

# CTRAFFIC SAFETY Connection



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Connecting Oregon's Community Traffic Safety Advocates

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## The Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey (MVOSS): Driver Education and Graduated Driver Licensing

Join ODOT—Transportation Safety Division and ACTS Oregon, October 27 to 29 at the Best Western Hood River Inn. Often our work is dictated by the needs of the communities where we work and these needs are constantly evolving. In recognition of this the conference theme is, “Facing the Challenge of Change.”

As planning continues, we will be requesting proposals for workshops, contacting vendors, and planning the evening reception. Thus far we have some very exciting intensive workshops which will have field specific education credits available. There will be 3 concurrent 180 minute (3 hour) training workshops for Engineering, Law Enforcement, and Child Passenger Safety. Those that choose to not participate in these training sessions will have the option to go on a tour of the Historic Columbia River Highway.

Stay tuned to upcoming newsletters and [www.actsoregon.org](http://www.actsoregon.org) for the latest conference developments.

NHTSA administers a national telephone survey periodically to obtain data on attitudes, knowledge, and self-reported behavior primarily in areas of occupant protection. The sample is composed of randomly selected people ages 16 and older residing in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. People ages 16 to 39 are over-sampled to obtain more seat belt nonusers and more adults with children who should be using child restraints. The survey was first administered in 1994 and has been conducted five times. The most recent survey took place from January 9 to April 30, 2007.

Table 2 – Percentage of Drivers Who Took a Driver's Education Course by Driver Characteristics

	N-size	Percent
<b>Total</b>	5,393	62%
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	2,556	63%
Female	2,837	60%
<b>Age</b>		
16-20	271	70%
21-29	588	71%
30-39	1,275	70%
40-64	2,322	69%
65 and older	839	27%
<b>Race</b>		
African-American	444	51%
White	4,199	63%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Hispanic	461	49%
Non-Hispanic	4,866	63%
<b>Income</b>		
Household Income Under \$30,000	1,060	50%
\$30,000-\$49,999	997	59%
\$50,000-\$99,999	1,660	67%
\$100,000 or more	948	75%
<b>Education</b>		
Not a High School Graduate	476	50%
Finished Grade 12/Obtained GED	1,472	55%
Some College Experience	1,293	65%
Graduated College	2,099	69%

not appreciably differ. But differences appeared when analyzed by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. African-Americans and Hispanics were less likely to have taken a course than were Whites and Non-Hispanics, respectively. Fewer years of formal education or lower household income also corresponded with a greater likelihood of not taking a driver's education course.

With respect to geographic comparisons, about the same percentages of urban (62%), suburban (62%), and rural (59%) drivers had taken a driver's education course. Greater variation appeared when examining Census regions, with the lowest percentage of course takers being found in the South.

Among drivers who had taken a driver's education course, more than three-quarters (77%) had taken a course in school. Drivers also had taken courses from private companies (25%), from parents or family members (19%), and from the Internet (1%). Three percent had taken a driver's education course from some other source than those specified above. As indicated by the percentages, the respondents could identify more than one source.

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The MVOSS is composed of two questionnaires, each administered to approximately 6,000 people. Version 1 focuses on seat belt use. It also contains shorter modules on air bags, drinking and driving, and driving speed. Version 2 focuses on children's use of restraints when riding in motor vehicles. It also contains shorter modules on driver education and graduated driver licensing (GDL), air bags, emergency medical services (EMS), and use of cell phones while driving. Both questionnaires include a series of questions on crash injury experience as well as questions collecting basic demographic information. Prior to each survey, the questionnaires are updated as needed.

This Research Note summarizes selected results focusing on driver education and GDL, new modules introduced in 2007.

**Driver Education**—Sixty-two percent of drivers had taken a driver's education course before getting a driver's license (Table 2). The percentage was lower for those 65 and older. Males and females did

Table 4 – Recommended Number of Hours That Parents/Guardians Should Spend Teaching Their Teenagers How To Drive

	N-size	More Than 50 Hours	25-50 Hours	Less Than 25 Hours	None
<b>Total Population</b>	6,010	35%	47%	11%	2%
<b>Sex</b>					
Male	2,793	35%	48%	11%	1%
Female	3,217	35%	46%	10%	2%
<b>Race</b>					
African-American	561	31%	52%	14%	1%
White	4,503	36%	48%	10%	2%
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Hispanic	634	31%	44%	17%	1%
Non-Hispanic	5,297	36%	48%	10%	2%
<b>Age</b>					
16-20	351	30%	55%	13%	1%
21-29	689	35%	51%	10%	1%
30-39	1,389	43%	44%	10%	1%
40-64	2,474	38%	46%	10%	2%
65 and Older	997	26%	45%	13%	4%
<b>Education</b>					
Not a High School Graduate	674	30%	47%	14%	1%
Finished Grade 12 or Obtained GED	1,705	35%	49%	9%	1%
Some College	1,387	37%	48%	9%	2%
College Graduate	2,175	36%	45%	12%	2%
<b>Income</b>					
Less Than \$30,000 Income	1,414	34%	45%	13%	1%
\$30,000-49,999	1,063	36%	52%	8%	1%
\$50,000-99,999	1,700	37%	50%	8%	2%
\$100,000 Or More	965	37%	46%	12%	2%
<b>Population Density</b>					
Urban	1,908	33%	46%	13%	2%
Suburban	2,983	36%	47%	10%	2%
Rural	1,119	35%	49%	9%	1%

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# Hillsboro Technician Class

Despite the threat of snow, the first CPS Technician Certification Class in 2009 was hosted by Hillsboro Fire Department February 11th-14th.

