

Emphasis Area: Unrestrained Vehicle Occupants

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Objectives: - Reduction of Unrestrained Vehicle Occupant Fatalities

- Reduction of Unrestrained Vehicle Occupant Suspected Serious Injuries

| <p>Strategy 1 - Laws & Enforcement</p> <p>Purpose: Policies and laws focus on vehicle occupants using safety restraints and enhancing safe driving behaviors; and enforcement can help to change behavior. Adoption of a primary safety belt law that allows officers to stop drivers for that offense alone would make a significant difference in saving lives. Increasing the penalty for a citation would reinforce that Montana takes the nonuse of safety restraint seriously and that no life is expendable.</p> | | | | | | |
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| Opportunities | Timeline | Status | Lead(s) | Reference | Resources | Measurement of Success |
| S1.1 Support efforts from safety partners and stakeholders to implement a primary seatbelt law. | Legislative Session 2021 | Review & update related safety educational outreach materials with confirm consistent messaging (such as fact sheets and speaking points and other educational materials). Occupant Protection Program Assessment that was conducted May 10 – May 14, 2021. *2021 Legislative Session was unsuccessful in promoting safety of vehicle occupants as the secondary law was not strengthened and a primary seatbelt law was not passed. | Collaboration of traffic safety partners not limited to DPHHS, DOJ, Department of Revenue (DOR), OPI, DLI, Department of Administration (DOA), MDT; AARP; AAA; Montana Association of Counties (MACo), Montana Sheriffs & Peace Officers (MSPOA) and Montana Municipal Interlocal Association (MMIA) | 2017 Occupant Protect Program Assessment | Resource needed: Legislator or other identified traffic safety coalition lead | Passage of a Primary Law |
| S1.2 Support increasing the current seat belt penalty of \$25 to be consistent with the \$100 penalty for the child passenger safety restraint law. | Legislative Session 2021 | Review & update of related safety materials (fact sheets & educational materials). *2021 Legislative Session did not see a bill to increase seat belt fines. | Collaboration of traffic safety partners | 2017 Occupant Protect Program Assessment | NHTSA Countermeasures That Work (CMW) Resource needed: Legislator or identified traffic safety coalition lead | Primary fine increased: |
| S1.3 Support enhancement and implementation of mandatory minor (under 17 years of age) occupant protection laws per best practices and GDL requirements which includes other risky driving behaviors . | On-going. Annual Report. | Per the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM), an approved traffic education program for young novice drivers must include a parent meeting at the beginning of the driver education class that includes course schedule, requirements, and expectations of the teen student and the parents/guardians; information on Montana's graduated driver licensing (GDL) law; best practices in GDL; and parental involvement (ARM 10.13.307). Drivers education continues in schools. | OPI | OPI Traffic Education Program | NHTSA Countermeasures That Work (CMW) | Number of students expected/enrolled: |
| S1.4 Continue to support Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) & SETT efforts at the state and local level focusing on unrestrained vehicle occupants among other risky driving behaviors. | Annual. On-going | State Highway Traffic Safety Section(SHTSS) provides funding for HVE efforts implemented by law enforcement (LE.) Participating agencies provide national mobilization & HVE at local at-risk events. Funding is a competitive grant process requiring a work plan and regular reporting. | Montana Highway Patrol (MHP) & Local LE - Department of Justice (DOJ), SHTSS-MDT | HSP FFY 2022, HSP FFY 2021, HSP FFY2021 Annual Report | NHTSA Countermeasures That Work (CMW) | Reported LE HVE hours: Seat belt citation reported during mobilizations: |

