



Delaware Office of Highway Safety OCCUPANT PROTECTION AND CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

BREAKOUT SESSION 2

April 17, 2024

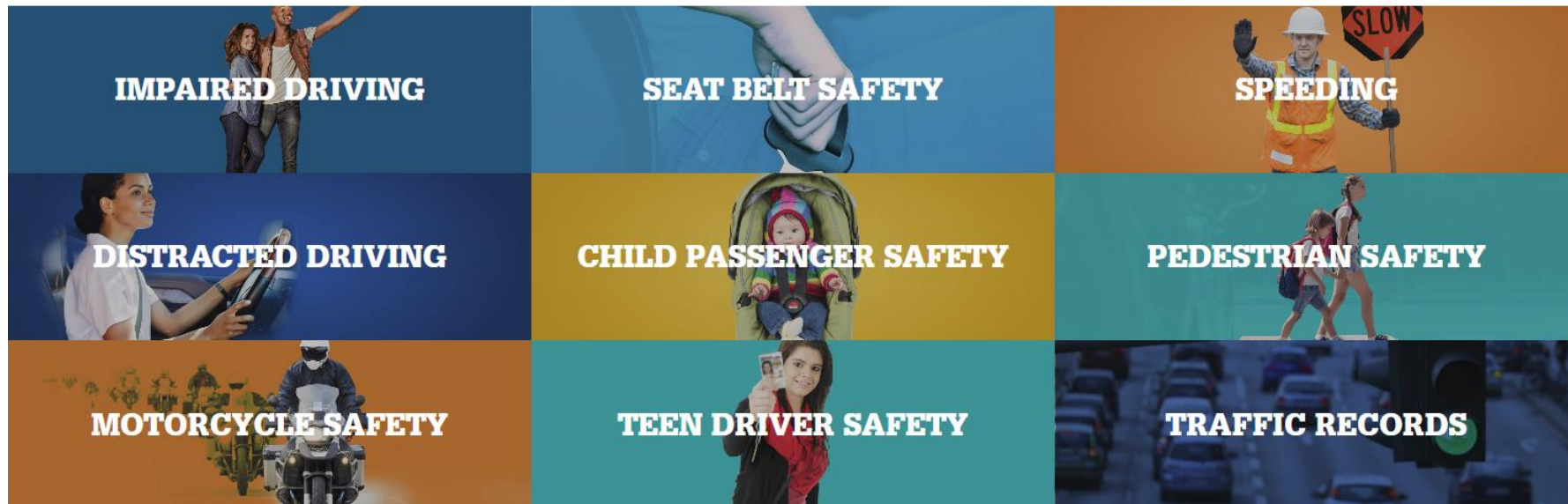
2024 Safety Summit Presentation

Overview of OHS



The Office of Highway Safety is committed to enhancing safety on Delaware roads by managing federal highway safety funds and implementing safety programs to encourage safe behavior among all road users, with the ultimate goal of reducing injuries and fatalities.

PRIORITY AREAS



Overview of OHS Presenters



- **Jackie McDermott** - Planner IV/Program Manager for the Office of Highway Safety for various program areas. I have been with the Office of Highway Safety since December 2019. Prior to joining the Office of Highway Safety, I was with Public Health in the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. Before joining the State of Delaware, I worked 20+ years in the private sector in quality/auditing functions.
- **Aubrey Klick** - Fitting Station Coordinator for the Office of Highway Safety. Aubrey has been with the Office of Highway Safety since October 2018. She is a Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician Instructor. Aubrey has been a Child Passenger Safety Technician since February 2017 and an Instructor since March 2018. She has enrichments in adaptive transportation and school bus transportation. Aubrey is also the Chair of Safe Kids Delaware.

Workshop Overview



- **General Occupant Protection**

Jackie McDermott

- Delaware Data Overview
- Current Strategies
- How you can assist

- **Delaware's Update Child Safety Law**

Aubrey Klick



BUCKLE UP
ARRIVE ALIVE DE

Delaware Occupant Protection Data Overview



Good News:

According to Delaware's 2023 Seat Belt Survey, 93.9% of motorists on Delaware roadways were properly restrained.

