



high five

rural traffic safety project

An Instructional Guide for Building a High Five Rural Seat Belt Program

February 2026



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration



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16. Abstract <p>The <i>High Five</i> Rural Traffic Safety Project was designed by Iowa's Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau and first implemented in 2014 to address the disproportionate number of fatalities on the State's rural roadways. The project brought together State and rural stakeholders and focused on increasing seat belt use and addressed safety issues on problematic roadway segments in program counties. <i>High Five</i> uses a systemic, data driven, multi-disciplinary approach to achieve a safety outcome (e.g., increased seat belt use) and hinges on the development of a Rural Traffic Safety Advisory Board (RTSAB), collaborative program planning, and the use of the three E's: enforcement, education, and engineering. Program implementation involves coordinated multi-jurisdictional law enforcement, publicity and outreach sustained over a 12-month program period. Program developers in Iowa reported promising results after the first year of implementation and highlighted strengthened interagency relationships as an additional positive outcome of the program. The program was demonstrated in two States, Arkansas and Kentucky, over a 12-month program period and evaluated program processes and outcomes on observed seat belt usage. A final report (DOT HS 813 764) describes Iowa's <i>High Five</i> model and the development of two demonstration programs, summarizes the efforts of project teams, and provides qualitative insights including lessons learned, program limitations, future adjustments, and suggested steps to replicate the program. This guide provides steps for implementing a <i>High Five</i> program in your State along with helpful insight and tips from program planners and implementers.</p>			
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Included in this guide are steps for implementing a *High Five* program in your State along with helpful insight and tips from program planners and implementers. Before getting to the steps, it is important to know about *High Five*'s background.

Background

The *High Five* Rural Traffic Safety Project was developed and implemented in 2014 by the Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau (GTSB) in response to a stagnant rate of unrestrained fatalities and lower seat belt usage across rural areas of the State.

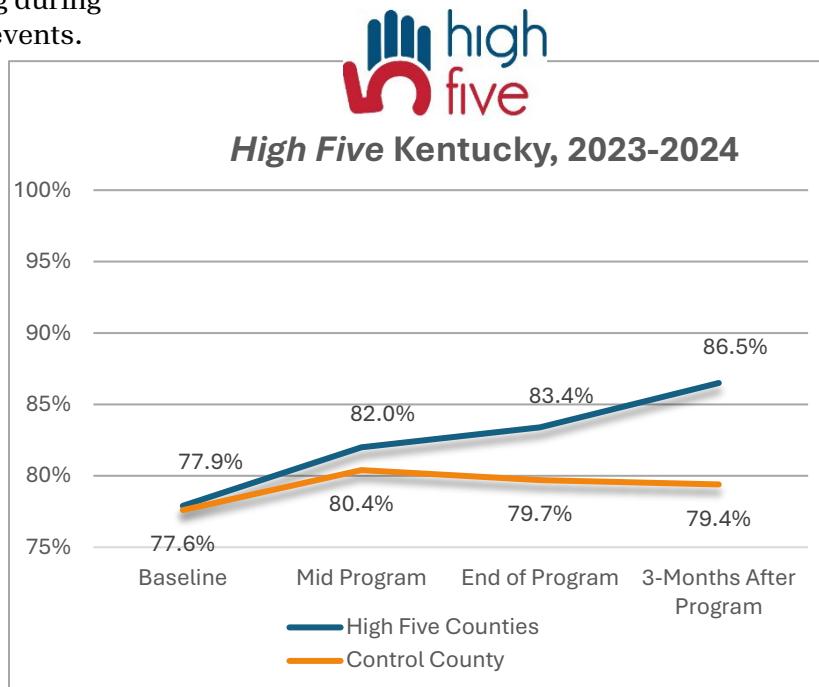
The *High Five* program was designed to be carried out, in large part, by county sheriff's offices (CSOs) that serve rural areas along with their State police partners. Law enforcement officers take every opportunity to share *High Five* branded messaging during stops, in schools, and at community events. Coordinated enforcement details focusing on seat belt safety are conducted at least two days a month for the

The State of Kentucky launched their own *High Five* program in 2023 following Iowa's example. The program was a measured success. The program is continuing into years 2025 and 2026.

duration of the 12-month program period. Unlike other programs that use law enforcement, the *High Five* program is less citation-centric, providing room for officer discretion, while urging the public that it is their responsibility to make rural roads less dangerous and safer.

Program participants in Iowa reported an increase in seat belt use after the first year of implementation. Stakeholders attributed a small decrease in the overall number of crashes in the *High Five* counties and a slight percentage point decrease in unrestrained passenger vehicle fatalities to program efforts.

These results prompted NHTSA to demonstrate and evaluate similar programs in 2022 and 2023 in Arkansas and Kentucky. Results of observational seat belt surveys in two demonstration locations indicated an increase in seat belt use in all *High Five* counties in both States, with statistically significant changes in several counties, indicating an effect of the program on seat belt usage.



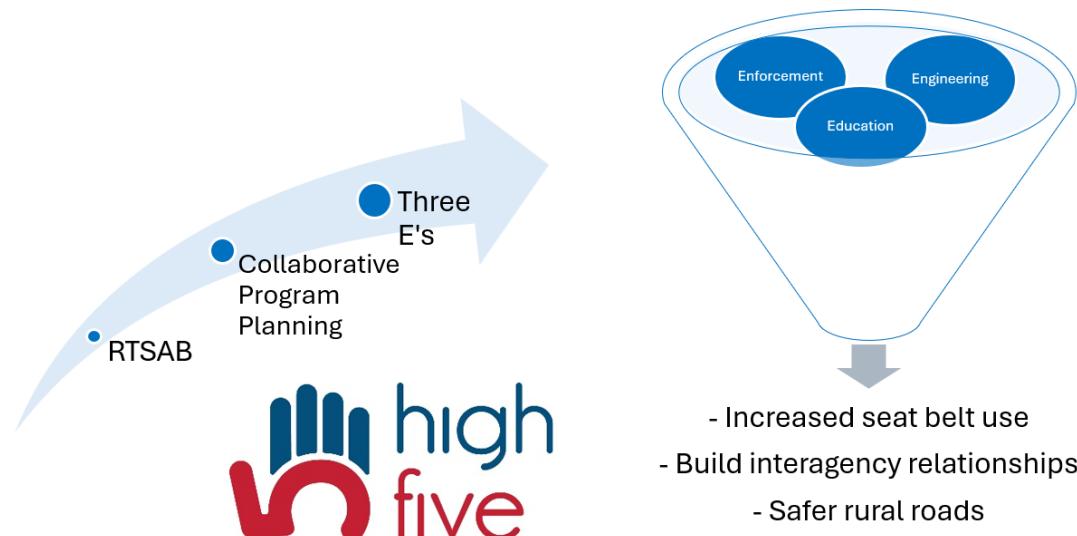
A closer look at implementation efforts revealed that the counties with a significant improvement in belt use implemented more multi-disciplinary efforts than other counties. Analysis of historical citation data indicated the number of seat belt and speeding citations or warnings issued during the *High Five* program did not show a change when compared to the previous 5 years. This finding suggests that a sustained law enforcement presence focused on seat belt use in a rural community can improve belt use.

Evaluators studied the program development and implementation process as well as historical seat belt citation data to draw conclusions about what made the program successful in the counties that saw a significant increase in seat belt use. The steps included in this guide were formed based on that demonstration experience as well as feedback from program participants in both demonstration States and the GTSB in Iowa.

Before building a *High Five* program you should understand the design and how it is intended to work. *High Five* uses a systemic, data-driven, multi-disciplinary approach to address problems with rural roadway crashes. Implementation revolves around three core elements: enforcement,

education, and engineering. Essential to the program is the development of a Rural Traffic Safety Advisory Board (RTSAB) to select counties for participation and oversee program development and implementation. Equally as important are local and State law enforcement who portray a unified effort while carrying out established measurable objectives in the selected *High Five* counties. The program requires law enforcement to conduct multi-jurisdictional enforcement activities, publicity and outreach events, and local observational seat belt surveys to monitor the effect of program efforts. Multiagency teams are also formed to conduct road safety assessments (RSAs) to address existing problems on rural roadways in participating counties. Counties are provided with a report with low-cost engineering recommendations and suggestions for possible funding sources.