| <p>S1.5 Continue to support Tribal law enforcement Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) efforts focusing on unrestrained vehicle occupants among other risky driving behaviors.</p> | <p>Annual. Ongoing</p> | <p>Funded by NHTSA 405 program & managed by SHTSS-MDT, Tribal STEP grants assist tribal law enforcement in conducting HVE at local at-risk events & to establish checkpoints with the purpose of checking for seat belt and child safety seat use and impaired drivers. Funding is a competitive grant process requiring a work plan and regular reporting.</p> | <p>Tribal LE agencies, SHTSS-MDT</p> | <p>HSP FFY 2021</p> | <p>NHTSA Countermeasures That Work (CMW)</p> | <p>Reported LE HVE hours worked: Number of mobilizations worked: Citations reported during mobilization:</p> |
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| <p>To Watch: Promote local jurisdictional adoption of -seat belt ordinance if appropriate.</p> | <p>Ongoing.</p> | <p>Local ordinances can be enacted which do not exceed state statute.</p> | <p>Local government agencies</p> | <p>NHTSA Countermeasures That Work (CMW)</p> | <p>Implementation of Ordinances. MDT has no knowledge of local seat belt ordinances that have been adopted.</p> | <p></p> |
| <p>Strategy 2: Communication, Education & Injury Prevention</p> <p>Purpose: Use of a vehicle safety restraint can reduce fatalities and suspected serious injuries and improve crash outcomes. The key to improved crash outcomes is correct use of seat belts and child passenger safety seats every trip, every time. Education, training, and public outreach are effective tools to support and promote workplace policies and laws, enforcement activities, safety programs and messaging materials. Developing and strengthening partnerships with private employers, community-based organizations, and public agencies to encourage and promote the use of safety belts and child passenger safety seats.</p> | | | | | | |
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| <p>2.1 Sustain and grow the community based Buckle Up Montana program.</p> | <p>Annual. Ongoing.</p> | <p>Grass roots community coalitions funded by NHTSA grants through SHTSS-MDT to implement local public information and educational (PI&E) programs to promote seat belt and child passenger seat use. These coalitions also conduct CPS training and car seat fittings within their local communities. *Four Buckle Up Montana Coalitions cover Cascade, Flathead, Lewis & Clark, Jefferson, Broadwater and Missoula counties implement public information & education program encouraging seat belt use & child passenger safety.</p> | <p>BUMT Coordinators, local agencies, MDT-SHTSS</p> | <p>HSP FFY 2022, HSP FFY 2021</p> | <p></p> | <p>Program implementation:</p> |
| <p>2.2 Sustain and grow the Safe On All Roads - SOAR - Tribal community program focusing on seat belt and child passenger seat use.</p> | <p>Annual. Ongoing.</p> | <p>Focus of the SOAR program is to promote safe driving practices including seat belt & child passenger seat use within tribal reservation communities. SHTSS-MDT manages the NHTSA funding and partners with tribal agencies SOAR coordinators to provide tribal specific and relevant safety messaging . During 2021, the coordinators launched February's teen buckle up campaign focused on seat best use, & a impaired driving campaign forh the summer months, & a back-to-school campaign. Feb 2022: New campaign being launched focused on sports Live to Play Another Day. Radio, posters, billboards, & social media campaign. SOAR program received the 2022 Lifesavers Public Service Award.</p> | <p>SOAR Coordinators, tribal agencies, SHTSS-MDT</p> | <p>HSP FFY 2022, HSP FFY 2021</p> | <p></p> | <p>Program implementation.</p> |