**WHEN YOU LEARN WHY
9 OUT OF 10 PEOPLE
WEAR A SEAT BELT.**

IT JUST CLICKS

CLICK IT OR TICKET DE

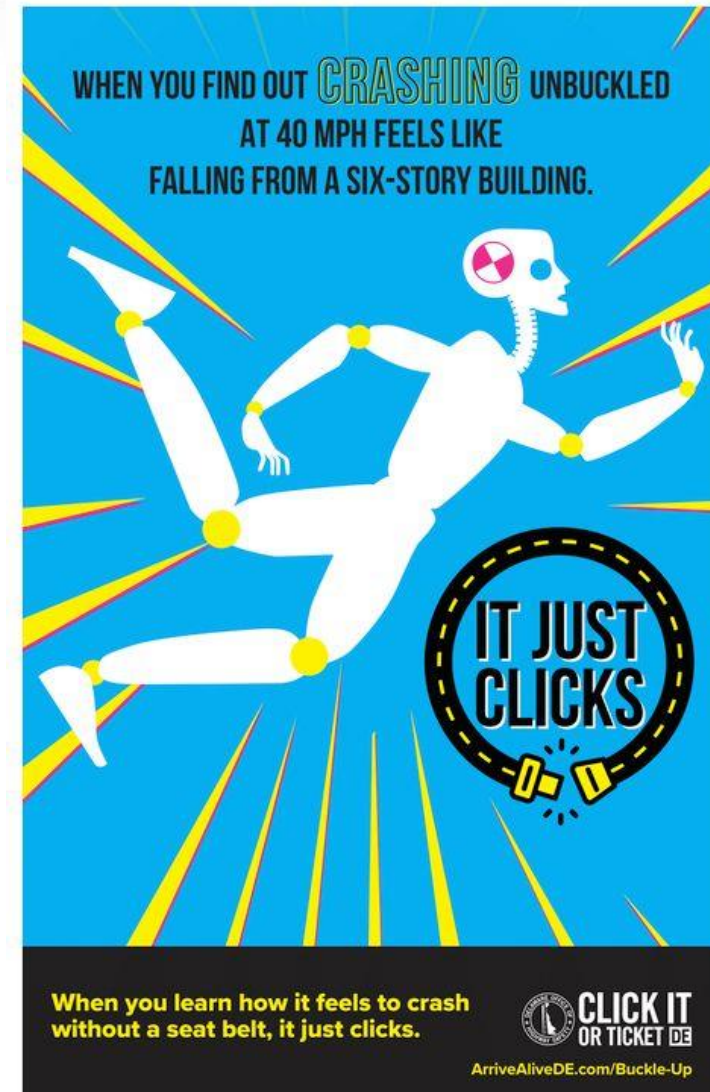
The graphic features a yellow background. On the left, text reads "WHEN YOU LEARN WHY 9 OUT OF 10 PEOPLE WEAR A SEAT BELT." To the right of the text is a 2x5 grid of icons representing people in vehicles. The top row has five green icons, and the bottom row has four green icons followed by one red icon, representing the 93.9% statistic. To the right of the icons is a circular logo with a dashed border containing the text "IT JUST CLICKS" and an illustration of a seat belt buckle. Below this logo is the text "CLICK IT OR TICKET DE" with a small circular logo to its left.

Delaware Occupant Protection Data Overview



Bad News:

48% of 2023 fatalities were unrestrained, up from 39% in 2022 and so far this year, 53% of fatalities were unrestrained.





Failure to Wear a Seat Belt In 2019, according to the National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA)

- Failure to buckle up caused 2,400 avoidable fatalities, 46,000 serious injuries, and cost society \$11 billion in easily preventable injury-related costs, accounting for about 3% of all crash costs.
- Seat belts work. Seat belt use prevented more than 14,600 fatalities, 450,000 serious injuries, and \$93 billion in injury-related economic costs in 2019.

Delaware Occupant Protection



Seat Belt Usage

- Belt use rates are lower among fatally injured occupants than among the general population because risk of death is much higher when not using a seat belt. Additionally, data shows people who don't use belts tend to be riskier drivers.
- Observed belt use in 2021 was lower among occupants of pickup trucks (85%) than occupants of cars (91%) or vans and SUVs (92%). ([National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2021](#))
- Research also shows that belt use is lower among occupants of older vehicles and among drivers who have been drinking alcohol. ([Mackay, 1997](#); [Partyka, 1989](#))

[Source: Seat belts \(iihs.org\)](#)