For the NHTSA program, mini-grants of \$10,000 were available to each of the five participating counties and up to \$50,000 for State Police. In this case, the funds could not be used to for the engineering improvements. State Police and County Sheriff's Offices (CSOs) were responsible for monthly seat belt projects, publicity and outreach, school presentations and tracking seat belt usage using observational surveys.



The States of Arkansas and Kentucky conducted *High Five* demonstration programs in 2023 and 2024.

Every *High Five* program county in these two States indicated increases in seat belt usage ranging up to 9 percentage points.

The combined population in the 10 demonstration counties was roughly 300,000 residents. Sustaining that level of increase, across a population that size would prevent injuries and fatalities on rural roadways.

If every State conducted a *High Five* program, reaching five counties per year, tens of millions of motorists in rural areas could be reached. A triple-digit reduction in annual unbelted fatalities and injuries is possible.

Project teams should allot 20 months to plan and complete the program, beginning to end.

High Five Program Development

Project teams should allow up to 6 months to develop the program followed by a 12-month implementation period. Additional months are needed for evaluation at the program's conclusion.



Expected *High Five* Timeline for First Year

MONTH →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Assemble RTSAB																				
Build action plan templates																				
Select <i>High Five</i> counties																				
Develop/print material																				
Informational meetings																				
Baseline seat belt observations																				
Program kickoff																				
12-month implementation period																				
Road safety assessments																				
Post seat belt observations																				
Produce results report for sharing/review																				
Choose new <i>High Five</i> counties for Year 2																				
MONTH →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

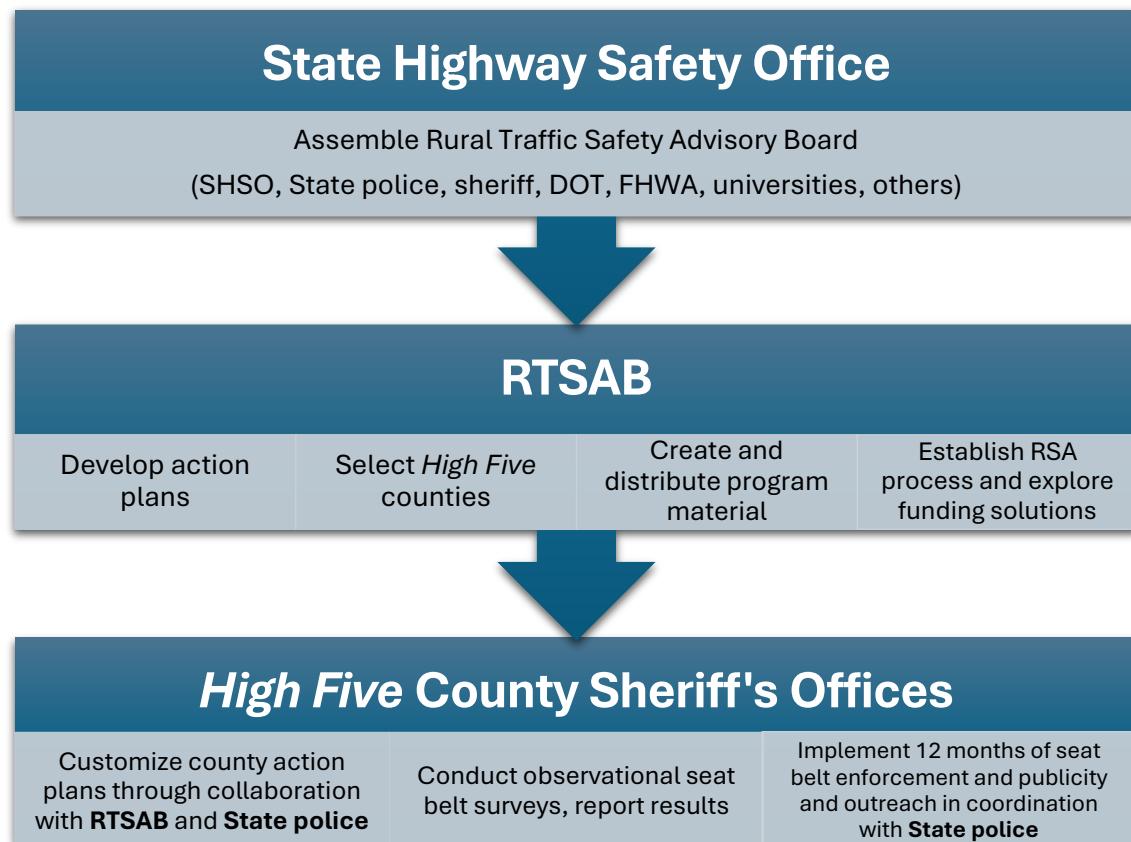
Your State's Highway Safety Office will start the *High Five* program development process.

The essential first step is to assemble the RTSAB. Your highway safety office will take the lead. This process should take 1-2 months. Once established, the RTSAB develops an action plan. The RTSAB selects *High Five* counties, followed by the development of program material. The RTSAB then conducts informational meetings with each *High Five* county to discuss program specifics and to refine county-specific action plans. Sometime after the informational meetings and before the implementation period begins, CSOs conduct an observational seat belt survey to

establish a baseline usage rate. Once the baseline is set, the 12-month implementation period begins with a media event. Road safety assessments are also completed during the implementation period. After 12 months, a second seat belt survey is conducted, and results are compared with the baseline usage to measure change.

If conducting *High Five* a second year, the RTSAB should plan to choose new counties around months 9 to 10 of the current implementation period and begin the process over again. Less time is needed for the development process in year 2 as the RTSAB does not have to start from scratch. The previous year's action plan and printed material can be updated to reflect new county information.

Participating Organizations and Roles for Developing *High Five*



STEP 1: Assemble an RTSAB

The development of an RTSAB is vital to the success of *High Five*. Make it a priority to assemble a well-rounded RTSAB to cover all program elements (i.e., enforcement, education, engineering). SHSO leadership can start assembling a RTSAB by appointing one or two SHSO professionals to serve on the RTSAB and oversee its development.

Other members should be traffic safety professionals from an array of agencies who are eager and determined to make the program function correctly in rural areas. A well-respected sheriff or Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL) who can relate to local and State law enforcement should be included on the board.

RTSAB Composition	
Agency	Expectations for <i>High Five</i>
State Highway Safety Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Take the lead role: recruit appropriate entities, collaborate within RTSAB and with other entities as needed.Coordinate conversations and introductory meetings with key RTSAB members.Provide data and insight to help determine which counties will participate.Reach out to county-level stakeholders in the <i>High Five</i> counties.Provide data and insight to county-level stakeholders.Coordinate meetings with each <i>High Five</i> county.Monitor program progress throughout duration of program.
State Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support the overall purpose of the project, lend insight and expertise.Lead road safety assessments (RSAs) in local communities.Collaborate within the RTSAB and on the county level.Visit counties to review data and steps for RSAs.Complete RSA in <i>High Five</i> counties and provide a summary report that includes low-cost engineering solutions.Provide information (if available) about available grant funds for county roadway repairs or engineering solutions identified in the RSA.
State Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lend insight and expertise during the planning phase of the project.Collaborate with local law enforcement and other stakeholders in the counties.Visit counties to help introduce the program and discuss activity requirements.Help establish plans to create a multi-jurisdictional presence.Spread <i>High Five</i>'s message of rural roadway safety.Provide motivation and support to State troopers and other participating law enforcement throughout the implementation period.Support program goals, objectives, and requirements.
Sheriff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ideally a well-respected and motivated sheriff from a rural county will help communicate the program to get local enforcement on board.Help spread <i>High Five</i>'s message of rural roadway safety.Lend insight and expertise.Provide motivation and support to participating law enforcement.
University Representative or Data Scientist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide historical and current statewide and local seat belt usage data.Lend insight about how to design and implement local seat belt surveys.

STEP 2: Develop Action Plans

Action Plans help keep information organized and serve as a resource guide for anyone involved in the program. Using two action plan templates – one for the RTSAB and one for individual county programs – is recommended. Example action plans are provided in Appendices A and B.

The RTSAB's action plan will guide development of the program at the State level and the county action plan template will be used to organize information for each of the county programs. Action plans should be considered living documents, meaning they will change as program plans develop.

