
Sit Back-It's Elementary:

A Traffic Safety Program to Save Young Lives

Crash Dynamics Talking Points

VEHICLE POSITIONING

In order to get the most out of your car seat, it's very important that everyone be in the proper seat and position in the vehicle for a safe ride.

Here are a few easy rules to follow when getting into a new car or getting a new car seat:

Did You Make the Correct Selection?

- Take a good look at yourself. What type of car seat should you really be in?
- If you need some help, ask an adult to work with you to complete the seat belt checklist. If you can't answer yes to every question, you should be in a booster or car seat.
- *Students should be urged to follow up by checking to see that they are using the right type of restraint (car seat, booster, belt).*

Are You Facing the Correct Direction?

- This question isn't for school age children, but it's very important for babies and toddlers.
- Babies and toddlers should always ride facing the back to protect their growing bodies. When they are too big for the rear-facing seats, they will "graduate", or move on, to a forward-facing seat. It's the first step in a lifetime of safe traveling.
- Car seats that are rear facing should never be placed in front of an airbag.

Are You In the Correct Location?

- Children age 12 and under should always ride in the back seat.
- There are many reasons for this:
 - o Airbags are made to protect adult sized people, and can injure kids because of the speed they come out..
 - o The back seat is a safer place to be in most types of crashes
 - o There are too many distractions in the front for children, like the radio, siblings or friends in the back to talk to, and
- You have the rest of your life to ride up front. Sit back and RELAX!

Did You Use the Correct Installation?

- There is a correct way to install and use or secure a child in every type of car restraint.
- Parents can go to fitting stations to get a trained child passenger safety technician to make sure their seats are in safe and sound. People at the stations have lots of training to make sure seats are being used in the best way. *(Explain that a link to a list of fitting stations will be given in a handout to take home)*

DISTRACTIONS

Who knows what distracted driving is? Can you list what a few distractions might be to a driver?

Answer: Cell phones, radio, children, loud noises, eating, drinking, etc.

Don't Be a Distraction

- Don't do things that will actively distract the driver (throwing things, touching the driver, fighting, talking too much or loudly, etc.)
- Pay attention to surroundings and traffic. If your driver is on a busy road or seems stressed, try to help by being quiet.

Help Drivers Avoid Distractions

- Watch out for obviously distracted drivers and point them out to your driver.
- If your driver is texting or otherwise distracted, ask them to stop what they are doing. Tell them "I heard texting and driving is dangerous" or ask them if the message can wait.
- Tell a parent or trusted adult if you've been in a vehicle with a driver who was texting or distracted.
- *For older kids* Texting and driving is being called "the new drunk driving" because it's so dangerous. When a driver looks down to write or send a text, they are usually taking their eyes off the road for as long as it would take to drive the length of a football field!

WHAT HAPPENS IN A CRASH?

Crashes happen every day. Most are not serious and result in a scare as well as repairs to the car, too. Crashes can also be very serious, and even fender benders can be dangerous if you're not wearing a seat belt, so **buckle up!**

What happens in a crash?

- A crash occurs when a moving vehicle hits another moving vehicle or non-moving object (like a tree, pole or stopped vehicle).
- Before the crash, both the car and the people in it are traveling at the speed the vehicle is going.
- When the car stops moving, the people in it keep moving until something stops them from moving. Hopefully the thing that stops them is a seat belt.

Why seat belts are so important?

- A seat belt keeps you in place and helps you slow down with the vehicle in a crash. It also keeps you from coming into contact with parts of the car and other passengers. With a seat belt on, you will stay right where you are, while without a seat belt you will be thrown wherever the force of the crash takes you. Being thrown is the easiest way to be hurt in a crash.
- A seat belt spreads the force of the crash across your whole body, including your strong shoulders and hips. That is a lot safer.
- If you are interested in learning more about how seat belts work, there is a link¹ on our web site. Read the article and you'll never go without a seat belt again.

¹ How Stuff Works <http://auto.howstuffworks.com/car-driving-safety/safety-regulatory-devices/seatbelt1.htm>

MULTIMEDIA:

Crash Test Videos

Current Crash Video or unbuckled child in front seat versus back seat in booster <http://youtu.be/Cgjc62RAwuY>

With and without booster seat <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AccYpfcElTs>

ACTIVITIES:

Egg Crash

Materials needed: plastic or paper sheeting, a large toy car in which it's possible to tape something into a seat (such as a Barbie car), two or more raw eggs, Sharpie pen, tape, cleaning supplies.

Directions: First prepare the area with plastic or paper as this exercise can get messy. Place two eggs into a toy car. Draw faces on them or label them if you wish. Tape one egg to the toy car's seat to simulate a seat belt. Put the other egg in unbelted. Give the car a good push and let it "crash." Usually this will result in the belted egg staying in place while the unbelted egg will splatter, causing a ruckus in the classroom and hopefully helping children to understand how of a difference restraints can make.

Crash Test Dummy Positioning

Materials needed: Crash test dummy cutouts.

Set up a car using classroom chairs. Ask students to place the dummy cutouts in the vehicle according to vehicle positioning rules. Do they always put booster and car seat dummies in the back?

Role Play

Ask for four or five volunteers. Seat them in the "car" (the group of chairs) as mother, father, and two or three kids. Do a role playing exercise to see if they buckle up, if the younger kid is in a car seat, etc. This can also be used as a way to explain how important it is for children not to distract their parents.