Delaware Occupant Protection

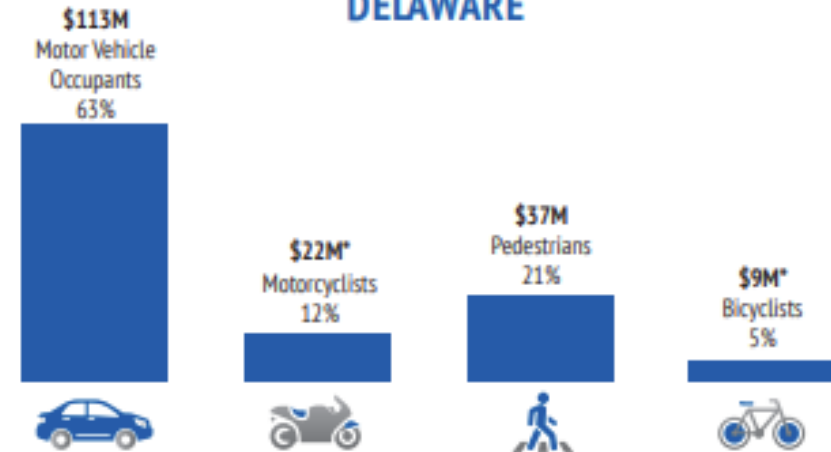


Costs of Crashes

According to the 2018 CDC WISQARS, Fatal Traffic Crashes in Delaware were estimated to be:

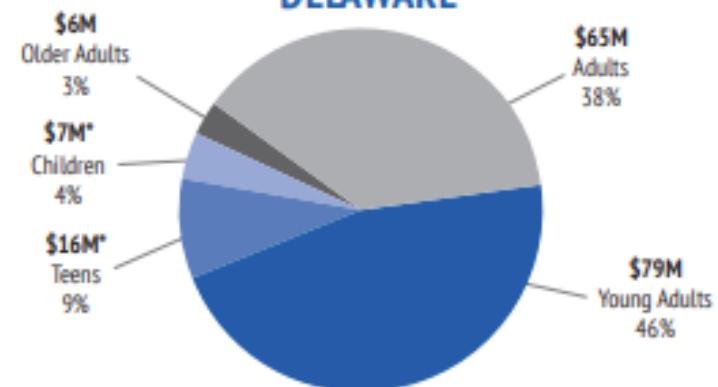
- \$ 1 million in medical costs
- \$180 million in work loss costs

COST OF TRAFFIC DEATHS BY TYPE OF ROAD USER DELAWARE



Source: CDC WISQARS (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System), 2018
*Cost is based on fewer than 20 deaths and may be unstable.

COST OF TRAFFIC DEATHS BY AGE GROUP DELAWARE



Children: 0-14, Teens: 15-19, Young Adults: 20-34, Adults: 35-64, Older Adults: 65+
Source: CDC WISQARS, 2018
*Cost is based on fewer than 20 deaths and may be unstable.



According to Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS)

In 2018 the total estimated dollar cost of crashes was \$72.24 Billion

- \$39.02 Billion for on-the-job crashes
- \$33.22 for off-the-job crashes

In 2018 the total estimated lost work days due to crashes was 1.951 Billion Days

- 201,000 for on-the-job crashes
- 1.750 million for off-the-job crashes

Delaware Occupant Protection



Myths Vs. Facts:

- <https://www.arrivealivede.com/buckle-up/>



Safe System Approach



Safer People -



Delaware Occupant Protection



What will encourage the remaining 6.1% of motorists to buckle up?



Delaware Occupant Protection



Educational modules that can be found on the Arrive Alive DE website:

arrivealivede.com/buckle-up/

Seat Belt Simulator

Fix the Fit



SEAT BELT SIMULATOR

THE POWER OF THE CLICK

To click or not to click? You decide who buckles up, then hit **GO!**



FIX THE FIT!



What's wrong with the position of this seat belt?

Click the character to find out!





Strategies to Increase Seat Belt Use

- ✓ **Primary seat belt laws** – allow police officers to stop and ticket someone for not buckling up. Seat belt laws are most effective when they cover occupants in all seats of the vehicle.
- ✓ **Short-term, high-visibility enforcement** – involves a brief period of increased police efforts/visibility. Highly publicized mass media campaigns.
- ✓ **Integrated nighttime enforcement programs** – short-term, highly visible enforcement strategies conducted at night combined with enforcement of other laws.
- **Increased penalties** – violating seat belt laws might include higher fines or points on a driver's license.

Additional Strategies

- **Education** – OHS uses paid and social media, outreach events, coloring books, follow and share OHS and other partners social media posts.
- **Positive Peer Pressure from Family and Friends** – if you see a family or friend not wearing a seatbelt discuss with them the importance of wearing the seatbelt, I love you too much to lose you, please do it for me!
- **Make a pledge** – there are several “pledge” opportunities available to entice your family, friends and co-workers.
- **SET THE EXAMPLE** – Every trip, every time!