Examples of Information to Include in the Plans:

- Short summary of the program and program goals
- Names and contact information for RTSAB members and other participants
- Program timeline
- Data/information requests (e.g., data queries needed for site selection, frequency and type of reports expected from law enforcement)
- Assigned points of contact for each program element
- Expectations and requirements for program implementation
- Protocol for conducting seat belt observations



Rural High Five Seat Belt Program Demonstration

COUNTY ACTION PLAN

County Name, State

PROGRAM PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH
Iowa's program required five media outreach events per county throughout the implementation period and at least one visit to each high school in the county. Distribution of educational cards and posters was also required. The High Five program in [State] will require the same. Listed below are the requirements for publicity and outreach activities, as well as examples that will satisfy the requirement of "five media outreach events." State police and CSOs will work together to plan multijurisdictional events to show collaboration between the two agencies. The RTSAB will provide publicity activity summary forms to collect information about frequency and type of publicity and outreach events. These forms will be submitted to the RTSAB monthly.

Required Events/Activities

- **Kickoff event – DATE:**
 - Invite media (TV, print, radio).
 - Attempt to get coverage during prime time local news broadcasts statewide.
 - Ideally State police, CSO, and county judge will be present at the event to demonstrate multidisciplinary effort.
 - The kickoff event counts as one of the five required events.
- **Social media**
 - State police and CSO will come up with ideas for social media posts related to seat belt use and that refer to the High Five program. Posts should reflect local culture and/or trends in the area.
 - Two social media posts per month will be required.
 - Posts can be made by either State police or the CSO, partnering agencies should "like" and share each other's posts.
- **Presentation at high schools**
 - State Patrol Educational Officers and Sheriff's deputies will participate in an assembly at each high school to talk about seat belts and rural traffic safety, and why the High Five program is going on in the county.
- **Roadside distribution of educational cards**
 - State police and CSOs will distribute educational cards when citations are issued. This pertains to any violation—not just seat belts.
- **Poster distribution**
 - Posters will be hung in public areas by State police and CSOs.

STEP 3: Select *High Five* Counties

County selection is completed by the RTSAB, which identifies rural counties and then analyzes crash data for those counties. Prospective counties can then be ranked to reveal the top 10 or 15 counties in multiple categories such as the highest fatal and severe injury crash rates (restrained and unrestrained) or highest all-injury crashes.

Next, the RTSAB discusses prospective counties and chooses the five that would be the best fit for the program. The RTSAB then reaches out to sheriff's offices in the selected counties to offer an invitation to participate in the *High Five* program.

The RTSAB should consider the following ideas and suggestions when selecting *High Five* counties.

- CSOs selected for participation should have an interest and willingness to participate in the program. The highest-ranking county may not be the best choice if leadership does not show interest.
- Ask the law enforcement representative on the RTSAB (e.g., sheriff, LEL, State police) to weigh in about which counties might be the best fit for the program.
- Analyze the last 5 or 10 years of data; consider the impact the number of animal-related collisions might have when querying data.
- Pay attention to election years and consider if county elections might cause a problem during the implementation period.

EXAMPLE CRASH DATA TO EXPLORE FOR COUNTY SELECTION

2014-2024 (or previous 10 years), annually by county (passenger vehicles only)

- Total number of passenger vehicle crashes
- Total number of injuries
- Total number of fatalities
- Total number of severe injuries

2020-2024 (or previous 5 years) annually by county, restrained/unrestrained (passenger vehicles only)

- Total number of fatalities (K)
- Total number of severe injuries (A)
- Total number of minor injuries (B, C)
- Passenger vehicle injuries and fatalities by age, day of week, time of day, and road type. Can group by age (e.g., <6, 6-10, 11-15) and time of day (e.g., 6 – 8:59 a.m., 9 – 11:59 a.m., noon-2:59 p.m.)

STEP 4: Develop Program Material

Printed and electronic program material are developed by the RTSAB and provided to participating LEAs. The following table provides descriptions of the items used in previous *High Five* programs.

Signature *High Five* items are the two-sided educational card and the poster. These two items are used by CSOs and State police to fulfill both enforcement and publicity and outreach requirements. The cards are handed out at roadside stops during

enforcement projects and publicity and outreach activities, and the posters are hung in public areas throughout the community. Statewide crash data are used to develop content for both items.

Educational cards are designed for use in all counties for years to come. Posters are customized for each county by including county names in the text. Appendix C provides examples of the educational card and poster used in the demonstration program.

Examples of *High Five* Program Material Created by RTSAB

Material	Notes
High Five Logo	The logo should be used on all printed material and electronic versions provided to participating CSOs and State police.
Two-Sided Educational Card (9½" x 4½")	SHSO prints and distributes cards to participating CSOs and State police prior to program kickoff. A good starting point is to print 3,000 cards for each county and encourage LEAs to request additional cards if needed.
Poster	SHSO prints and distributes posters to <i>High Five</i> CSOs who are asked to hang them in public spaces in the community. A good starting point is to print 25 posters for counties with relatively small populations (< 30,000), and 40-50 posters for counties with populations larger than 30,000.
Social Media Posts	Create readymade social media posts for <i>High Five</i> CSOs and State police troops. Create twelve posts, one for each month of the program period. (Posts can be used more than once.) Distributing social media posts monthly or quarterly, instead of all at once, can serve as a reminder and keep agencies engaged in the program. Encourage LEAs to create their own social media posts as well.
News Release and Media Advisory	Provide news release and media advisory templates for LEAs to use to announce program kickoff events and other <i>High Five</i> events.
Banners	Consider creating a large banner for use at kickoff events. Advise participating LEAs that the banner can be requested in advance for use at other <i>High Five</i> publicity events. Demonstration programs used a step-and-repeat banner as a backdrop and a podium banner for kickoff events.

STEP 5: Establish a Process for Road Safety Assessment

The RSA process is a signature feature of *High Five*. It builds relationships between people at county and State agencies who may not otherwise work together. It is likely that the RSA element will be an attractive feature of the program and a big reason why CSOs agree to participate; some counties may not have the ability to accomplish assessments without the program. RTSABs

will need to do a lot of legwork and follow-through to ensure this step is completed. Local and State resources vary, so RSAs will look different State to State and maybe even year to year within a State. RSA process steps are listed in the following bullets. The RTSAB should establish an RSA process before meeting with *High Five* counties (STEP 6).

Establishing the RSA Process

- Query and analyze crash data to identify problematic road segments in each *High Five* county.
- Explore and document possible funding and resources that counties can use to help implement engineering solutions identified in the RSA.
- Develop an RSA team in each program county. The RSA team should include RTSAB members, CSOs, local engineers, etc. Others with insight into road conditions in the county, like first responders, can be invited to participate.
- Share problematic road segments identified by the RTSAB with the RSA team. Ask for input from the local members of the RSA team about road segments deemed problematic by the local community.
- RSA team collaborates to confirm road segments for RSA.
- Conduct the RSA and develop a report that includes recommended engineering solutions for problematic road segments.
- Review the RSA report with the team and provide ideas for possible funding to implement the recommended solutions.
- RTSAB follows up with counties to offer support with implementing suggestions found in the RSA report.

Be clear with local stakeholders that funding sources may not exist for implementing low-cost engineering solutions. If funding options cannot be found, the RTSAB should explore other ways to lend support – like related workshops conducted by the State DOT or other educational opportunities. The RTSAB could also provide ideas for how the RSA

report itself can be used to help address the problem (e.g., Can the RSA report be submitted to State DOT to have them address the problematic road segments? Can the RSA be combined with another larger request for grant funds to address problematic road segments in multiple counties?).

STEP 6: Conduct Informational Meetings With Counties

Informational meetings are a chance for the RTSAB and the potential county participants to meet face-to-face, discuss program specifics, and develop plans for implementation on the local level. Using the county action plan template to guide the meeting will ensure everyone understands program goals and objectives, program

activity requirements, and other important information like reimbursement and reporting. The following bullets provide things to consider when organizing informational meetings, suggestions about facilitating the meeting, and recommendations for followup.

Things to consider when organizing informational meetings

- Schedule informational meetings prior to program kickoff.
- Prior to the meeting, fill in the action plan with as much information as is known at the time, like names of RTSAB members and their contact information, name of county sheriff's office and corresponding State police troop.
- Attendees should include RTSAB representatives, participating State and local law enforcement, and other stakeholders who will be involved with the program (e.g., law enforcement liaisons, county engineers, school resource officers, other first responders).
- Schedule time before or after the meeting to train whoever will be completing the observational seat belt surveys.

