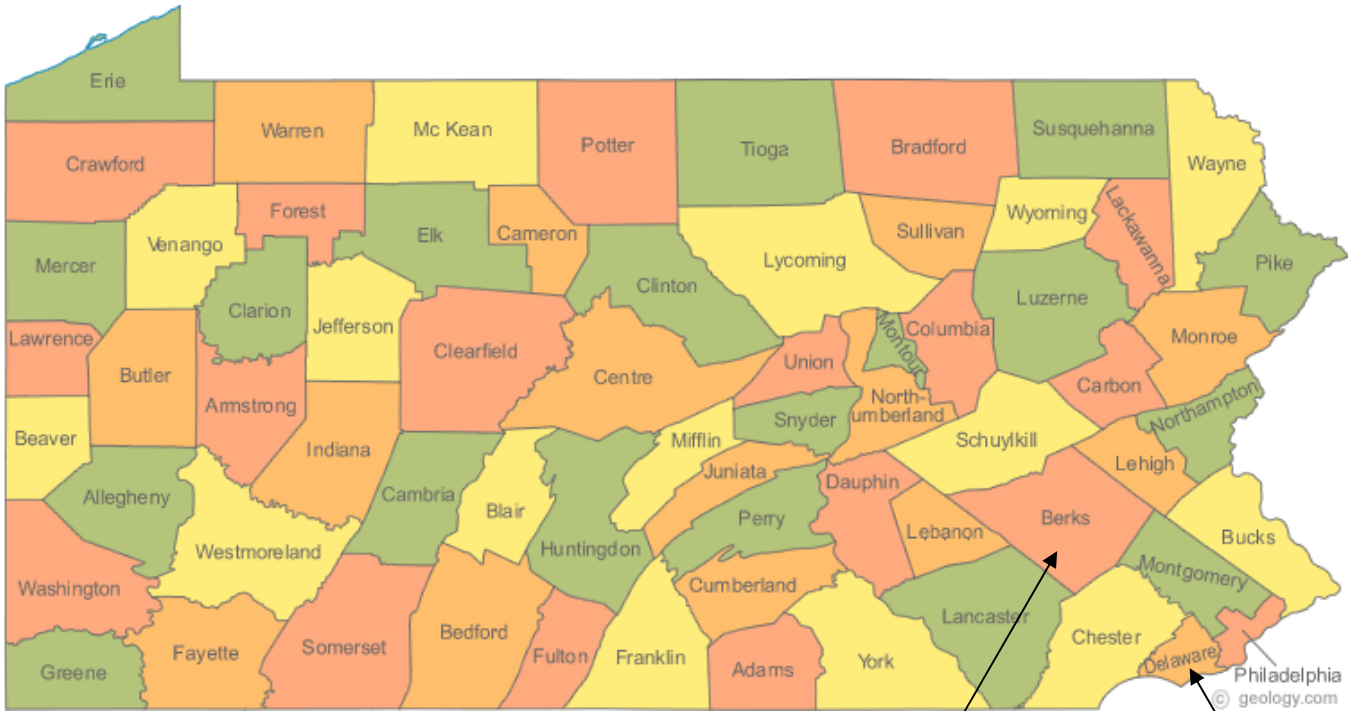
NJ OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



DIVISION OF HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY  
 WWW.NJSAFEROADS.COM







Exeter  
Township

Haverford  
Township

**Exeter Township Police Department  
Berks County, Pennsylvania**

Coverage Area	24.6 square miles
Setting	Suburban location near Reading and on a major highway (U.S. Rte. 422)
Population	21,161 (U.S. census 2000)
Median Household Income	\$59,956
Racial Composition	<p>99.3% White  0.1% African-American  0.04% Native American  0.08% Asian  0.2 % Pacific Islander  0.3% Other Races  0.04% from 2 or more races</p> <p>Hispanic or Latino of any race constitutes 0.35% of the population.</p>
Number of Officers/Type	<p>Total Number: 32  Traffic Unit Officers: 3  CPS-Certified Officers: 2</p>
Enforcement Methods	Roving and routine patrols; checkpoints
Hours Dedicated	136
Child Restraint Law Citations*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 - 8 yrs. old (booster-seat-specific): 7</li> <li>• Up to 4 yrs. old (child-restraint-specific): 15</li> </ul>
Seat Belt Law Citations*	48
Other Moving and Non-Moving Citations	69
Enforcement Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checkpoints and roving patrols were used. Instructions for enforcement in routine patrol were also given.</li> <li>• 1,700 vehicles were contacted. Warnings, citations, and traffic safety education checkpoint conducted in March '08.</li> <li>• Participated in May '08 <i>Click It or Ticket</i> mobilization and ticketed seat belt (29), child restraint law (19), and booster law (7) violators.</li> <li>• Officers found it very difficult to enforce booster seat law (secondary nature of law; need to guess age; type of roadways that were used in order to find a primary violation).</li> <li>• 60% of child restraint law citations were by routine patrol.</li> </ul>

\* In Pennsylvania, booster seat law and seat belt law violations are secondary enforcement violations.