Additional Strategies Continued:

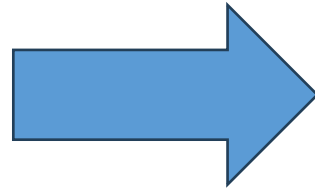
- Participate in OHS's Corporate Outreach Program.
- Develop a Road Safety Program at your place of business by starting with a proven employee-wide seat belt use campaign.
- Positive Reinforcement – If your place of business has a single entrance have someone at the entrance when employees arrive/leave to check for seatbelt usage and hand out goodies, such as candy, small gift cards etc.
- Submit a project proposal – If your company/agency can receive Federal Funding you can submit a project proposal to OHS for possible reimbursement of salaries.

Delaware Occupant Protection

IT ONLY TAKES THREE SECONDS TO SAVE A LIFE.

When you click it, you avoid a ticket. And possibly a fatal crash.

BUCKLE UP. ARRIVE ALIVE 



YOUR CHILDREN DEPEND ON YOU.

Learn how to protect them with the appropriate restraints, properly installed.

SECURE THE KIDS. ARRIVE ALIVE 

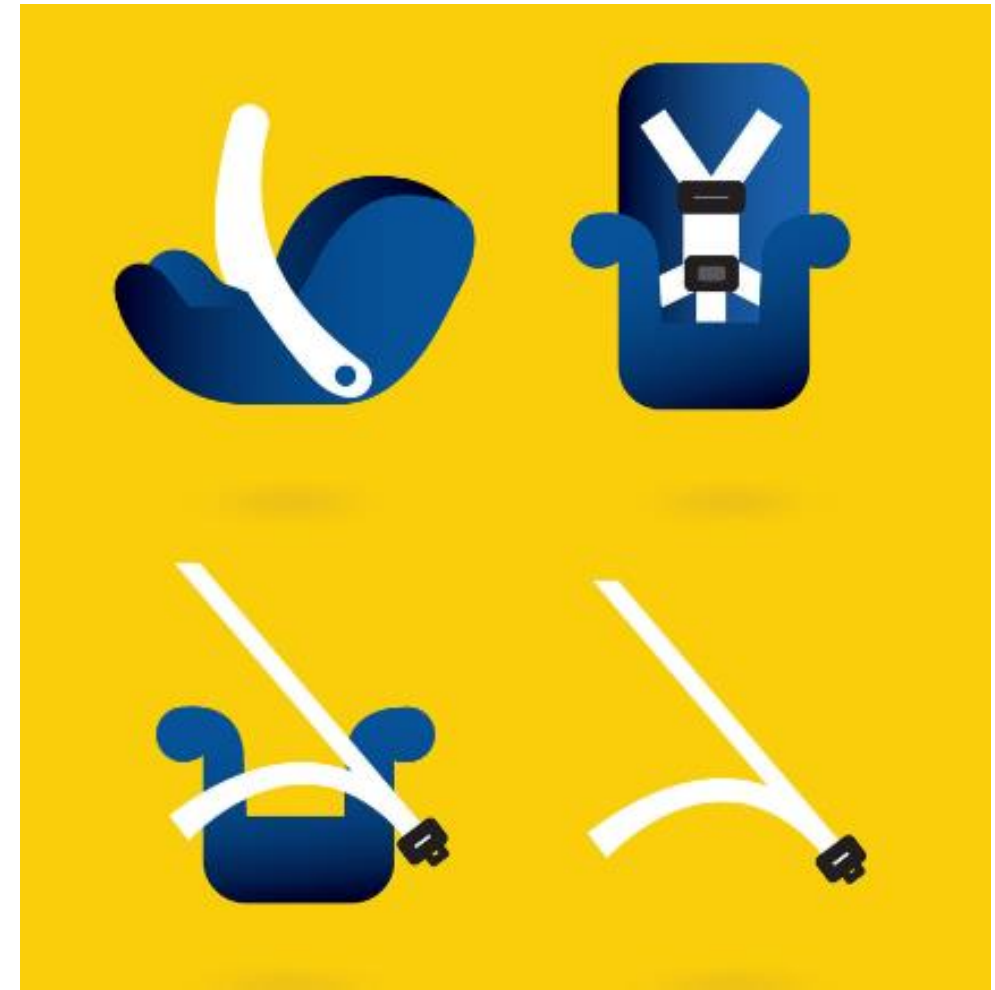


Child Passenger Safety

Child Passenger Safety



- In Delaware, 4 out of 5 car seats are being misused.
- Nationally
 - In 2021, 40% of children killed in crashes were unrestrained.
 - In 2021, 711 child passengers (ages 12 and younger) were killed in motor vehicle crashes in the United States, and in 2020 more than 63,000 were injured.



What We Know



- Proper use of child restraints reduces the risk of fatal injury to infants by 71% and by 54% for toddlers.
- Proper use of booster seats reduces the risk of non-fatal injury for children ages 4-8 by 45% when compared to seat belt use alone.