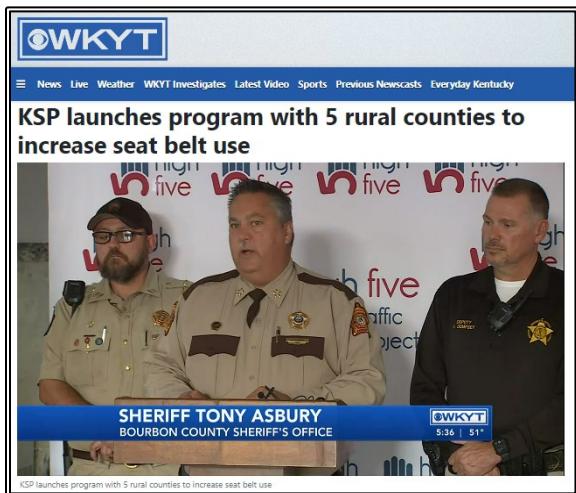
Things to do while the meeting is in progress

- Provide everyone in attendance with a copy of the action plan template and encourage attendants to take notes or fill in the blanks.
- Have someone on the RTSAB review crash data to help local attendees understand why their county was selected for the program.
- Establish a point person at both the State and county level for each program element. Document their name and contact information in the action plan.
- Establish plans for kickoff events.
- Discuss road segments the RTSAB identified for the RSA. Ask local attendees to weigh in about road segments deemed problematic by the community.
- Train local observers (appointed by the CSO) to conduct SBOs. Example training material is included in Appendix D.

Recommendations for followup

- Stay in touch with local teams to ensure enthusiasm and engagement with the program does not wane prior to program kickoff.
- Update the action plan with notes from the meeting and provide attendees with an updated copy. Ask them to review the updated copy. Confirm the information in the action plan is correct and that everyone understands expectations for program activities.

STEP 7: Kick Off *High Five* in Participating Counties



The RTSAB can support law enforcement by planning successful kickoff events in *High Five* communities. A successful kickoff will distribute information to the community and



provide support to law enforcement once program activity begins. Law enforcement may find that some motorists have already heard about the program and understand the reason for the stop.

Tips for a Successful *High Five* Kickoff

- Plan press events in each *High Five* county. Getting the word out within the community will support program efforts.
- Develop and distribute press releases and media advisories to local and State news outlets.
- Provide talking points to program participants so they can share information about the program if asked. Stress that the program is a multi-agency effort to increase safety on rural roadways in the State.
- Develop social media posts and encourage both State and local law enforcement agencies to use them.
- Create media kits and distribute them to media that attend the event. Include press releases and educational cards in the kits.

PRO TIP: Complete local seat belt surveys before any kickoff events so as not to inflate the baseline seat belt use rate.

STEP 8: Sustain *High Five* Enforcement and Publicity and Outreach Activities

A 12-month implementation period may seem like a long time to sustain enforcement and publicity, and periodic checkins will help keep agencies engaged in program activity and can be used to monitor progress

and address any issues that might arise. The RTSAB should appoint a member to check in with local teams regularly. LELs can be a good fit for this role.

Monitor the following to keep the program on track.

- Reports of enforcement and publicity and outreach activity
- Stock of program material like educational cards, posters, social media posts (refresh/reprint as needed)
- Plans for upcoming events that could be opportunities to generate earned media
- Availability of technical support (e.g., if the point person in a county changes, review the action plan with the new person assigned to the program.

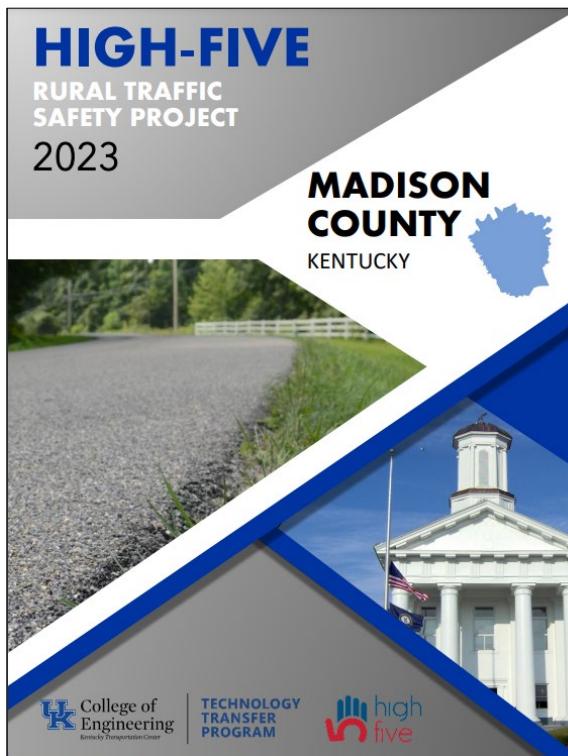
PRO TIP: If there are plans to implement *High Five* the following year, begin selecting new *High Five* counties around the ninth month of program implementation. If the program is going well in a particular county, have the sheriff or other point of contact speak with counties that might be hesitant to participate.

Expect some hurdles during implementation. Staffing changes, major weather events, and other unexpected emergencies can obstruct the best laid plans. Stay in touch with participating law enforcement and be ready to adapt.

STEP 9: Implement Road Safety Assessments

Follow the RSA process established by the RTSAB (Step 5). Although it is unlikely the engineering solutions identified in the RSA will be implemented during the

implementation period, the RSA team should work together to address the recommendations provided in the report.



2023 KY HIGH-FIVE SAFETY PROJECT

MADISON

Existing Conditions

Fixed Objects

Fixed objects adjacent to the roadway were noted along Goggins Lane. These objects present a safety hazard to drivers who depart the roadway. Trees were the most common fixed object type encountered, but utility poles were also observed. **Figure 7** shows examples of fixed object (utility pole) on the outside of a horizontal curve on Goggins Lane.

Figure 7: Fixed Objects



Recommendations

It is recommended that fixed objects adjacent to the roadway be evaluated for removal so that a clear zone of a consistent width can be established along the roadway. On low volume rural roads, providing a clear zone consistent with the AASHTO Roadside Design Guide is not cost-effective or practical to implement. For these types of roadways, the following recommendations may be applied:

- Tangents: Provide a minimum clear zone of 2 feet.
- Horizontal Curves: Provide a minimum clear zone of 5 feet on the outside of the curve.
- If an established clear zone exists, such as a fence line, and isolated encroachments are present they should be removed if feasible and cost effective.

Common examples of obstructions in the clear zone include trees, utility poles, headwalls, signs, guardrails, and other fixed objects. Vegetation may be present in the clear zone, but trees must not be greater than 4 in. in diameter.

A-79

Consider the following when working on road safety assessments.

- Build working relationships between the agencies involved. Working with local teams can teach them about available resources and techniques that might be helpful in future endeavors.
- Learn from each other. Just as local participants can learn from the RTSAB, the RTSAB can learn from local participants. Listen to ideas local participants have about completing some of the jobs that are suggested in the RSA, like sign replacements or brush clearing. RTSAB members might learn an efficient or creative way to get those jobs completed and can pass that information along to another *High Five* county.
- Strive to complete at least one engineering solution identified in the RSA in each county before the program period ends.

STEP 10: Wrap Up the Program, Gather Feedback, and Adjust Plans as Needed

After the 12-month implementation period concludes, the RTSAB and program participants should share feedback about

what worked and what didn't work. Document and consider the information to apply it to future efforts.



To-do list for after program conclusion

- Complete an observational seat belt survey and compare results with baseline use rates. Was there an increase in belt use? Think about what happened during implementation and see how it lines up with observation results. These findings can help influence future iterations of the program.
- Ask for feedback from program participants.
- Share program results with program participants and stakeholders.
- Check in with counties a few months after the program concludes to find out if they moved forward with suggestions provided in the RSA.

Appendix A. Action Plan Template for SHSO/RTSAB



High Five Rural Seat Belt Program Demonstration
[State] Highway Safety Office

ACTION PLAN

Date Revised:





PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this project is to implement and evaluate a 12-month *High Five* rural seat belt program modeled after the successful Iowa campaign of the same name. The purpose of [State]'s *High Five* Rural Traffic Safety Program is to increase seat belt use and reduce crashes in rural areas with a systemic multidisciplinary approach using law enforcement, education, and engineering. The project includes the development of a Rural Traffic Safety Advisory Board (RTSAB) that will include high level support from the SHSO, the Department of Transportation, and leading enforcement officials (State police and sheriff), among other key stakeholder groups. The RTSAB will use data to identify five rural counties in the State for participation in the program, help to recruit county participation, and assist county engineers (or someone similar) to identify low-cost engineering solutions to existing problems.

