

**Unrestrained Vehicle Occupant
CHSP Emphasis Area
Virtual Meeting Agenda**
Tuesday, February 4, 2025



Attendees:

Alison Malensek, Impaired Driving Grant Manager, State Highway Traffic Safety Section (SHTSS), MDT
Alysa Johnson, Trauma Systems Manager, EMS & Trauma Systems, Department of Public Health & Human Services (DPHHS)
Heidi Moran, Injury Prevention/ DUI Task Force, Richland County Health Department
Kelly Little, EMS for Children, EMS & Trauma Systems, DPHHS
Kevin Dusko SHTSS Supervisor, MDT
Koren Bloom, EMS coordinator, AMR- Billings, Safe Kids Yellowstone County
Maureen Ward, Injury Prevention Coordinator, EMS & TS, DPHHS
Michael Houghton, Director, Traffic Education, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
Pam Langve-Davis, CHSP Manager, MDT
Sheila Cozzie, Cultural Liaison/SOAR Program/Teen Program, SHTSS, MDT
Spencer Harris, LE Liaison & EMS Grants, SHTSS, MDT
Steve Schmidt, Drive Safe Missoula, Ci-Co Health Department
Tammy Ross, Bureau Chief, Transit & Safety Planning Bureau Chief, MDT
Terry Mullins, EMS & Trauma Systems Section Supervisor, DPHHS
Tracie Kiesel, Tri-County Buckle Up (L&C, Broadwater & Jefferson) BUMT Coordinator, MT CPS Training Coordinator
Wendy Olson Hansen, Flathead County BUMT Coordinator

The purpose of this meeting is to report on activities that have been accomplished in the last 4 months; to share events planned for the coming year; and learn what activities the work group could help with or promote within their agencies and networks.

Old Business

The annual transportation safety meeting was well attended and *Superhero's* presentation well received. A write up was included in the Winter 2024 edition of the <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/docs/newsletters/newsline/2024/winter24.pdf>

Strategy 1: Law & Enforcement

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 during Labor Day mobilization there were 168 seat belt citations, 25 seat belt warnings, 7 child seat belt citations, and 1 child seat belt warning. Overall, for FFY 2024 third period there were: 237 seat belt citations, 31 seat belt warnings, 9 child seat belt citations, and 2 child seat belt warnings.

S1.3 Continue to support Tribal law enforcement Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) efforts focusing on unrestrained vehicle occupants among other risky driving behaviors. (HSP, Strategy 5, Law Enforcement, p.60)

- Sheila Cozzie reported that CSKT STEP conducted High Visibility Enforcement with 628 STEP hours, 932 citations of which 5 were seat belt citations.

S1.4 Support efforts from safety partners and stakeholders to implement a primary seatbelt law.

Anyone looking at discussing, reviewing or updating the current seat belt law please direct them to Steve Schmidt. Steve will be the point of contact to provide updates on any legislative changes regarding seat belt law.

Strategy 2: Communication, Education & Injury Prevention

S2.1 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. Three classes were held in Lewis & Clark County in October, November, and January.
- Steve Schmidt provide an update of two new games on Drive Safe Missoula [Games | Drive Safe Missoula](#) which are only available and playable on a computer, the first is a Classic Snake game, but instead of a snake, it's a seat belt. The more times you buckle up the longer the seat belt grows. The second game is a Classic 3x3 slide puzzle of the Drive Safe Missoula Logo. This one works on mobile phones or the computer. Why? To further demonstrate the power of AI. I'm not a computer programmer and would have never been able to do anything like this before. Now with a couple prompts, boom. Two games that will hopefully keep some engaged long enough to help reinforce a positive traffic safety message without me telling them what to do.

S2.2: Sustain and grow Safe On All Roads - SOAR - Tribal community program focusing on seat belt and child passenger seat use.

- Sheila Cozzie reported in FFY 2024 that Tribal SOAR coordinators distributed 149 child passenger safety seats.
- The sports campaign is currently being updated and should roll out before March.

S2.3: Sustain and grow the Teen Traffic Safety Program

- Outreach and coordination continue with Buckle Up MT Coordinator Wendy Olson with schools in the Northwest part of the state including Missoula, Hot Springs, Big Fork, Columbia Falls with education programs and 'Battle of the Belt' competitions; and ongoing activities with new FCCLA coordinator in Columbia Falls.
- Sheila Cozzie continues work with local community FCCLA high school coordinators and with Koren Bloom with Safe Kids Yellowstone County.