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| 2.3 Sustain and grow the Teen Traffic Safety Program | Annual. Ongoing. | Continue to partner with Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) on teen peer-to-peer traffic safety program and other teen traffic safety opportunities to develop campaigns and conduct educational outreach for teens and young adults to reduce teen crashes, fatalities and serious injuries through outreach and education at a peer-to-peer level. Feb 2022: Received Ford's Drive Safe for Life grant for FY 2022 , w/campaigns to focus on speeding. Campaigns will be used for Teen Driver Safety Week in October. | FCCLA, SHTSS-MDT, and other traffic safety partners | HSP FFY 2022, HSP FFY 2021 | NHTSA Countermeasures That Work (CMW) | Program implementation. |
| 2.4 Sustain and grow the Child Passenger Safety Certification Training Program and inspection stations in Montana with increased focus on high-risk populations. | Annual. Ongoing. | Continue to support and promote the National Child Passenger Safety certification and recertification training to maintain and increase CPS technicians; and maintain and increase instructors in Montana. Maintaining inspection stations correlates with with maintaining certified instructors. *Annual mtg is May 4. 15th annual CPS is May 5 in Helena; working on speakers for CEU courses. Had 19 instructors, down to 15 . MLEA renewed training for POST, with stimulation of partnership w/ law enforcement (MHP). 2022 CPS Training Calendar has been scheduled. | CPS Instructor Team, MDT-HSP | HSP FFY 2022, HSP FFY 2021 | NHTSA Countermeasures That Work (CMW) | Technicians and Instructors trained: Technicians and Instructors recertified: |
| 2.5 Continue to support and sustain purchase and distribution of child passenger safety seats. | Annual. Ongoing. | Purchase and distribution of child safety seats for child restraint inspection stations and CPS technicians statewide with priority given to at risk areas. | CPS Technicians, Other traffic safety partners, SHTSS-MDT | HSP FFY 2022, HSP FFY 2021 | NHTSA Countermeasures That Work (CMW) | Number of seats purchased and distributed: |
| 2.6 Develop child passenger safety educational materials with updated and coordinated messaging and a distribution plan | As needed. | Activity involves updating and distribution of relevant materials that may be out-dated and warrant an update due to statute change and industry upgrades; and includes consistent messaging developed by safety partners. Distribution should consider various media formats to inform public stakeholders. | CPS Instructor Team, Injury Prevention & Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC)- Department of Health & Human Services (DPHHS), SHTSS-MDT | | NHTSA | Campaign implementation to include development & distribution plan. |
| 2.7 Develop educational campaigns based on current research on effective messaging to effect behavioral change in seat belt use. | As needed. | This opportunity involves updating and a distribution of relevant materials that may be out-dated and warrant an update due to statute change, industry upgrades, or change in safety change methodology to include agreed upon consistent safety messaging developed by safety partner experts. Distribution should consider various media formats & distribution outlets to inform public stakeholders. | Traffic safety partners not limited to CPS Instructor Team, DPHHS, Department of Labor & Industry (DLI), and SHTSS-MDT | | National Safety Council (NSC) | Campaign implementation to include development & distribution plan. |

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| 2.8 Continue to support occupant protection mini grant funding of community education and outreach | Annual. Ongoing. | Projects are funded by NHTSA & managed by SHTSS. Grant funding assists in community education and outreach on the importance of seat belt use and child passenger safety. Grant applications are open to the public and accepted throughout the year. Occupational Protection mini grants would be for events, speakers, or mini BUMT activities | Local & tribal health and prevention specialists, educators, MHP, local, & tribal LE-DOJ, SHTSS-MDT and other traffic safety partners | HSP FFY 2022, HSP FFY 2021 | | Number of funded mini-grants: |
| 2.9 Continue to encourage state agencies and other safety partners to distribute coordinated and consistent educational safety campaigns and messaging to increase seat belt and child passenger safety awareness and use. | Ongoing. | Opportunity involves coordination, collaboration, and communication with all transportation safety partners to distribute seat belt and child care seat messaging to internal staff networks and external county, tribal, and city networks to reach grassroots stakeholders to promote and enhance safety benefits of using vehicle safety restraints. Distribution should consider various media formats & distribution outlets to inform public stakeholders. * Continue to support and promote Saved By The Belt Award. | Traffic safety partners and networks not limited to those listed (DPHHS, DOJ, Department of Revenue (DOR), OPI, DLI, Department of Administration (DOA), MDT; local city, tribal, county government agencies and health departments; AARP; AAA; Montana Association of Counties (MACo), Montana Sheriffs & Peace Officers (MSPOA) and Montana Municipal Interlocal Association (MMIA) | 2017 Occupant Protect Program Assessment | National Safety Council (NSC) | Campaign implementation to include development & distribution plan. |
| 2.10 Continue to encourage state, county, tribal and city agencies and private employers to coordinate and implement workplace traffic safety policies to include seat belt use and other traffic safety measures. | Ongoing. | Access and update workplace traffic safety tool kit with traffic safety partners and determine best methods for public use. Develop safety messaging campaign to roll out traffic safety resource tool kit to public. Consider various outlets for distribution. "Seconds to Click" educational resources to be added to kit. To be reviewed in 2022. | Traffic safety partners, not limited to BUMT coordinators, DOA, DLI, DPHHS, MMIA, DOJ, OPI, SHTSS- MDT and other state, county, tribal and city transportation and health and LE agencies | | National Safety Council (NSC), Smith System-Drive Different | Work place policies & toolkit development and resource distribution: |
| 2.11 Promote and increase education and training for law enforcement, prosecutors, and the judiciary to ensure consistent citing and adjudication of occupant protection offenses and consideration of alternative sentencing (i.e., safety education including Alive at 25). | Annual. Ongoing. | Training enhances the skills & expertise of LEOs when conducting traffic stops. Training conducted by the Traffic Safety Resource Officer (TSRO). The TSRO serves as a liaison between MHP and local and tribal LE agencies, prosecutors, judges and the public. | MHP-DOJ, SHTSS-MDT | HSP FFY 2022, HSP FFY 2021 | | Expand partnerships. |
| Strategy 3: Improve Unrestrained Vehicle Occupant Data | | Purpose: Data is an essential part of identifying driver and occupant behaviors, including safety restraint use, misuse, or nonuse. Observational, pre-, and post- seat belt use surveys and child passenger safety checklists are methods of gathering occupant safety restraint use data. Other data resources include citation, crash, and trauma registry data. Evaluation of the effectiveness of workplace policies, laws, enforcement, safety programs, and public outreach activities helps identify areas that may need enhancement or increased focus | | | | |
| Opportunities | Timeline | Status | Lead(s) | Reference | Resource | Measurement of Success |

