

## Helping Kids Ride Safe Child Passenger Protection Workshops

# news

# NHTSA



Leigh Seaver shows Dr. Leroy Dunn, Chief of the Division of Driver and Pedestrian Education, one of the child restraint posters developed by the Highway Safety Research Center of the University of North Carolina for the Child Passenger Protection Workshops.

Auto crashes are the leading cause of death and serious injury in all children over the age of 1 month. In 1977, 920 children under the age of five were fatally injured while riding in motor vehicles, and 1,360 children died who were between five and 14 years of age.

Because many of these deaths and injuries could be prevented, the Office of Driver and Pedestrian Education, TSP, is working on a project to educate parents about the need to use child restraint systems. TSP is planning 10 regional Child Passenger Protection Workshops in the coming months to stimulate and enhance the child passenger protection programs already being conducted by volunteer organizations around the nation.

The Child Passenger Protection Workshops have been designed to ensure that the energy of activist groups is channeled most constructively, Leigh Seaver, TSP, says. Participants at each workshop will be primarily from grass roots organizations, although some State officials and representatives of major organizations will be invited, too. The number of participants is limited to 35 per workshop.

Each regional workshop will be conducted by Dr. B. J. Campbell, Forrest Council, and Beverly Orr of the Highway Safety Research Center of the University of North Carolina under contract to the NHTSA. They plan to provide technical information and materials to help grass roots  
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Editor M. J. Noll

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## Kids Car Safety (from page 1)

organizations do a more effective job in educating parents about child restraint systems.

Elaine Weinstein, TSP, says the two-day workshops have three objectives: to increase the level of activity and effectiveness of grass roots organizations; to establish channels for the distribution of audio-visual and print materials on child restraints to the public through community organizations; and to stimulate the development of special community programs to promote child restraint use among lower income parents.

Combining lecture and discussion sessions will give participants the opportunity to share their personal experiences in setting up local programs, working with State Legislatures, and promoting other efforts such as stimulating auto dealers to stock, display, and advertise child restraint devices, Weinstein says.

The workshops will also discuss the general

## Three Rules for Child Safety

1. Insure that safety belts or child restraints (for children under five years of age) are always used.

2. Make sure that children sit in the rear seats.

3. Never leave the hatchback open when a child rides in the back of a car.

problem of what happens to occupants in a crash, the protection provided by restraint systems, and the problems experienced in getting occupants to use safety belts and child restraints. Some attention will be given to the events which led to the passive restraint mandate. These workshops will also feature air bag and passive belt cars and will focus on the total NHTSA occupant restraint program and how child restraint activities relate to it.

The remainder of each two-day workshop will consist of lecture, group discussion, and audio-visual sessions to provide a firm base of technical information and a set of effective parent education strategies.

"The workshops will be contributing to a large social movement that did not originate with the DOT," Seaver says. "There are many enthusiastic, involved volunteers across the country who have been working with hardly any financial or technical backing to educate parents about the need to use child restraints."

Citizens groups like Jaycees, hospital auxiliaries, groups of pediatricians, and prenatal care classes are involved in promoting the use of child restraints, he says. In some places, these organizations are even forming "loaner" groups that pool restraint equipment. Parents then can borrow or rent the proper equipment without having to buy new models

as their child grows.

Properly used, child restraint systems have been shown to reduce deaths by 92-96%. To date, however, nearly 90% of children under the age of five ride unprotected in motor vehicles, Seaver says.

Seaver, a parent himself, says that the passage of a child restraint usage law in Tennessee has generated much interest around the country. The legislative push in Tennessee was led by a group of pediatricians and early reports show that the use of child restraint systems has increased considerably since the law was enacted. Tennessee's law may be just the beginning, Seaver adds. At least 17 States have introduced similar child restraint usage legislation in current legislative sessions.

NHTSA is promoting the safety and well-being of the Nation's children in other ways, too. Currently, rulemaking activities are under way on FMVSS 213 to upgrade the requirements for child restraint systems. NHTSA is also planning a National Child Passenger Safety Conference scheduled for this fall. The Child Passenger Protection Workshops program is a prelude to the National Conference, which has been planned to promote and coordinate child restraint activities nationwide, Weinstein says.

The National Child Pas-

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senger Safety Conference and the workshops are being held during the U.N. International Year of the Child. They are examples of NHTSA's commitment to the safety of the Nation's children.

## Creativity...

Attitudes and mental habits that stifle creativity have been cited by Executives' Digest:

1. Excessive need for order. This encourages inflexible thinking and discourages originality.
2. Reluctance to play--with things, ideas, words, people. Individuals who are afraid of "looking silly" rarely innovate.
3. Resource myopia. Society values realism, i.e., seeing things as they are, whereas innovation requires seeing things as they might be.
4. Reluctance to risk. Innovation depends on a willingness to stick one's neck out.
5. Reluctance to exert influence. Fear of seeming "pushy" results in acceptance of the established way of doing things even when there is a better way.
6. Overcertainty. The "disease of specialists"--those who are experts or think they are--closes the mind to new approaches.

How open are you?

## Thought Provoker

What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity.