S2.4: 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

- Dec 3-6, 2024: Bozeman CPST Certification Course with 7 Instructors, 26 Technicians. Course attendees represented Bozeman Fire (8), Bozeman Health, Bozeman Thrive, Healthy Gallatin, Park County Rural Fire, Three Forks Ambulance, Carbon County Public Health, Beaverhead EMS, Enterprise Car Rental, Box Elder Tribal Health, Madison County Sheriff's Office, Whitehall EMS, and Choctaw Nation Tribal Partners(8)-Oklahoma.
- Two CPST Renewal Courses, December 3, 2024- Bozeman: 2 Instructors, 1 Technician-Bozeman & December 6, 2024-Bozeman: 3 Instructors, 3 Technicians-Great Falls, Helena, & Boulder.
- 2025 Stats: Currently, 281-MT CPS Technicians, 15-MT CPS Instructors, and 7- MT Special Needs Technicians and 4-MT Technician Proxies. Calendar year 2024 MT CPS Technician Recertification Rate is 52% compared to calendar year 2024 National CPS Technician Recertification Rate which is 50.62%
- 2025 Planned Activities-
 - Three (3) upcoming CPST Certification Courses:
 - April 9-12: Billings.
 - April 29-May 1: Havre, Closed Course for Native American Programs and Partners.
 - April 29-May 2: Bozeman, Closed Course for Bozeman Fire.
 - Annual CPS Instructor and Tech Meeting-
 - May 7, 2025: Helena - Annual in-person MT CPS Instructor Team Meeting.
 - May 8, 2025: Helena- 18th Annual MT CPS Technician Update with confirmation of two national speakers, hands on activities, and installations of newer model Child Restraints, 6 CEU's & Technician Seat Checks for Recertification, and a Public Check-Up Event.
- Inspection Stations in Billings area- Koren Bloom, Safe Kids Yellowstone reported that four inspection stations include AMR-Billings, Lockwood Fire Station, Laurel EMS, and Child Clinic.

Monthly events are held at AMR, quarterly events at Laurel EMS and Lockwood Fire. A certification course will be held April 9-12, 2025, the Hybrid STAC course in person June 25, and a 2-hour Tech Update followed by a checkup event on August 9. Calendar invites are being sent to the Eastern half of the state, anyone else that would like to attend can send an email to safekidsyellowstoneco@gmail.com and I will add them to the invite list.

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. (HSP, Strategy 2, Traffic Records, p. 48)

- Maureen Ward shared that she is working with CDC mini grant funding to provide training focusing on injury prevention and cps tech training.
- Koren Bloom, Safe Kids Yellowstone has coordinated two large events for high school students in Billings and will continue to facilitate quarterly meetings to include seat belt awareness, driver safety, and Impact Teen Driver presentations with Billings West, Billings Senior, Billings Skyview, and Lockwood schools.

Strategy 3: Improve Unrestrained Vehicle Occupant Data

3.1 Continue to conduct observational seat belt surveys, local and statewide.

The core measure is to improve observed seat belt rates to 90.2% by 2025.

- New site locations are updated every year with the most recent change in FFY 2023. The survey methodology to determine the percentage of observed use has been updated. Outside consultants will be conducting future observational surveys. The FFY 2024 Montana Observed Seat Belt Survey was 79%. [Traffic Safety Facts Crash-Stats: Seat Belt Use in 2023 – Use Rates in the States and Territories](#)

S3.2 Continue to evaluate behavioral surveys on occupant restraint use to include teen and adult behavior,

The reporting of the Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and the MT Needs/Prevention Assessment is on the odd year reporting of the OPI's YRBS which is typically reported in late fall. The YRBS is a self-reported safety behavior survey by MT youth used to identify the leading causes of mortality, morbidity, and social problems among youth. The YRBS and the MT Prevention Assessment

S3.3 Child Passenger Car Seat data collection on use and misuse of child safety restraints and distribution of car seats.

- Tracie Kiesel reported the car seat check information from the National Digital Check Form (NDCF) Database indicated that 70.9% - MT Car Seat Misuse Rate for 2024 at 70.9% compared to the - National Car Seat Misuse Rate of 70.7% for 2024

Upcoming Trainings & Announcements

- NHTSA Occupant Protection mini-grant applications continue year-round.
- 2025 Lifesavers Conference, Long Beach, March 9-11
- 2025 Montana Traffic Education Association (MTEA) Conference, Great Falls, April 27-29th
- 2025 Child Passenger Safety Tech Training [Child Passenger Safety Training Dates & Locations](#)
- 2025 MT CPS Instructor Team Meeting (in-person) - Helena, May 7
- 18th Annual MT CPS Technician Update-Helena, May 8
- NHTSA Occupant Protection Assessment, week of May 19-23
- 2025 American Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association Conference, Billing, MT-July 20-23 [Annual Conference | ADTSEA](#)
- 2025 Annual Transportation Safety Meeting, August 13 & 14

Meeting Adjourned at 10:41 AM