Data from NHTSA, AAA, and Pediatrics publication



Delaware's Child Restraint Law



- Currently, Delaware's Child Restraint law states that children under the age of 8 OR 65 pounds must ride in a child restraint and they must use that restraint according to manufacturer instructions.



Delaware's New Child Restraint Law



- Effective June 30, 2024
- Children under the age of 2 AND 30 pounds must ride rear-facing.
- Children under the age of 4 AND 40 pounds must ride in a harnessed seat, whether that be rear- or forward-facing.
- Children must use a booster seat until reaching the upper height or weight maximum allowed by the booster seat manufacturer.
 - There is no booster seat on the US market with a height limit less than 4'4" or a weight limits less than 80 pounds.

Why the change?



- Children are not small adults
 - Children have soft, flexible bones that take years to harden.
 - Children are born with a head that is larger and heavier in proportion to the rest of their body. Their neck muscles are also weaker.
- Crash forces spread across the shell of the car seat.
- Rear-facing keeps a child's head, neck, and spine in a straight line in the event of a collision.
- This reduces the risk of severe spinal injuries.

Why the change?



REAR-FACING

96.0



FORWARD-FACING

96.0



Caregiver Concerns



- “What will they do with their legs?”
- “I want to see my child.”
- “My pediatrician said they could face forward.”








Why the change?



- Seat belts are made for adults.
- Improper belt fit leads to serious injury and fatalities.

A child can ride **safely** without a **booster** seat when you can say **YES** to **ALL 5**

1	2	3	4	5
				
Back against the vehicle seat	Knees bend at edge of seat	Lap belt on tops of thighs, not on belly	Shoulder belt between neck and shoulder	Sits properly. No slouching, no playing with seat belt, etc.

* To ride safely, most kids need a booster until age 10-12 *



THE CAR SEAT LADY



A change to penalties

- With the new law, we removed the fine for the first offense.
- A first offense now results in a referral to an OHS fitting station.
- The law change is about education and increased safety, not fines.

Delaware's Child Restraint Law



OUT
WITH THE OLD

Delaware's Child Restraint Law used to state: All children must be properly restrained in a federally approved child safety seat appropriate for the child's age, weight and height up to 8 years of age or 65 lbs whichever comes first



IN
WITH THE NEW

As of June 30, 2023, Delaware's Child Restraint Law now requires:

- Children under age 2 AND 30 pounds to ride in a rear-facing car seat
- Children under age 4 AND 40 pounds to ride in a harnessed car seat
- Children in booster seats to remain in their booster seat until reaching the height or weight maximum listed by the booster seat manufacturer (There's no booster seat with a height maximum lower than 4'4")



For more information, please contact the Delaware Office of Highway Safety Car Seat Fitting Stations

New Castle: (302) 256-1123

Kent: (302) 387-2324

Sussex: (302) 242-7107

Best Practice



- Best practice is for children to remain in each child restraint stage until reaching the maximum height or weight limit allowed by their restraint manufacturer.
- State law is the bare minimum.
- CPSTs must be accepting of caregiver choices while within the law and manufacturer instructions.



How OHS Helps



- Conduct daily car seat checks.
- In FY23, OHS CPSTIs checked 691 car seats at our fitting stations.
- Two of our Fitting Station Coordinators are able to assist with adaptive restraints.
- All three Fitting Station Coordinators are able to assist with school bus transportation.



How OHS Helps



- Public car seat check events.
- We have partnered with:
 - Hospitals
 - Police departments
 - Daycares
 - Local businesses
 - State agencies
- In FY23, 387 car seats were checked at public seat check events.



How OHS Helps

- Basic car seat safety trainings
- Available for free to anyone



Transportation
Pre-Service

How OHS Helps



- Trains new CPSTs
- Delaware currently has 86 CPSTs
 - 7 CPSTIs
- Nationally certified
- 4 day course



How OHS Helps



- Serving underserved communities:
 - Two low-cost car seat programs
 - Safe Kids DE and OHS
- In FY23, OHS distributed a total of 100 car seats through these programs.



Challenges



- Caregiver hesitancy
 - Afraid of receiving a ticket or being judged
- Where do I go?
 - Common myths



How can you help?



- Know where to send people for help.
- Share our marketing materials (brochures, flyers, social media posts).
- Become a CPST!



Contact Us



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<https://www.arrivealivede.com/>

<https://ohs.delaware.gov/>

<https://www.facebook.com/highwaysafetyde/>

<https://www.instagram.com/highwaysafetyDE/>