

**Unrestrained Vehicle Occupant
CHSP Emphasis Area
Virtual Meeting Agenda**
Tuesday, January 9, 2024



Attendees:

Alyssa Johnson, Trauma Systems Manager, EMS & Trauma Systems Section, Department of Public Health & Human Services (DPHHS)
Don Smies, Richland County Health Department
Dwight Nelson, Driver Education Director, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
Jennifer Wilson, Occupant Protection Program, State Highway Traffic Safety Section (SHTSS), Planning Division, MDT
Kelly Little, EMSC, EMS & TS, DPHHS
Maureen Ward, Injury Prevention Coordinator, EMS & TS, DPHHS
Pam Langve-Davis, Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan Manager, MDT
Sheila Cozzie, Cultural Liaison/SOAR Program/Teen Program, SHTSS, Planning Division, MDT
Sgt John Spencer, Training, Montana Highway Patrol (MHP)
Spencer Harris, LE Liaison & EMS Grants, SHTSS, Planning Division, MDT
Steve Schmidt, Drive Safe Missoula, Ci-Co Health Department
Terry Mullins, MES & Trauma Systems Section Supervisor, DPHHS
Tracie Kiesel, Tri-County Buckle Up (L&C, Broadwater & Jefferson) BUMT Coordinator, MT CPS Training Contact and Coordinator
Wendy Olson Hansen, Flathead County Buckle Up Coordinator, Ci-Co Health Department

The purpose of this meeting is to report and evaluate strategies, confirm measurables, prioritize strategies, and consider new opportunities for the coming year.

Upcoming Events

- 2024 Child Passenger Safety Tech Training, <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/other/webdata/external/planning/safety/cps/training-dates.pdf>
- HSP grant applications deadline is March 1st.
- Lifesavers Conference, April 7-9, 2024, in Denver [2024 Lifesavers Conference on Roadway Safety \(eventscribe.net\)](https://www.lifesaversconference.com/)
- 2024 Montana Traffic Education Association (MTEA) Conference April 28-30th in Great Falls, MT at the Heritage Inn.
- Block calendar, 2024 Annual Meeting, Oct. 9-11, tentative, time to be confirmed.
- Submittal of occupant protection mini-grant applications- year-round.

Strategy Updates

Strategy 1: Law & Enforcement

- **S1.1 Support enhancement and implementation of mandatory minor (under 17 years of age) occupant protection laws per best practices and GDL requirements which includes other risky driving behaviors.** Dwight Nelson reports traffic education looks to be back on track. School year 2023-24 drivers' education is anticipated to be higher than past years. The curriculum is being updated to include new vehicle technology as schools are getting newer education cars. Anticipated data of curriculum is start of the new school year. An emphasis will be placed on the importance of GDL requirements and responsibilities.
- **S1.2 Continue to support Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) & SETT efforts at the state and local level focusing on unrestrained vehicle occupants among other risky driving behaviors.** Spencer Harris reported cumulative STEP program of 1,200 + citation and 8,000 hours of which 20 were seat belt citation. Looking to enhance STEP program with the potential of additional counties.

- **S1.3 Continue to support Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) & SETT efforts at the state and local level focusing on unrestrained vehicle occupants.**
Sheila Cozzie reported in FFY 2023 CSKT issued 1,100 citations in 637 hours, mostly speeding and with 5 being seat belt citations. Plans to work on opportunities with Fort Peck and Fort Belknap on additional tribal operations in future.
- **S1.4 Support efforts from safety partners and stakeholders to implement a primary seatbelt law.**
Continues to be a priority. So far there has not been someone within the state who has expressed interest in taking the lead. Members will share any community efforts with the team.

Strategy 2: Communication, Education & Injury Prevention Child Passenger

- **2.1 Sustain and grow the community-based Buckle Up Montana (BUMT) program.** BUMT coordinators report that it is business as usual, Alive at 25 classes continue to be scheduled.
An issue of concern is the posting of Alive at 25 classes. Wendy used the example of a young person ticketed in Flathead but who may be a student in Bozeman. Is there a possibility to include classes on MHP site? Also, a question was posed on whether there is any thought to coordinating BUMT activities for the coming year.
 - Wendy Olson Hansen and Sgt John Spencer to discuss.
 - BUMT coordinators to share coordination ideas with Jennifer Wilson
- **2.2 Sustain and grow the Safe On All Roads - SOAR - Tribal community program focusing on seat belt and child passenger seat use.** Sheila Cozzie reported the program will receive a GHSA grant in 2023. Poster concepts are being finalized w/ Duft Watterson. Sports campaign should roll out in Feb-Mar. More information to come at the March meeting.
- **2.3 Sustain and grow the Teen Traffic Safety Program,** Sheila reported that six FCCLA charter groups submitted applications. Unlike previous years, this year there was no additional funding sources from other organizations, leaving only NHTSA funding for the program.
- **2.4 Sustain and grow the Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Certification Training Program and inspection stations in Montana with increased focus on high-risk populations.** Tracie Kiesel reported that as of 01/04/2024 there are 270 CPS techs and 15 CPS instructors covering 41 counties with some techs covering additional bordering counties. In FFY 2023 four CPS tech certification courses were held. In FFY 2024, four and possibly five CPST Certification courses may be held.

