



May 2011

Children Connection

Boost 'Til Eight — Utah's Law Protecting Kids

Recently, Zero Fatalities, the Utah Department of Public Safety, Hold On To Dear Life, Primary Children's Medical Center, and of the Utah Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics came together to launch a new website, boosttil8.org. Featured on the website is an educational and emotional video with Kyle Sorensen, a patient at Primary Children's Medical Center, sharing the importance of using booster seats for children that do not properly fit in a seat belt.

More children ages 6 to 14 die from traffic crashes than from anything else. But even more startling is the fact that over half of the 4- to 7-year-olds who die in crashes are buckled in seat belts. The truth is that these younger children are not adequately protected by seat belts alone.

Seat belts are designed for adults, not children. They can place a young child at risk of serious injury. Booster seats elevate the child so that the shoulder belt fits snugly over the middle of the shoulder and the center of the chest; the lap belt fits across the child's hips or upper thigh, not the stomach.

In Utah, children up to age 8 (through age 7) must be in an appropriate child safety seat or booster seat when traveling in a passenger vehicle. There is an exception to the law that states that children younger than eight are not required to be in a booster seat if they are at least 57 inches tall (4'9"). At that point, they should use the vehicle's lap and shoulder belt without a booster.

To Watch Kyle's story and find out more information about proper booster seat use visit: www.boosttil8.org

2011 Legislative General Session

Every year, Primary Children's Child Advocacy Department,

through our Children Connection newsletter, provides a legislative update on a few of the health and safety issues that we followed during the state's legislative session. Thank you to those of you who took the time to get involved and contacted your Representative and Senator and let them know how you felt regarding certain pieces of legislation.

SB 124 Leaving a Child Unattended in a Motor Vehicle — Passed

Makes it a class C misdemeanor for a person who is responsible for a child under 9 years of age to intentionally, recklessly, knowingly, or with criminal negligence leave a child in an enclosed compartment of a motor vehicle if:

- the motor vehicle is on public property or private property that is open to the general public;
- the child is not supervised by a person who is at least 9 years old; and the conditions present a risk to the child of hyperthermia, hypothermia, or dehydration.

HB 258 Child Restraint Device Amendments — Failed

Provides that an operator of a motor vehicle is exempt from the requirement to use a child restraint device to restrain a person who is five years of age or older but younger than eight years of age if the operator of the motor vehicle is operating a motor vehicle on a road that has a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour or less.

S.B. 45 Wireless Telephone Use Restrictions for Minors in Vehicles — Failed

Provides that it is an affirmative defense to the wireless telephone prohibition if the minor uses a wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle:

- during a medical emergency;
- when reporting a safety hazard or requesting assistance related to a safety hazard;
- when reporting a criminal activity or requesting assistance relating to a criminal activity; or
- when communicating with a parent or legal guardian.

Provides that a violation of the wireless telephone prohibition

Continued on next page

is an infraction and a person shall be fined a maximum of \$50 for a violation.

How to Talk to Your Kids about Disasters

It seems that recently there have been many natural disasters like the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, tornados in Alabama and North Carolina, flooding throughout the Midwest; and the man made disasters, such as the oil spill that affected the Gulf Coast in 2010. Disasters, like the earthquake and oil spill, are serious problems that may frighten or adversely affect our children. Find out more about these difficult situations, how to discuss them with your children, and how to help people in need by visiting <http://intermountainhealthcare.org/hospitals/primarychildrens/> Click-on Children's Health & Safety, click-on KidsHealth, type "Disasters".

Four Corners without Borders Safety Summit

Child advocates from Primary Children's Medical Center recently co-sponsored an injury prevention safety summit in the Four Corners area. Others participating included community leaders, emergency medical technicians, law enforcement officers, healthcare providers, and child passenger safety technicians from the Navajo Nation and surrounding communities and states.

The safety summit was titled "Four Corners without Borders Safety Summit" because it provided an opportunity for 58 people from a four-state region (Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado) to meet with members of the Navajo Nation to learn from one another, and to share expertise in areas of injury prevention and traffic safety.

"It was a very successful summit," stated Janet Brooks, Child Advocacy Manager, for Primary Children's, "We couldn't have asked for greater results. In these small communities we were able to build partnerships, train additional car seat technicians, and provide safe installations for children and their families. We cultivated additional child advocates on the benefits of injury prevention, and I believe we all came away as winners."

Besides sharing ideas and resources, 36 participants enrolled in a course to expand knowledge on car seat technology advances and updates, and receive certification renewal as nationally certified child passenger safety technicians. The group also provided two local car seat inspection and distribution events – one in Bluff, Utah, and one in Monticello, Utah. Over 33 car seats were inspected, and 15 new car seats were provided.

Zero Fatalities

The loss of just one life is too many. This is the philosophy of Zero Fatalities. It is a goal that we can all live with.

The most recent data from the Department of Public Safety (UDOT), reports that Utah traffic fatalities are the lowest they've been in 36 years, with 235 fatalities in 2010. That number represents a 37 % drop since 2000, a commendable decrease, but one that could be improved. UDOT stated that improper seat belt use contributed to 40% of fatalities on Utah roads in 2010.

To view the inclusive report, which identifies cause, age, and location of traffic fatalities go to: <http://ut.zerofatalities.com/>

Make Every Day Earth Day

Want to get your kids invested in recycling, reusing, reducing, and the other basics of environmental responsibility? Here's how your family can "go green." Go to KidsHealth at: <http://intermountainhealthcare.org/hospitals/primarychildrens/> click-on Children's Health & Safety, click-on KidsHealth, type "Go Green".

If you have any questions regarding child advocacy efforts, or if you would like to join Primary Children's Medical Center grassroots advocacy group, "Children Connection" or, have friends and family members that would like to join, call Tim Cosgrove at: 801.662.6582, or email at tim.cosgrove@imail.org or you can go to www.primarychildrens.org, click on Child Health and Safety, then click on Child Advocacy, then click on Sign-Up.

Thanks for being a child advocate!