This program will include mini-grants of up to \$10,000 to each of the five participating counties in the demonstration and up to \$50,000 to State police. Mini-grant awardees will be primarily responsible for conducting a 12-month program implementation period and providing necessary project data. State police and local law enforcement agencies shall be responsible for monthly seat belt enforcement patrols, media and outreach, school presentations and tracking seat belt usage using observational surveys.

This action plan will be used to outline and describe expectations of all parties related to the planning and implementation of the program and will establish a timeline for each stage of the project.

This action plan will address the following.

- Rural Traffic Safety Advisory Board (RTSAB)
- *High Five* County Site Selection
- Publicity and Outreach
- Program Material
- Seat Belt Enforcement
- Seat Belt Observations
- Road Safety Assessments
- Data Needs for Program Evaluation
- Grant Funding



RURAL TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY BOARD (RTSAB)

The RTSAB will include high level support from the SHSO, Department of Transportation, and law enforcement officials (State police and sheriffs), among other key stakeholder organizations. Expectations of the RTSAB are as follows.

- Provide data and analysis of State and local crash data for selection of *High Five* counties.
- Select and recruit counties to participate in the program.
- Appoint RTSAB members to travel to selected counties to assist with explaining local crash statistics and problem identification.
- Work with county engineers to plan and conduct road safety assessments.
- Assist with support acquisition from other traffic safety partners, as needed for a multi-agency approach.
- Support the program goals and objectives.
- Participate in scheduled meetings or as needed.
- Work with the project team to complete program elements as stated in this action plan.

DUE DATE: (RTSAB members will be established by this date)

Initial RTSAB meeting time and location:

SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s) for this task:

(name)
(contact info)
(name)
(contact info)



Proposed RTSAB members will lend their insight to help choose *High Five* counties, for planning program activities and evaluation, and will represent the RTSAB when speaking about the *High Five* program at meetings with *High Five* counties. Other, more specific, roles are listed in the following table.

2024/2025 Rural Traffic Safety Advisory Board Members

Name, Title, Organization	Projected Role
Name Organization/Agency Title Contact Information	



I. HIGH FIVE COUNTY SITE SELECTION

The RTSAB should use available crash and seat belt data to help identify *High Five* counties. RTSAB members should analyze data and lend their knowledge and insights regarding local county characteristics to select five viable counties to participate in the program. Data used for site selection will also be used on program material developed for this project.

EXAMPLE Data Needs for *High Five* County Site Selection:

CRASH DATA

2010-2020 annually by county (passenger vehicles only; exclude motorcycles)**

- Total number of passenger vehicle crashes
- Total number of injuries
- Total number of fatalities
- Total number of severe injuries

2016-2020 annually by county, restrained/unrestrained (passenger vehicles only; exclude motorcycles)

- Total number of fatalities (K)
- Total number of severe injuries (A)
- Total number of minor injuries (B, C)
- Passenger vehicle injuries and fatalities by age, day of week, time of day, road type***

NOTE: Iowa reported that their crash data contained animal-related crashes, and it accounted for a significant number of crashes in rural counties because of car/deer collisions. They suggested the overall impact of animal-related collisions be considered during data analysis since many of the crashes could be minor property-damage-only crashes.

** Monthly for *High Five* counties (once selected)

*** Grouping ages (e.g., <2, 2-6, 7-15) and time of day is acceptable

DUE DATE: Data needed to select *High Five* counties is due by (date)

SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s) for this task:

(name)

(contact info)

(name)

(contact info)



2025 High Five Counties

County / County Seat	2020 Population	Sheriff	KSP Troop	Notes

NOTES:

DUE DATE: *High Five* counties will be established by (date)

SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s) for this task:

(name)
(contact info)
(name)
(contact info)



II. PROGRAM PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH

Iowa's program incorporated five required media outreach events across the program period per county, and at least one visit to each high school in the county. Below are publicity and outreach events that were conducted for the Iowa *High Five* program:

- Kickoff event
 - Invite media (TV, print, radio).
 - Attempt to get coverage during prime time local news broadcasts statewide.
 - Conduct a statewide kickoff event and one in each participating county.
- Social media
 - Stakeholders posted information about the *High Five* project, importance of wearing a seat belt, rural traffic safety, etc. on Facebook, and/or other appropriate social media platforms.
- Letters to the editor
 - State Patrol Safety Education Officers wrote letters to the editor of local papers reinforcing seat belt usage and the involvement of the county in the project and why additional enforcement would be seen.
- Presentations at school
 - State Patrol Educational Officers participated in assemblies at each high school to talk about seat belts, rural traffic safety, and why the *High Five* program was going on in their county.
- Other
 - State police troopers ate lunch at popular local establishments and spoke with county residents about why the program was going on in their county.
 - Iowa had an idea of making tent cards to be placed on the tables at popular local restaurants.
 - RTSAB members, law enforcement, and stakeholders are encouraged to share ideas and suggestions for publicity and outreach activities.

DUE DATE: Media Outreach Events will be established by (date)

SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s) for this task:

(name)

(contact info)

(name)

(contact info)



III. PROGRAM MATERIAL

Program material will include State-specific data and graphics and county-specific graphics. The county sheriff's office and State police will largely be responsible for disseminating material. State program material will be developed prior to the implementation phase of the project and distributed throughout the program period.

At minimum, the SHSO will develop the following material for the program.

- Two-sided 4½" x 9½" educational card/handout
 - Use State-specific data (not county-specific) to allow for use in all *High Five* counties.
 - For use by enforcement officers to provide information to motorists
 - To be distributed at various locations in *High Five* counties including at roadside stops for traffic violations
- Poster
 - Personalized for each county using logo of participating CSOs
 - To be distributed and displayed in public areas in the *High Five* counties

The following statewide data is needed to help develop project material.

- State's national ranking for miles of public roadways
- Number of miles of secondary rural roadways (include percentage of total miles)
- Percentage of fatal crashes on secondary rural roads
- Percentage of unbelted fatal crashes on secondary rural roads
- Statewide seat belt use rate
- Number of rural fatalities per 100 million VMT (over the last 5 years)

Other questions to be answered:

- Do rural counties/communities in the State have smaller budgets and manpower for law enforcement and engineering type projects?
- Is there a statewide seat belt awareness survey that can be used to indicate the percentage of people who report wearing/not wearing a seat belt?

DUE DATES: Develop program materials (date)
Printing of materials (date)

SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s) for this task:

(name)
(contact info)
(name)
(contact info)



IV. SEAT BELT ENFORCEMENT

- Deploy data-driven high-visibility seat belt enforcement using overtime.
- At least two multi-jurisdictional enforcement projects per month across the program period (24 HVEs).
- Employ a safe-communities approach to show that law enforcement is enforcing compliance with the seat belt law to keep the community safe.
- Each *High Five* county, with assistance of State patrol, can determine the tactical approach to conduct enforcement and special projects.
- Seat belt citations and/or warnings should be issued to violators depending on local policy and officer discretion.
- According to Iowa, participating law enforcement handed out educational cards during traffic stops – all types, not just seat belt violations – and any other appropriate times while discussing the disproportionate number of unbelted fatalities on rural roads.
- Participating LEAs (local and State police) will submit monthly Enforcement Activity Reports.

In Iowa, crash data was used to develop a data-driven approach to HVEs. Historical crash data (the last 5 years) was analyzed to identify problematic areas and times for unrestrained crashes.

- Location of crashes (pinpointed on a map)
- # of crashes by time of day
- # of crashes by day of week
- # of fatally and severely injured individuals
- Ages of fatally and severely injured individuals
- Road class where fatal and severe injury crashes occurred

DUE DATE:

SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s) for this task:

(name)

(contact info)

(name)

(contact info)



V. SEAT BELT OBSERVATIONS

- In Iowa, observations were used to evaluate the program and provide insight about the seat belt problem in the county.
- In each of the *High Five* counties, local observers will conduct three observational seat belt surveys: baseline, mid, and post.
- Baseline observations should be completed at a time where *Click It or Ticket* or other grant programs do not interfere with results (after May 1, 2022).
- Local observers will be approved by local law enforcement and the RTSAB.
- Survey sites will be identified, and observation training will be completed as part of the informational meetings held in each of the *High Five* counties.
- The RTSAB will provide hands-on seat belt observation training and written instructions/protocol to local observers.
- In Iowa, the RTSAB created a pin map of crash data to help identify survey sites.
- Expectations for seat belt observations will be outlined in the county action plan.

