

[A Success Story:](#)

Motor Vehicle Crashes are Leading Cause of Unintentional Injury-Related Deaths in Kansas Children Ages 0-14

State Program: Injury Prevention Program

National Health Objective: HO 15-13 Unintentional injury deaths

Block Grant Role: Supplemental Funding

Block Grant Funding Percentage: 10-49% - Partial source of funding

Block Grant Current Year Funds: \$146,334

Issue:

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, unintentional injury causes more deaths than disease, homicide or suicide in Kansas' children ages 1-14. Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of unintentional injury-related death for children ages 0-14 in Kansas. While Kansas has a primary restraint law for children up to age 14, we know that not all parents/caregivers follow the law. Of the 26 Kansas children ages 0-14 killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2001, 85% were not using safety belts or child safety seats. By calculating relative risk, this data estimates that children in a motor vehicle crash are 39 times as likely to be killed and 2.6 times as likely to be injured as those with a safety restraint.

Intervention:

What we know: Research on the effectiveness of child safety seats in passenger vehicles has found them to reduce fatal injury by 71% for infants (less than one year old) and by 54% for toddlers (1-4 years old). Booster seats have been found to cut a child's risk of injury by 78%.

What we did: Preventive Health Block funds were used by Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City to distribute car seats to families designated at-risk and in-need. The assessments for the families' child passenger safety needs were done through Healthy Start Home Visitors.

- Children's Mercy Hospital staff developed an assessment form and had the home visitors make appointments for designated families to attend an event at the Kansas Speedway on May 15, 2004.
- This event was the first of four events scheduled for the Kansas City area. Two of the events took place on the Kansas side, focusing predominantly in the Wyandotte County area.
- At this event, the families received appropriate car seats for their needs, and received education on the proper use and installation of those seats. Current car seats being used were also assessed to make sure they fit the child, and were devoid of any defects or recalls. Older siblings were also targeted for booster seats.

Impact:

A total of 196 new car seats were distributed at the Kansas Speedway event. (Of these 51 were booster seats.) Many of these parents were not using a car seat prior to the event (86 children arrived without a car seat.) Of those that brought seats that were currently being used, 29 were found to be recalled or have a defect that rendered the car seat unsafe and unusable. The educational component should help increase the correct usage of the car seats. The Home Visitors will follow up with the families to ensure that they understand how to use the car seats, that they are using them correctly, and that they replace them when their child outgrows their current car seat or when the seat has been involved in a crash.

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