**Haverford Township Police Department  
Delaware County, Pennsylvania**

Coverage Area	10 square miles
Setting	Suburban location near Philadelphia near one major highway (U.S. Rte. 1)
Population	48,498 (U.S. census 2000)
Median Household Income	\$76, 813
Racial Composition	94.0% White 2.1% African-American 0.1% Native American 2.8% Asian 0.01% Pacific Islander 0.2% Other Races 0.8% from 2 or more races  Hispanic or Latino of any race constitutes 0.89% of the population.
Number of Officers/Type	Total Number: 85 Traffic Unit Officers: 5 CPS-certified Officers: 1
Enforcement Methods	Roving and Stationary Patrols
Hours Dedicated	64
Child Restraint Law Citations*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 - 8 yrs. old (booster-seat-specific): 1</li> <li>• Up to 4 yrs. old (child-restraint-specific): 3</li> </ul>
Seat Belt Law Citations*	9
Other Moving and Non-Moving Citations	112
Enforcement Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roving patrols, stationary patrols, and safety checkpoints were used. Most of the time periods were between 3 and 7 p.m.</li> <li>• Officers were unable to find many booster seat violators; this was partially due to the type of roadways that were used in order to find a primary violation (required before a booster seat law violation can be cited).</li> <li>• Participated in March, May, and August '08 <i>Click It or Ticket</i> mobilizations and ticketed seat belt (120), child restraint (3), and booster (2) law violators. Used mini-cades in the mobilizations. Over 35,000 vehicles were contacted in mini-cade and safety checkpoint details.</li> </ul>

\* In Pennsylvania, booster seat law and seat belt law violations are secondary enforcement violations.

**Pennsylvania  
Child Passenger Safety Law  
A Guide for Law Enforcement**

1



**Infant:** Rear-facing child safety seat until 1<sup>st</sup> birthday and 20 pounds.

2



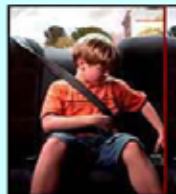
**Toddler:** Front-facing child safety seat from 1<sup>st</sup> birthday and 20 pounds to 4<sup>th</sup> birthday unless 40 pounds.

3



**Booster:** Booster seat using vehicle lap and shoulder belt from 4<sup>th</sup> birthday until 8<sup>th</sup> birthday unless 55" tall.

4



**Seat Belt:** Vehicle seat belt from 8<sup>th</sup> birthday until 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in all seating positions.