Joseph Addison

## Personnel

### 'Bye and Good Luck

Robert W. Aubuchon, Safety Compliance Engineer, EF, 1-27.

Lewis T. Milliken, Chemist, RD, 2-9.

Barbara J. Bullock, Clerk-Typist, EF, 2-10.

Sylvia B. Smith, Clerk-Typist, RD, 2-13.

Robert H. Cook, Public Information Specialist, PACP, 2-20.

Roger H. Compton, Director, Engineering Systems Staff, RM, 2-23.

Joan E. Edwards, Clerk (DMT), TS, 2-28.

### Congrats on Promotion

Stephen H. Cohen, Operations Research Analyst, RD, 2-11.

William M. Elliott, Safety Standards Engineer, RM, 2-11

Barry D. Eisemann, Computer Systems Analyst, RD, 2-11.

Christine E. Fisher, Auto Safety Hotline Operator, EF, 2-11.

Dennis M. Flemons, Mathematical Statistician, RD, 2-11.

Carolyn A. Green, Clerk (DMT), AD, 2-11

Edward S. Korzeniowski, Safety Compliance Engineer, EF, 2-11.

Deborah Mazyck, Auto Safety Hotline Operator, EF, 2-11.

Hugh F. Oates, Attorney Advisor, OCC, 2-11.

Karen L. O'Bannon, Clerk (DMT), RD, 2-11.

Gerald M. Royston, Budget Analyst, AD, 2-11.

Judith L. Stone, Special Assistant to the Administrator, NOA-01, 2-11.

Marian T. Tomassoni, Secretary (Steno), PACP, 2-11.

## Accident Facts

The 1977 Annual Report of the Fatal Accident Reporting System provides several facts about 1977 fatalities of particular interest.

Almost 60 percent of the fatalities occurred in rural areas.

Passenger automobiles were the type of vehicle having the largest percentage of fatalities (57 percent of all fatalities).

More than half (55 percent) of the fatalities were drivers.

U.S. and State routes were cited as the accident location in which 51 percent of the fatalities occurred. Only 9 percent occurred on interstate highways.

The largest percentage of fatalities (29 percent) occurred in the summer; the smallest percentage occurred in the winter (20 percent).



## A Letter From a Parent

This letter was recently received in the Office of Allan Bass, Middlesex County Traffic Safety Coordinator, North Brunswick, New Jersey. Mr. Bass comments, and we concur, that "if any driver can resist its appeal, he has no business with a driver's license."

Dear Driver:

A few weeks ago, I saw a little girl struck by a car as she tried to cross the street. I saw her father race toward her and hold her to him as she struggled in the agony of death. I saw all the plans that had been made for her dashed and I saw the look of despair that came over her face. I could only offer a prayer that such a thing might never happen again.

Today my daughter, who is 6 years old, started off to school. Her cocker spaniel, whose name is Scott, watched her leave and whined his belief in the folly of education.

Tonight we talked about school. She told me about the girl who sits in front of her, a girl with yellow curls, and about the boy across the aisle who makes faces; about the teacher who has eyes in the back of her head; about the trees in the school yard and the big girl who does not believe in Santa Claus.

We talked about a lot of things--tremendously vital and unimportant things. Now, as this is

written, she is sound asleep with her doll "Paddy" in her arms. When her doll gets broken or her finger gets cut or her head gets bumped, I can fix them. But, when she starts across the street--then, Mr. Driver, she is in your hands.

Much as I wish I could, it's not possible for me to be with her all the time. I have to work to pay for her home, her clothes, her education.

So, Mr. Driver, please help me to look out for her. Please drive carefully. Please drive slowly past schools and at intersections. And, please remember that sometimes children run from behind parked cars.

Please don't run over my little girl.

Very sincerely yours,

(signed) Father

## Our Best Wishes

Joseph J. Levin left NHTSA on February 23 to join the law firm of Charles Morgan, Jr. and Associates of Washington, D.C.

Mr. Levin had served in the position of Chief Counsel for NHTSA since May 1977. In that capacity, he led NHTSA's negotiations with Firestone Tire Company which resulted in the largest recall, to date, in the history of the automobile industry.

We wish him good luck in his new endeavor.

## A Prayer for the Road

Grant me, O Lord, a steady hand and watchful eye,  
That none shall be hurt  
as I pass by.

You gave life--I pray no act of mine take away or mar that gift Divine.  
Protect those, dear Lord,  
Who travel with me from highway dangers and all anxiety.

Teach me to use my car for others' needs  
And never to miss through excessive speed the beauty of the world.

Fr. Gregory Bezy, S.C.J.  
Sacred Heart Auto League

## Softball Anyone?

NHTSA will again enter a team in the DOT/ERA Men's Slowpitch Softball League. All NHTSA and Coast Guard employees are eligible. Play will begin in early May. Those interested in playing should contact Tim Abney or Tom Hollowell of R&D (426-4862).

## 'Round About NHTSA

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Walter Murianka who became the proud parents of a baby boy, Philip Joseph, 6 lbs, 7 oz., on March 9. Joann Murianka works in Enforcement as Secretary to the Director of Defects Investigation. Philip is their first child.