Data needs for survey site selection:

- Locations of high crash areas in the county

DUE DATE:

SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s) for this task:

(name)

(contact info)

(name)

(contact info)



VI. ROAD SAFETY ASSESSMENTS

- The purpose of road safety assessments (RSAs) is to identify low-cost engineering solutions in each *High Five* county.
- The RTSAB will work with local or regional engineers (or someone with similar job duties) to plan RSAs in each of the *High Five* counties.
- Funds from this project shall not be used to complete improvements identified in the assessments.
- The RTSAB will explore alternate funding options through Federal or State resources and help counties identify possible funding to implement engineering solutions.
- Ideally, at least one engineering improvement identified in the assessments should be implemented in each participating county before program implementation period ends.
- In Iowa, an RSA team was formed that included representatives from the RTSAB.

County	Assessment Date	Report Completed Yes/No	Name/Date of Person Who Reviewed RSA Report with County	Name/Contact Info for County Representative	Notes

DUE DATE:**SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s) for this task:**

(name)

(contact info)

(name)

(contact info)



VII. DATA NEEDS FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION

The RTSAB should develop a process for participating law enforcement to submit monthly activity reports for enforcement and publicity efforts. Respective forms for reporting activity should be developed and provided as well.

Data needs from participating law enforcement:

- Participating agencies submit monthly **Enforcement Activity Summary** form
- Participating agencies submit monthly **Publicity Activity Summary** form

DUE DATE:

SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s) for this task:

(name)

(contact info)

VIII. GRANT FUNDING

- SHSO will reimburse State police an amount up to \$50,000 for overtime seat belt enforcement in each participating county (\$10,000 per county x 5 counties = \$50,000). SHSO will reimburse a participating county for additional enforcement, production of program material, and any other direct costs spent in implementation of this program.
- All requests for grant funds will be pre-approved by SHSO.
- After the program, any physical resources obtained for this project may be retained by the participating CSO as property and can continue to be used in traffic safety operations and for occupant protection programs.
- Grant funds can be used to pay for:
 - Hours put into program management and coordination (e.g., planning, training, and conducting local seat belt observations; planning and conducting outreach activities; completing enforcement/publicity activity summary reports);
 - Overtime enforcement hours for this program;
 - Equipment purchases (per NHTSA's approval);
 - Development of program material (e.g., printing posters or handouts); and
 - Expert help (per RTSAB's approval).
- Reimbursements will be made within ___ calendar days from the day the invoice is received.
- Mail or email invoices to:

SHSO/DOT/State police representative(s):

(name)

(contact info)



HIGH FIVE PROGRAM TIMELINE

TASK	Estimated Completion Date	INVOLVED PARTIES
Confirm participation		SHSO
Finalize MOU		SHSO
Assemble Rural Traffic Safety Advisory Board (RTSAB)		SHSO/DOT/SP
Analyze and review data for county selection		RTSAB
Finalize selection of <i>High Five</i> counties		RTSAB
Informational meetings with <i>High Five</i> counties		RTSAB/SO/SP/RSA Team
Seat belt observation training		RTSAB/CSO
Seat belt observations (pre)		RTSAB/CSO
Implementation Period		
Complete road safety assessments		RTSAB/CSO/RSA Team
Plan engineering solutions		RTSAB/CSO/RSA Team
Implement engineering solutions		RTSAB/CSO/RSA Team
Conduct enforcement	Monthly	SP/CSO
Conduct publicity and outreach	Monthly	SP/CSO
Report enforcement activity summary	Monthly	SP/CSO
Seat belt observations (mid)		RTSAB/CSO
Seat belt observations (post)		RTSAB/CSO
Last day to submit reimbursements		SP/SO
Post program review / gather feedback		RTSAB/ASP/SO/RSA Team

SHSO = State Highway Safety Office

DOT = Department of Transportation

SP = State police

CSO = County sheriff's office

Appendix B. Action Plan Template for Participating CSOs



High Five Rural Seat Belt Program
Demonstration

COUNTY ACTION PLAN

[County Name, State]



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this project is to implement and evaluate a 12-month *High Five* rural seat belt program modeled after the successful Iowa campaign of the same name. The purpose of the *High Five* Rural Traffic Safety Program is to increase seat belt use and reduce crashes in rural areas with a systemic multidisciplinary approach using “the three E’s”: enforcement, education, and engineering.

This program will include mini-grants of up to \$10,000 to each of the five participating counties in the demonstration and up to \$50,000 to State police. Mini-grant awardees will be primarily responsible for conducting a 12-month program implementation period and providing necessary project data. State police and county sheriff’s offices (CSOs) shall be responsible for monthly seat belt enforcement patrols, media and outreach, school presentations and tracking seat belt usage using observational surveys.

RTSAB/DOT will work with CSOs and county judges/road departments to identify low-cost engineering solutions to existing problems.

The RTSAB and each of the *High Five* counties will follow this action plan developed and approved by both organizations. It will be used to outline and describe expectations of involved organizations related to the planning and implementation of the program and will define a timeline for each stage of the project.

This action plan will address the following.

- Program Publicity and Outreach
- Program Material
- Seat Belt Enforcement
- Seat Belt Observations
- Road Safety Assessments
- Data Needs for Program Evaluation
- Grant Funding



The RTSAB is a group of traffic safety professionals from different organizations within the State. The RTSAB will assist agencies with program planning and will provide support during the implementation period.

2024/2025 RTSAB Members

Name, Title, Organization	Projected Role
Name Organization/Agency Title Contact Information	



PROGRAM PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH

Iowa's program required five media outreach events per county throughout the implementation period and at least one visit to each high school in the county. Distribution of educational cards and posters was also required. The *High Five* program in [State] will require the same. Listed below are the requirements for publicity and outreach activities, as well as examples that will satisfy the requirement of "five media outreach events." State police and CSOs will work together to plan multijurisdictional events to show collaboration between the two agencies. The RTSAB will provide publicity activity summary forms to collect information about frequency and type of publicity and outreach events. These forms will be submitted to the RTSAB monthly.

Required Events/Activities

- **Kickoff event – DATE:**
 - Invite media (TV, print, radio).
 - Attempt to get coverage during prime time local news broadcasts statewide.
 - Ideally State police, CSO, and county judge will be present at the event to demonstrate multidisciplinary effort.
 - The kickoff event counts as one of the five required events.
- **Social media**
 - State police and CSO will come up with ideas for social media posts related to seat belt use and that refer to the *High Five* program. Posts should reflect local culture and/or trends in the area.
 - Two social media posts per month will be required.
 - Posts can be made by either State police or the CSO, partnering agencies should "like" and share each other's posts.
- **Presentation at high schools**
 - State Patrol Educational Officers and Sheriff's deputies will participate in an assembly at each high school to talk about seat belts and rural traffic safety, and why the *High Five* program is going on in the county.
- **Roadside distribution of educational cards**
 - State police and CSOs will distribute educational cards when citations are issued. This pertains to any violation—not just seat belts.
- **Poster distribution**
 - Posters will be hung in public areas by State police and CSOs.



The required local kickoff event will satisfy one of the five required events. Participating CSO and respective State patrol troops will work together to plan at least four other publicity and outreach events to satisfy program requirements. Examples of activities that can be implemented are provided below. CSO and State police are encouraged to come up with their own ideas for publicity and outreach that reflect the culture and trends of the county. Any planned events and activities for the *High Five* program should be approved by the RTSAB prior to implementation and reported in the publicity summary form provided.

- Letters to the editor
 - In Iowa, State Patrol Safety Education Officers and sheriffs wrote letters to the editors of local papers, reinforcing seat belt usage and explaining the involvement of the county in the project and additional enforcement. Local law enforcement could send letters to the editors of multiple newspapers in the county. RTSAB can provide a sample or template of a letter.
- Tent cards at local eating establishments
 - Iowa had the idea of making tent cards to be placed on the tables at popular local restaurants. SHSO will design the card to mimic other program materials—using the same branding and statistics. SHSO will print the cards.
- Flyer distribution
 - Contact elementary schools and arrange for flyers to go out in school backpacks or be distributed at organized school meetings. SHSO will print, or local counties will print using grant funds.
 - Work with local utility company to insert flyers in bills that go out to county residents.
- Local poster competition
 - Schools or local businesses can hold a poster or essay contest that focuses on the *High Five* rural seat belt program. A poster competition could have students come up with a unique slogan and poster design for their county that encourages seat belt use. Local businesses could donate a prize or the winner could be recognized at an assembly. The winning entries could be made into a banner and displayed at the school. (Cost for production of banner would come out of county grant funds.) Example essay themes for competition include “Why I Wear My Seat Belt”, “Who Should Buckle Up?” or “The Importance of Wearing a Seat Belt.”