Montana currently has 11 certified special needs trained techs/ instructors in Kalispell, Polson, Missoula, Deer Lodge, Great Falls, Choteau, and Helena. Wendy Olson Hansen houses the special needs seats. Koreen Bloom has extensive knowledge and covers Billings.

Efforts to sustain the program include regularly scheduled instructor meetings, monthly newsletters and webinars, and the 17th Annual Statewide Tech Update scheduled for May 2, 2024, in Helena.

2024 Child Passenger Safety Tech Training. Next public course is January 23-26, in Helena, <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/other/webdata/external/planning/safety/cps/training-dates.pdf>

- **2.5 Continue to support and sustain purchase and distribution of child passenger safety seats.**
 Jennifer Wilson reported that in FFY 2023, 352 convertible car seats and 235 hi-back car seats totaling 587 car seats were distributed to families in need. It is anticipated that the same number of car seats will be purchased in 2024. Jennifer encouraged anything with knowledge of other funding sources to contact her.
- **2.6 Development and distribution of public information and educational materials on current research on safety messaging to effect behavioral change on the importance of seat belt use and child safety seats.**
 Jennifer reported that she is working to update the CPS publications and posters and will share with the BUMT coordinators for final review. Tammy Ross noted that IJA has included the NHTSA initiative of heatstroke of unaccompanied occupants left in hot vehicles. Messaging will be included in CPS messaging and discussions with parents. Media to be developed. Suggestion to include distribution to DPHHS Health in the 406 eblast. [Child Heatstroke Prevention: Prevent Hot Car Deaths | NHTSA](https://www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/heatstroke)
<https://www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/heatstroke>
- **2.7 Continue to support occupant protection (OP) mini grant funding for community education and outreach.**
 Jennifer noted that mini grant program is open year around and application can be submitted at any time. Funding for Traffic safety Projects including mini grants [Funding for Traffic Safety Projects | Montana Department of Transportation \(MDT\) \(mt.gov\)](https://www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/grants/)
<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/grants/>
 A few past mini-grant activities include

 - Special needs CPS training
 - Additional training equipment
 - Richland County Battle of the Belts
- **2.8 Continue to encourage state agencies and other safety partners to distribute coordinated and consistent educational safety messaging campaigns to increase seat belt and child passenger safety awareness and use.**
 Jennifer shared the MDT is rolling out a new campaign to increase safety on our roadways, focusing on the need of every road user to participate in “Engage.” Learn more about MDT’s new campaign and check out the safety videos from Andy the Aussie, Troy Andersen and Montana’s own student athletes, Tommy Mellott and Dani Bartsch by visiting <https://www.engage-mt.org/>

Strategy 3: Improve Unrestrained Vehicle Occupant Data

- **3.1 Continue to conduct observational seat belt surveys, local and statewide.**
 Annual seat belt use observations are a NHTSA core measure. NHTSA has not confirmed observational data for 2023. Results are anticipated by March.
- **3.2 Continue to evaluate behavioral surveys on occupant restraint use to include teen and adult behavior.** The Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) conducted by OPI, is a self-reported safety behavior by MT youth used to identify the leading causes of mortality, morbidity, and social problems among youth. 2023 YRBS updates are anticipated to be available in March.
- **3.3 Child Passenger Car Seat data collection on use and misuse of child safety restraints and distribution of car seats.**
 Yellowstone County Safe Kids representative Koren Bloom reported in FFY 2023 231 car sets were checked and 81 car seats were distributed to families in need. The average misuse rate was 93%.

Tracie Kiesel provided an update based on the National Digital Car Seat Check Form (NDCSCF) reporting by state certified CPS technicians, as of 01/09/2024, there are 104 users,

- 803 seat checks entered from July 2018-October2023,
- 474 seat checks in 2023, (an increase of 59% in 2023).

2023 misuse rate of seats entered is 71.2%*

Top four misuse categories:

- Correct use of seatbelt to install CR (too loose)
- Correct tether use (not used at all)
- Correct Harness Use (too loose)
- Lower anchor use (too loose)

(*Not all cps techs use this system so not all seat check data is available.)

Next Meeting- March 12th Agenda Topics

- Sheila Cozzie Strategy 2.2: SOAR: Proper Traffic Safety Behavior/ Sports campaign Update
- Sheila Cozzie Strategy 2.3: Teen Traffic Safety/FCCLA Update
- Dwight Nelson- Strategy 3.2: 2023 YRBS Update
- Tracie Kiesel- Strategy 3.3 National Digital Car Seat Check Form (NDCSCF) Update
- Tammy Ross -Strategy 3.4 Traffic Safety Culture Pooled Fund Studies (TSCPFS)
- Report project and plan benchmarks for upcoming Executive Leadership Team

Adjourned at 10:47 a.m. Motion by Terry Mullins, second by Steve Schmidt. Minutes by Pam Langve-Davis.