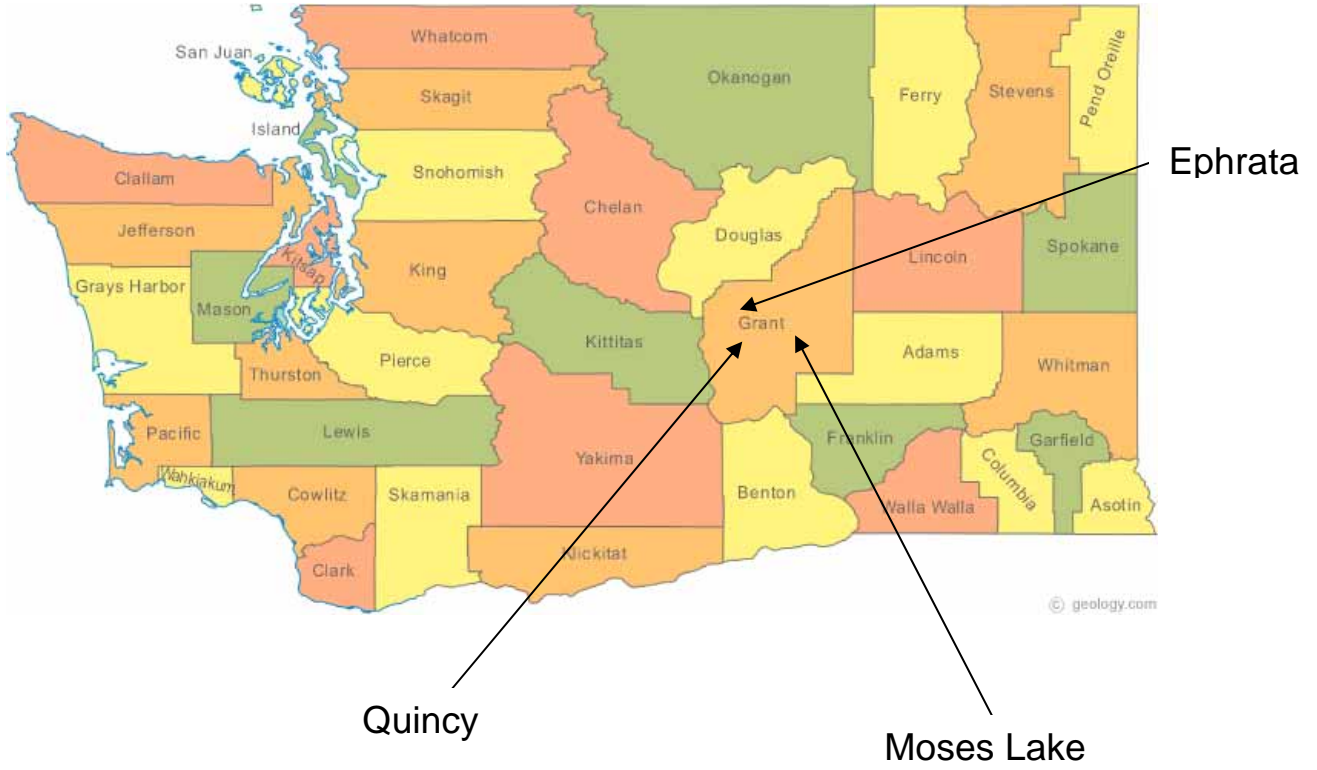
**Pennsylvania  
Child Passenger Safety Law  
A Guide for Law Enforcement**

	Under 1 yrs.	1-4 yrs.	4-8 yrs.	8-18 yrs.
Less than 20 lbs.	Rear-facing safety seat	Rear-facing safety seat		
20-40 lbs.	Rear-facing safety seat	Front-facing safety seat	Booster seat (using lap & shoulder belt)	
Over 40lbs. Under 55"		Booster seat (using lap & shoulder belt)	Booster seat (using lap & shoulder belt)	Seat belt
Over 55"			Seat belt	Seat belt

**Offense by Category**

	Rear-facing	Front-facing	Booster	Seat belt
Section 4581	4581 (a) (1)	4581 (a) (1)	4581 (a) (1.1)	4581 (a) (2)
Offense	Failed to provide/ properly use rear-facing child restraint system	Failed to provide/ properly use front-facing child restraint system	Failed to provide/ properly use an approved child restraint system	Failed to provide/ properly use seat belt

# WASHINGTON STATE



**Central Basin Traffic Safety Task Force Project  
 Selective Enforcement Campaign  
 7 Participating Police Departments  
 Grant County, Washington State**

Coverage Area	2,791 square miles (Grant County)
Setting	Rural area in central part of State, east of mountain range in a basin
Population	74,698 (2000 U.S. Census)
Median Household Income	\$35, 276
Racial Composition	<p>76.5% White          1.0% African-American          1.2% Native American          0.9% Asian          0.1% Pacific Islander          17.4% Other Races          3.0% from 2 or more races</p> <p>Hispanic or Latino of any race constitutes 30.09% of the population.</p>
Number of Officers/Type	<p>Law enforcement agencies represented several departments; however, most of the enforcement effort was operated by officers from the Grant County Sheriff's Office. The State Police, Moses Lake, Ephrata, Quincy, and Warden Law enforcement agencies contributed hours to the enforcement effort.</p> <p>CPS-certified technicians rode with officers on many of the enforcement details.</p> <p>Campaign Dates:</p> <p><u>August 2, 2007 (Warden, Mardon, Moses Lake)</u>          5 officers, 1 Safe Kids coordinator, KW tech, 1 Task Force coordinator</p> <p><u>October 25, 2007 (Mattawa/Royal City)</u>          4 officers, 3 CPS-certified techs (1 was an officer), 1 Task Force coordinator</p> <p><u>July 10, 2008 (Mattawa/Royal City)</u>          7 officers, 4 CPS-certified techs (1 officer, 1 Safe Kids coordinator, 1 FC, 1 Grant County Fire Dept. staff), 4 from Wash. Traffic Safety Commission (2 were camera crew)</p> <p><u>July 19, 2008 (Warden, Mardon, Moses Lake)</u>          5 officers, 3 CPS-certified Techs (1 officer, 1 Safe Kids coordinator, 1 Task Force coordinator)</p> <p><u>September 18, 2008 (Moses Lake, Ephrata, Quincy)</u>          8 officers and 6 CPS-certified techs (2 deputies, 1 Task Force coordinator, 1 Safe Kids coordinator, 1 Grant County Fire Dept. coordinator)</p>