- Multijurisdictional activities
 - In Iowa, State patrol and sheriff's deputies visited popular local establishments together and spoke informally with county residents about the program, shared information about local crash rates with patrons and why the program was going on in their county.
- Distribution of educational cards at local events
 - State police and CSOs can set up a booth at a local event and distribute cards. Engage attendees in conversation that focuses on the program, share local data and information about rural crashes and why the program is being implemented in the county.

PLANS FOR REQUIRED PUBLICITY & OUTREACH EVENTS

*Event 1: Kickoff _____ Date(s): _____

Event Description: _____

*Event 2: _____ Date(s): _____

Event Description: _____

*Event 3: _____ Date(s): _____

Event Description: _____

*Event 4: _____ Date(s): _____

Event Description: _____

*Event 5: _____ Date(s): _____

Event Description: _____

Event 6 (optional): _____ Date(s): _____

Event Description: _____

*Program Requirement



The following material will be provided by SHSO.

- Two-sided 4½" x 9½" educational card/handout
 - Includes State-specific data (not county-specific) to allow for use in all *High Five* counties
 - For use by enforcement officers to provide information to motorists
 - To be distributed at various locations in *High Five* counties including at roadside stops for traffic violations
- Poster
 - Personalized for each county using CSO logo
 - Content will include *High Five* logo and information about the program, including county crash data stats.
 - To be distributed and displayed in public areas in the *High Five* counties
- Flyers
 - Educational card printed on one side of 8½" x 11" paper
 - Can be distributed (e.g., at schools and gas stations) and mailed out (e.g., with utility bills)

HOW MANY HIGH SCHOOLS ARE IN THE COUNTY? _____

Details about distribution of program material (i.e., how many, where, when, and how often) should be reported to the RTSAB using the publicity summary form provided.

CSO contact:

State police contact:

RTSAB contact:



IX. SEAT BELT ENFORCEMENT

Seat belt enforcement is critical to this program. State police and participating CSOs will work together to determine the tactical approach to conduct enforcement and special projects. In Iowa, saturation-type patrols were primarily used. County sheriffs and State police should coordinate their efforts and use crash data to plan deployment in problematic areas during problematic times (see DOT map provided). Specific requirements and specifications for the *High Five* rural seat belt program are listed below.

- Conduct at least two multi-jurisdictional enforcement projects per month across the implementation period. (12-month program period = 24 HVEs)
- Employ a safe communities approach to show that law enforcement is enforcing compliance with the seat belt law to keep the community safe.
- Each *High Five* county, with assistance of State police, can determine the tactical approach to conduct enforcement and special projects.
- Seat belt citations and/or warnings should be issued to violators depending on local policy and officer discretion.
- Participating law enforcement should hand out educational cards during traffic stops (all stops—not just seat belt violations) and at any other appropriate times while discussing the disproportionate number of unbelted fatalities on rural roads.
- Participating law enforcement agencies (local and State police) will report enforcement activity to the RTSAB each month using the enforcement activity summary form provided.

Planned enforcement dates:

CSO contact:

State police contact:

RTSAB contact:



SEAT BELT OBSERVATIONS

In Iowa, local enforcement agencies conducted observations of seat belt use throughout the program period. Results were used to provide insight about the seat belt problem in the county and evaluate program efforts.

- In each of the *High Five* counties, local observers will conduct three observational seat belt surveys: baseline, mid, and post.
- **Baseline observations should be completed before [date].**
- Local observers will be appointed by the CSO.
- RTSAB will train local observers to conduct the seat belt observations using a methodological approach; RTSAB will provide hands-on training and written instructions/protocol to local observers.
- RTSAB will work with counties to identify three to four survey sites where enough traffic passes to collect a sufficient sample size.
- The initial three to four observation sites should remain the same throughout the duration of the program.
- CSOs can compute their own results and submit use rates to the RTSAB; a form will be provided during the seat belt observation training session.

Baseline Survey Date:

Mid Survey Date:

Post Survey Date:

Observation site locations (provide day of week observations occurred for each location as well as time of day and direction of traffic observed):

Site 1:

Site 2:

Site 3:

Site 4:

CSO contact:

State police contact:

RTSAB contact:



X. ROAD SAFETY ASSESSMENT

The road safety assessments (RSA) is an essential element of the *High Five* program. The goal of the RSA is to identify low-cost engineering solutions in each *High Five* county and to provide counties with possible funding sources to implement the solutions.

- The RTSAB and [name of other organizations involved, if any] will work with the CSO and county judge/county engineer to form an RSA team.
- The RSA team will collaborate with the RTSAB to plan and implement road safety assessments in the county and identify low-cost engineering solutions.
- The RTSAB and RSA teams will explore alternate funding options through Federal or State resources to help identify possible funding to implement engineering solutions identified in the RSAs.
- Funds from this project shall not be used to complete improvements identified in the RSAs.
- Ideally, at least one engineering improvement identified in the RSAs should be implemented before the program implementation period ends.

RSA Team Members:

DUE DATE: Road safety assessments will be completed by: [date]

CSO contact:

RTSAB contact:



XI. ACTIVITY REPORTING / DATA NEEDS FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION

The RTSAB requests the following information from participating CSOs and State police. Completed activity forms are due monthly. The RTSAB will provide the activity summary forms.

- Participating agencies submit monthly **enforcement activity summary** form*
- Participating agencies submit monthly **publicity activity summary** form*

CSO contact:

State police contact:

RTSAB contact:

XII. GRANT FUNDING

- **SHSO** will reimburse the CSO up to \$10,000 for seat belt enforcement hours and other approved program costs.
- All requests for grant funds will be pre-approved by the SHSO.
- After the program, any physical resources obtained for this project may be retained by the participating CSO as property and can continue to be used in traffic safety operations and for occupant protection programs.
- Grant funds can be used to pay for:
 - Hours put into program management and coordination (e.g., planning, training, and conducting local seat belt observations; planning and conducting outreach activities; completing enforcement/publicity activity summary reports);
 - Seat belt enforcement hours for this program; and
 - Equipment purchased to conduct this program (per SHSO approval).
- Mail or email invoices to:

CSO contact:

State police contact:

RTSAB contact:



HIGH FIVE TIMELINE		
TASK	Estimated Completion Date	INVOLVED PARTIES
Introductory meeting with <i>High Five</i> counties		RTSAB/CSO/SP/ Team
Seat belt observation training		RTSAB/CSO
Seat belt observations (pre)		RTSAB/CSO
Implementation Period		
Complete road safety assessment		RTSAB/CSO/RSA Team
Plan engineering solutions		RTSAB/CSO/RSA Team
Implement engineering solutions		RTSAB/CSO/RSA Team
Conduct two multi-jurisdictional enforcement details	Monthly	SP/CSO
Conduct publicity and outreach	Ongoing	RTSAB/SP/CSO
Report enforcement and publicity activity	Monthly	SP/CSO
Seat belt observations (mid)		RTSAB/CSO
Seat belt observations (post)		RTSAB/CSO
Last day to submit reimbursements		RTSAB/SP/CSO
Exit interviews		RTSAB/SP/CSO

SP = State police

CSO = County sheriff's office

Appendix C. *High Five* Educational Card and Poster



Two-Sided Educational Card (Example)

high five
rural traffic safety project

Q: What is the High Five Rural Traffic Safety Project?
A: A data-driven, multi-agency effort to increase seat belt use and reduce serious injury and fatal crashes on rural roads in Arkansas through the use of education, engineering and enforcement.

Q: Where in Arkansas will the program be focused?
A: In five rural counties that ARDOT crash data show have high fatal and severe injury rates.

Q: Don't most crashes occur on major roadways?
A: In 2019, 68% of fatal crashes in Arkansas occurred on rural roads, and 82% of Arkansas roads are rural.

Q: What are the main causes of rural traffic crashes?
A: Most rural road crashes involve only one vehicle. Contributing factors include loss of control, lane departure, excessive speed, failure to yield and impaired driving.

