



**OREGON THREE FLAGS CAMPAIGN BLITZ
& NATL CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY WEEK**

**FACT SHEET & TALKING POINTS
August 30 –September 12, 2010**



- According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), approximately 8,959 lives have been saved from 1975 to 2008 by the proper use of child safety seats.
- **In Oregon during 2009, ninety-nine percent of Oregon's child passengers under age four were observed to be riding in child restraints.**
- **Unfortunately among four to eight year olds, observed booster seat use was only 58% and one third of children in this age group killed or injured in crashes last year were not using booster seats.**
- Consistent vehicle restraint use is the single most effective way to protect motor vehicle occupants against crash injury or death, according to the US Department of Transportation.
- **Child safety seats reduce the likelihood of an infant (under 1 year old) being killed in a vehicle crash by 71 percent, and reduce the likelihood to toddlers (1 to 4 years old) by 54 percent.**
- **The last of three annual safety belt enforcement "blitzes" will run August 30 through September 12 and focus on educating the public regarding child restraint and safety belt laws. The blitz is also an opportunity to generate greater awareness around National Child Passenger Safety Week September 19 - 25 and provide referrals to free local child seat resources and events.**
- Thirty Sheriff Offices, 67 Police Departments and OSP are participating in federal overtime grants administered by ODOT through Oregon Association Chiefs of Police, Oregon State Sheriffs Association, and OSP Patrol Division.
- **OREGON CHILD RESTRAINT LAW (Effective July 1, 2007): A child weighing less than 40 pounds must be properly restrained in a child safety seat. A child under one year of age or weighing less than twenty pounds must be restrained in a rear-facing child seat. A child over forty pounds but under age eight or less than 4' 9" tall must be restrained in a booster seat that elevates them so the lap/shoulder belts fit correctly.**

- ***For help with child seats, refer to the seat manufacturer's instructions, vehicle owner's manual or call ACTS Oregon Child Safety Seat Resource Center at 1-877-793-2608.***
- **“BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS of the American Academy of Pediatrics and USDOT: Children should ride in rear-facing car seats to age two or as long as possible – to the upper weight limit of the safety seat. Children aged twelve and under should ride in the back seat where injury risk is reduced by 37% for that age group.**
- **“Proper use” of restraints is required by Oregon law and means using the entire belt system or child restraint as intended by the manufacturer. For child restraints, this means using the type of child seat or booster required by law for the child's size and age, and using that restraint according to the seat manufacturer and your vehicle manufacturer's instructions.**
- For safety belt systems, “proper use” means lap belt placed low across hips and shoulder belt crossing center of chest over collarbone. Belts should be free of slack and lying flat with no twists or knots. If the shoulder belt portion of the belt rides up onto the neck or feels uncomfortable, comfort may be increased by using the built-in adjuster or by moving seat position. The shoulder belt should NOT be placed under the arm or behind the back – this can cause serious internal injuries or ejection in a crash.
- The greatest danger to unbelted children and adult occupants is ejection from the vehicle. Unbelted or improperly restrained occupants are five times more likely to be ejected than one who is belted. They can also slam into other passengers and injure them during a crash or sharp swerve. Odds of surviving ejection are estimated at one in four. Ejection is the principal reason that minors are prohibited from riding in an open bed of a pickup truck.
- Speeding and driver impairment are the most common causes of injury crashes. Oregon's Three Flags Campaign is committed to reducing crashes and crash injuries by promoting safety belt use and discouraging speeding and impaired drivers.
- Since the 1990 passage of Oregon's adult belt law, observed belt use among the motoring public has doubled from 50% to 96% while crash fatality and injury rates have both decreased by 46% and 45% respectively. And yet, 43% of crash fatalities were reportedly unbelted last year. These unbelted fatalities were predominantly male (73%) and considered “impaired” drivers (51%).
- Oregon's 2009 belt use rate was 96.3% and ranked within the top five state rates nationally. (The nationwide average was 84%.) The most recent survey, just completed in June 2010, reveals belt use has risen to 97% for passenger cars and 95% for pickup truck occupants.