	Regional EMS (7/10/08, 7/19/08) and Safe Kids Enforcement (9-18-08) grants used for publicity (i.e., air time on radio stations) and training lunch only. There was no overtime enforcement money used. State Farm provided car seat giveaways for 9-20-08 follow-up car seat check. No grant funds were used for 2007 enforcement events.
Vehicles Stopped/Contacts (Number)	329
Hours Dedicated	145
Child Restraint Law Citations	120 (booster seat and child restraint violations not distinguished)
Seat Belt Law Citations	78 violations, plus 79 verbal warnings for seat belt and child restraint laws
Other Moving and Non-Moving Citations	162
Enforcement Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated roving patrols and stationary patrols were used.</li> <li>• Enforcement involved two techniques: (1) dedicated roving patrols around streets near schools (enforcing school zone speed laws as well as booster seat laws) and (2) stationary spots at student drop-off and pick-up areas. Patrolling streets near schools provided more opportunity to issue booster seat law citations, but fewer contacts. Stationary spots at schools provided less opportunity for issuing booster seat law citation, but more opportunity for contacts and “educational” encounters.</li> <li>• All of the enforcement events were followed up the next day with a car seat check up event in the same area.</li> </ul>



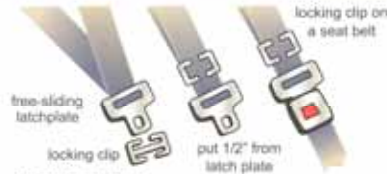
## Washington's Child Passenger Safety Law RCW 46.61.687 covers all passengers under 16 years of age

- (a) A child must be restrained in a child restraint system, if the passenger seating position equipped with a safety belt system allows sufficient space for installation, until the child is 8-years old, unless the child is 4 feet 9 inches or taller. The child restraint system must comply with standards of the U.S. Department of Transportation and must be secured in the vehicle in accordance with instructions of the vehicle manufacturer and child restraint manufacturer.
- (b) A child who is 8-years of age or older, or 4 feet 9 inches tall or taller, shall be properly restrained with the motor vehicle safety belt properly adjusted and fastened around the child's body or an appropriately fitting child restraint system.
- (c) The driver of a vehicle transporting a child who is under 13-years old shall transport the child in the back seat positions in a vehicle where it is practical to do so.

*Does not apply to:* "for hire vehicles"; vehicles designed to transport 16 or less passengers, including the driver, operated by transportation companies as defined in RCW 81.68.010; vehicles providing shuttle service between parking, convention, and hotel facilities, and airport terminals; and school buses.

- (7) Requirement to use a booster seat does not apply to: any seating position where there is only a lap belt available and the child weighs more than 40 pounds.

### LATCH (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children)



**LOCKING CLIP:**  
Check child restraint or vehicle owner's manual for correct usage instructions.

Local Contacts:

Revised May 2007

[www.800BUCKLUP.org](http://www.800BUCKLUP.org)  
En Español

[www.boosterseat.org](http://www.boosterseat.org)  
[www.abrochatuvida.org](http://www.abrochatuvida.org)