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| 3.1 Continue to conduct observational seat belt surveys, local and statewide. | Periodic Surveys. Annual. | Pre- and post- surveys of seat belt use are a component of traffic safety educational outreach and is a method to determine message effectiveness. Annual seat belt use observations are a NHTSA core measure. MT's 2021 confirmed annual seat belt observation survey rate is 92.2% This meets the 2021 target of 90.2% | BUMT Coordinators, other traffic safety partners and educators, SHTSS-MDT | HSP FFY2022, HSP FFY2021, NHTSA 2017 Occupant Protect Program Assessment | | Sustained or Improved seat belt rates. |
| 3.2 Continue to evaluate behavioral surveys on occupant restraint use to include teen and adult behavior, (i.e. Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and MT Needs Assessment) | Bi-annually | The Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), OPI is a self-reported safety behavior by MT youth used to identify the leading causes of mortality, morbidity, and social problems among youth; and includes questions on seat belt use, distracted driving, drug use, and impaired driving. 2021 YRBS, completed. https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/YRBS/2021YRBS/2021_MT_YRBS_FullReport_Sept22.pdf?ver=2021-09-22-125128-213 Seat Belt use rider, 46% do not always wear a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else. In those who drive a car, 6.9% never or rarely wear a seat belt when driving. The Needs Assessment (DPHHS) student survey focuses on risky behaviors associated with factors resulting in injury and/or impede positive development among our youth. The survey also includes risk and protective factors, which attitudes and opinions research has shown to be highly correlated with these risky behaviors. 2020 Needs Assessment https://www.bach-harrison.com/montanawebtool/Reports.aspx | OPI, DPHHS, DLI, DOR, SHTSS-MDT among other traffic safety partners. | YRBS-OPI, MT Needs Assessment- DPHHS | 2021 YRBS, 2019 YRBS, 2020 & 2018 MT Prevention Needs Assessment | Increase self-reported safe driving behaviors. |
| 3.3 Research underlying beliefs and behaviors of high-risk groups to better understand their traffic safety behaviors. | Ongoing. | The task of improving the culture of safety begins with understanding the behaviors and beliefs of specific high risk groups. Developing relevant, impactful safety messaging is the first step in changing the behavior and beliefs of the specific high risk groups. Implement research findings and best practices as appropriate to include a measure to evaluate success. Traffic Safety Culture research projects added on CHSP page https://www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/plans/ *Most recently completed " Guidance on Messaging to Avoid Reactance and Address Moral Disengagement", available under Safety/ Traffic Safety Culture https://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/projects/trafficsafety-reactance.shtml | DPHHS, OPI, AARP, SHTSS-MDT and other traffic safety partners | | Research- MDT, NHTSA, GHSA, Insurance Institute of Highway Safety (IIHS), National Safety Council (NSC) | Implement research findings and best practices and evaluation, as appropriate. |

3.4 Child Passenger Safety Seat data collection on use and misuse of child safety restraints

Ongoing.

The CPS instructor team is engaging in discussions on data collecting efforts in the field and setting goals in relation to baseline and misuse rates. This is ongoing and we can update as we proceed.

CPS Tech Network, SHTSS-MDT

Number of car seat education opportunities.
Continues to be monitored.