Q: What will be done to reduce crashes and save lives?
A: Through enforcement, media and community outreach efforts, participating agencies will work to educate drivers on the benefits of complying with traffic laws, especially Arkansas's seat belt law.

Q: Why is increasing seat belt usage so important?
A: Proper and regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to reduce fatalities and injuries. A total of 77% of vehicle occupants ejected during a crash are killed.

Q: Can more be done to make rural roads safer?
A: Yes. The High Five project includes local and state engineers and traffic safety professionals working together to identify road hazards and make upgrades wherever possible.

*Data Sources: Arkansas Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

(Side 1)

high five

The High Five Rural Traffic Safety Project recognizes:

- The chances of surviving a traffic crash are 45% higher when properly restrained in a seat belt.
- In the U.S., based on known restraint use in fatal crashes, 51% of rural passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2020 were unrestrained.
- Airbags are designed to work with seat belts. Without a seat belt, the force of a rapidly deployed airbag can severely injure or kill.
- Arkansas's statewide seat belt usage rate is 84.2% (2021). This means almost 16% of passenger vehicle occupants in Arkansas are not belted.

As seat belt use has increased in Arkansas, traffic fatalities have declined.

Year	Fatalities	Belt Use (%)
2015	550	78
2016	540	80
2017	520	82
2018	510	83
2019	500	84

The Arkansas High Five Program is sponsored by the Arkansas State Police, the Arkansas Highway Safety Office and the Arkansas Department of Transportation.

Arkansas State Police • One State Police Plaza Drive • Little Rock, AR 72209
(Side 2)



High Five Poster (Example)



high five

rural traffic safety project

High Five is an ongoing statewide Rural Traffic Safety Project that is designed to increase seat belt use and make rural roads safer. **Fulton County** was selected to participate in this year's program due to a higher proportion of serious injury crashes compared to other Arkansas counties.

The 3 E's of High Five: Engineering, Education and Enforcement

Engineering - Identify unsafe road segments in Fulton County and work to find low-cost solutions

Education - Teach the community seat belt safety facts

Enforcement - Enforce seat belt use among Fulton County residents

The goal of the High Five Program is to draw public attention to the tragedies caused by traffic crashes and to emphasize that the safest way to travel on Fulton County roadways is with your seat belt buckled.

The Arkansas High Five Program is sponsored by the Arkansas State Police, the Arkansas Highway Safety Office and the Arkansas Department of Transportation.



**Appendix D. County Sheriff's Office Seat Belt Observation Instructions, Observer Protocol, and
Data Collection Form**

High Five Seat Belt Observation Instructions

BASIC STEPS

- 1) Choose three to four locations in the county that will provide enough traffic to yield a sufficient sample size. (Ideally 200-250 vehicles in 45 minutes; not always possible as rural counties tend to have smaller populations.)
- 2) Schedule 45-minute observation periods at each site, dispersed throughout the day so morning and afternoon traffic is observed.
- 3) Observe seat belt use for 45 minutes at each location following the established schedule. Draw a map to indicate where you stood at each site to observe seat belt use. Be sure to note the direction of traffic and traffic lanes you observed on the map.
- 4) Conduct one set of observations before the program kicks off in your county to establish a baseline use rate. Then conduct another set of observations after the conclusion of the 12-month program period following the same schedule. Observe at the same locations on the same day of week and at the same time of day. Also, observe the same lanes and direction of traffic. Refer to site maps drawn for the baseline survey to ensure things are done the same way. Ideally, the same person who observed seat belt use for the baseline survey will observe for the post-program survey.
- 5) Compute results for both baseline and post surveys and compare results. Was there a change in belt use?

SUPPLIES NEEDED

Data collectors/observers should have the following materials.

- **Blank site map and data collection forms**
- Clipboard and pens
- Reflective safety vest
- Paper clips or stapler (don't forget staples)
- Summary form



What NOT to do when observing seat belts

- ☒ Don't wear your law enforcement uniform – observe in plain clothes appropriate for the weather.
- ☒ Don't try to memorize multiple car/occupant usages and write it all down from memory. Record one vehicle at a time.
- ☒ Don't rush to record more cars at the expense of accuracy. Strive for QUALITY not quantity).
- ☒ Don't think "But I'm missing cars!"



Occupants to Observe

DO observe: <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Front seat occupants (driver and outboard passengers)✓ Children in the front seat who are wearing adult seat belts	DO NOT observe: <ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Rear seat occupants✗ Children in car seats
DO observe: <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Cars, station wagons✓ Pickup trucks✓ Minivans and cargo vans✓ SUV/crossovers✓ Emergency passenger vehicles (e.g., law enforcement)✓ Taxis, limos	DO NOT observe: <ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ RVs/campers✗ Semi-trucks (3+ axles), semi-trailers (i.e., tractor-trailers)✗ Buses✗ Box trucks, dump trucks, garbage trucks, cement trucks, oil delivery trucks✗ Mail trucks (USPS, UPS, FedEx)✗ Firetrucks✗ Ambulances

Belted versus Not Belted

Correct Belt Use = Belted <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Belt across shoulder diagonally toward center of the vehicle	Incorrect Belt Use = NOT Belted <ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Shoulder belt underneath the arm✗ Shoulder belt behind the back✗ No shoulder belt✗ Child sitting in adult's lap✗ Multiple occupants sharing one seat belt✗ Shoulder belt pulled/held across the chest but not actually buckled
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REMEMBER.... CONSISTENCY and ACCURACY are KEY!

High Five Seat Belt Observations

Observer Protocol

The following protocol should be followed to conduct observational seat belt surveys.

- For best visibility, observe standing on the side of the road (and not from your vehicle). Choose a safe location that does not impede the flow of traffic and provides you with a good vantage point to see inside vehicles as they pass by.
- Do not wear a law enforcement uniform while conducting seat belt observations so as not to influence driver behavior.
- Make sure you observe **various** vantage points as part of confirming driver and/or passenger usage or non-usage as vehicles approach:
 - from the front windshield as they move toward you
 - from the side windows when they are in front of you
 - as they pass (look for the belt strap coming across the neck/shoulder area)
- If the person is using the shoulder belt improperly (e.g., has the shoulder strap under his/her arm or behind the back), this should be recorded as **NOT belted**.
- If you notice a lap belt in use without a shoulder belt, it should be recorded as **NOT belted**. Only shoulder belts are to be counted. Even if the vehicle likely has no shoulder belts, code the occupant(s) as **NOT belted**.
- If you are observing a multiple-lane roadway, if traffic is light enough and you can see well, observe traffic in all lanes. If traffic is too heavy to observe every vehicle, you should determine a **reference point** (e.g., a sign or other stationary object) up the road for the appropriate lane(s). Observe the next vehicle to pass the reference point after the last vehicle has been recorded.
- If you are observing at a stop light, wait for cars to collect during a red light. Then skip the first car and walk along the line of cars, recording driver belt use as you go. When the light turns green and traffic resumes, walk back toward the light, and begin again with the next cycle.
- Qualifying vehicles include:
 - passenger vehicles;
 - pickup trucks;
 - SUVs; and
 - vans (private, public, and commercial).

High Five Seat Belt Observation Data Collection Form

SITE LOCATION: _____ **OBSERVER INITIALS:** _____

COUNTY: _____ **DIRECTION OF TRAVEL OBSERVED:** **N S E W**

DATE: ____ - ____ - ____ **DAY OF WEEK:** _____

START TIME: _____ **AM / PM** (observation period is 45 min.)

WEATHER CONDITIONS				
1	Clear/Sunny	4	Fog	
2	Light Rain	5	Wet pavement/ not raining	
3	Cloudy			

Veh. #	Driver Belt Use Y=Yes N=No U=Unsure	Passenger Belt Use Y=Yes N=No U=Unsure	Veh. #	Driver Belt Use Y=Yes N=No U=Unsure	Passenger Belt Use Y=Yes N=No U=Unsure	Veh. #	Driver Belt Use Y=Yes N=No U=Unsure	Passenger Belt Use Y=Yes N=No U=Unsure
1			26			51		
2			27			52		
3			28			53		
4			29			54		
5			30			55		
6			31			56		
7			32			57		
8			33			58		
9			34			59		
10			35			60		
11			36			61		
12			37			62		
13			38			63		
14			39			64		
15			40			65		
16			41			66		
17			42			67		
18			43			68		
19			44			69		
20			45			70		
21			46			71		
22			47			72		
23			48			73		
24			49			74		
25			50			75		