1-800-BUCK-L-UP  
1-877-7-TU-VIDA



## A Reference for Proper Child Restraint Use

	<p><b>Rear Facing Infant or Convertible Seat</b></p> <p>A child <b>must be rear-facing until the child is over one-year of age</b> and over 20 pounds. Never in front of an active air bag.</p>	<p>Harness <b>at or below</b> shoulders. Harness straps snug. Harness clip at armpit level. Seat reclined so infant's head doesn't fall forward.</p>	<p>Tightly installed with vehicle safety belt or Lower Anchors.</p>
	<p><b>Forward Facing Seat</b></p> <p>At least one-year old and between 20 and 40 pounds. Some models can accommodate heavier children.</p>	<p>Harness <b>at or above</b> shoulders. Harness straps snug. Harness clip at armpit level. Seat in upright position.</p>	<p>Tightly installed with vehicle safety belt or Lower Anchors and top Tether.</p>
	<p><b>Belt Positioning Booster Seat</b></p> <p>From about age 4 to at least age 8, unless 4 feet 9 inches tall.</p>	<p><b>A booster seat can only be used with the vehicle's lap and shoulder belt.</b> Booster seats are not required when the seating position has only a lap belt and the child weighs more than 40 pounds. The lap belt must cross the lower hips and upper thighs--never over the abdomen. The shoulder belt must be adjusted so it crosses the center of the shoulder and chest; never worn behind the back or under the arm.</p>	
	<p><b>Safety Belt</b></p> <p><b>Must be</b> at least 8-years of age or 4 feet 9 inches tall or taller.</p>	<p>Passengers should sit upright with back against the vehicle seat cushion. Lap belt must be snug across the lower hips and upper thighs—never across the abdomen. If a shoulder belt is available, it must be adjusted so it crosses the center of the shoulder and chest—never behind the back or under the arm. Note: If possible, children should continue to use a booster seat if their knees do not bend over the front edge of the vehicle seat when the child is sitting properly with back touching seat cushion.</p>	

## APPENDIX D: TOPIC GUIDE FOR DEBRIEFING SESSIONS

Meeting location:

Date:

Law enforcement agency (LEA):

LEA staffing size:

Community population:

Sociodemographic profile:

### Topics/Questions

#### A. Enforcement Methods

1) What types of booster seat law enforcement programs were used for the pilot program?

Routine patrol?

Checkpoint?

Dedicated roving patrols?

Combinations?

Others?

2) Which programs appeared to be most effective in terms of identifying violators? Why?

3) What were the staffing requirements for effectively conducting this booster seat law enforcement effort? Were there specific roles for officers on this assignment?

4) What techniques were used to facilitate a citation to the driver for a booster seat law violation? (e.g., asked children their ages?)

#### B. Challenges in Enforcing Booster Seat Law

1) What are the physical challenges of enforcing the booster seat law (e.g., tinted windows, child obstructed from view, vehicles going too fast to make clear observations, limited opportunities)?

- 2) What are the situational factors that challenge enforcing the booster seat law (e.g., perceived economic situation of the driver, multiple children improperly restrained between 4 and 8 years old)?
- 3) What are the most common reasons drivers give the officers for not properly securing their booster seat age children?
- 4) Are there other barriers (e.g., community feelings, limited target population to expend such enforcement efforts)?
- 5) Can selective child restraint law enforcement efforts really be a part of normal operations for a law enforcement agency? Are grants necessary for these selective enforcement efforts?

**C. Training, Reminder Cards, Educational Resources**

- 1) Was the initial 1 to 2 hour training session enough to prepare for the pilot program? If not, what additional information was needed?
- 2) Was the (laminated) child restraint law enforcement guide useful as a reminder or educational tool during the enforcement efforts?
- 3) Were other information/educational resources used as well during the enforcement efforts?
- 4) Are there other types of information/education needed to help the officers during child restraint law enforcement?
- 5) Is there any need for officers to go through the Child Passenger Safety Certification program and the re-certification process every two years?

**D. Strategies to Improve Enforcement of Child Restraint Laws**

- 1) Are the child restraint laws adequate in your State? Do these laws restrict efforts to enforce them? What improvements to the laws are needed?
- 2) Are revisions needed to the citation form booklet to facilitate the ease of recording child restraint law violations (especially, those related to booster seats)? If so, what are your recommendations?
- 3) What minimal levels of training and education (e.g., CPS-certified officers, annual course, roll-call videos, website training) are needed to implement booster seat law enforcement programs as part of routine patrols or dedicated enforcement efforts?

- 4) Do actions from the local courts affect your officers' motivations to enforce child restraint laws? If yes, what recommendations should be given to the courts?


**E. Other Issues**

- 1) In general, do you feel it is necessary to expend department resources to promote enforcement of child restraint laws, especially for booster seats? Are more education and publicity efforts needed?
- 2) If staffing resources/expenditures and community impact were not issues, what would be the most effective enforcement methods to use in identifying violators of the booster seat law?
- 3) What publicity/educational events does the department like to participate in the most? Examples provided:
- Delivering programs in the elementary schools
  - Attendance at special events (health fairs, community fairs)
  - Conducting "Car seat" fitting stations
  - Enforcement stops
  - Education checkpoint stops
  - Appearances in the media (e.g., billboards, radio,









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