New CPS Technicians include: Jeff Weiss—**Aberdeen Police Department**; Lauren Hermann—**American Medical Response**; Kristi Mattes and Phoebe Rosenberg—**Community**



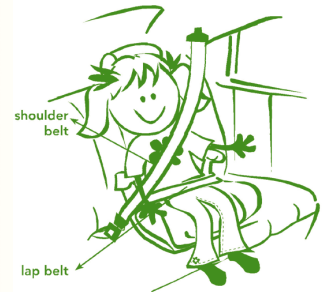
**Volunteers**; Chad Toomey and Geoffrey McFarland—**Forest Grove Fire & Rescue**; Mike Osgood and Susan Bradbury—**Grays Harbor County Sheriff's Office**; Dorothy Anderson—**Healthy Birth Initiative**; Darlene Montgomery and Adriana Canas—**Hillsboro Fire Department**; Stacey Seal—**Insights Teen Parent Program**; Ann Marie Penge—**Jefferson Rural Fire Protection District**; Amanda Klein—**Parent Enhancement Program**; Trent Tompkins—**Salem Hospital** and Doreen Rivera—**Washington County Sheriff's Office**.

Thank you, Storm Smith and Hillsboro Fire Department for making this class possible.

The instructor team was a lively bunch including Instructors Bret Barnum—**Portland Police Bureau**; Jeff Oliver and Cindy Storlie—**Lake Oswego Police Department**; Sandy Holt, **ACTS Oregon** and Technician Assistant Clint Foley—**The Relief Nursery, Eugene**. Thank you, for your dedication to the certification program.

# Misuse and Booster Seats

The Automotive Safety Program at Riley Hospital for Children conducted a cross-sectional, observational survey of children transported in motor vehicles between 2006 and 2007. Drivers completed a survey reporting the child's age, weight and gender, and the driver's age, gender, race, income, education, and relationship to the child. Meanwhile a child passenger safety technician recorded vehicle seating location, restraint type, and use of the car safety seat harness or seat belt as appropriate for the child. The survey was conducted at twenty-five fast food restaurants and discount department stores located throughout Indiana. Participants included a convenience sample of drivers transporting children younger than 16 years.



The results: 1446 drivers participated, 2287 children were observed with 564 children in belt-positioning booster (BPB) seats. At least one seat belt misuse was observed for every 64.8% of the children transported in a BPB. Common misuses were the shoulder belt being placed over the booster seat armrest (35.8%); shoulder belt not at mid-shoulder position (28.5%), seat belt too loose (24.5%), and the shoulder belt either behind the child's back (9.1%) or under their arm (10.0%).

This study determined that there is a high frequency of seat belt misuse among children transported in booster seats. Recommendations include advising parents on appropriate car seat selection and encouraging parents to supervise the seat belt use with booster seats to decrease misuse.

This study was adapted from Science Direct and can be viewed at:  
<file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/ruth/Local%20Settings/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/OLK3A>

# And the Winners Are...

## 2009 Building Safer Communities Grantees:

- City of Ashland Public Works
- Aumsville Police Department
- City of Eugene Transportation Planning
- Hubbard Police Department
- Independence Police Department
- City of Keizer Bikeways Committee
- Malheur County Fair Board
- Nyssa Police Department
- Redmond Police Department
- Rockaway Police Department
- Turner Police Department

## 2009 Bicycle Safety Mini Grantees:

- Aumsville Police Department
- Brookings Police Department
- Canby Police Department
- City of Gresham
- Hubbard Police Department
- Legacy Emanuel Hospital Trauma Nurses Talk Tough
- North West Bicycle Safety Council
- Nyssa Police Department
- Strengthening Rural Families, Philomath
- City of Tigard
- City of Union



## Study Shows Teen Passengers Are Least Likely to Buckle Up



A recent study conducted by Meharry Medical College and State Farm Insurance uncovered an alarming fact about teen behavior in vehicles. It is the first direct comparison of belt use rate among teen drivers versus teen passengers with a nationally representative teen population. Results have shown that teen passengers are even less likely to wear their seatbelts than teen drivers.

Fifty nine percent of teens reported buckling up in the driver's seat, but only forty two percent said they always wore seat belts as passengers. The study has also been able to identify sub populations who are the least likely to wear a seatbelt, whether the driver or passenger. These groups include: young men, African Americans, students experiencing academic difficulties, and teens with a history of drinking and driving/riding with a drinking passenger.

These findings help better understand why traffic crashes are the leading cause of death to U.S. teens accounting for nearly 5,000 lives lost per year. With about 40 percent of teen traffic fatalities involving passengers these finding should help target education efforts.

This article was adaptation from *Safe Ride News*, January/February 2009.

## Driving While Deluded



Increasing public awareness of distracted driving is important. ACTS Oregon encourages all drivers and passengers to think

more about their behavior and its impact on traffic safety. Recently Oregonian columnist, Susan Nielsen wrote about the issue of driving and cell phones. She wrote two articles: "Dialing and Driving" February 22nd followed by "Driving While Deluded" February 26th.

Nielsen stated, "Readers staged an intervention with me this week, after I claimed to be a careful driver who can handle her cell phone just fine." "Get off the phone," they said. "You're going to kill someone", they said. She took their message to heart and responded to her readers saying, "Their message hit home. While I still oppose a proposed state law that would ban Oregon drivers from using handheld cell phones, I'm going to curtail my calls significantly and concede the readers' point: People who dial and drive may be in as deep denial of their heightened accident risk as those who drink and drive."

Working in traffic safety we get adjusted to the fact that most of our beliefs are not high ranking

on the popularity scale. Therefore when we came across this article and saw that so many readers were well aware that cell phones are dangerously distracting, we were in a sort of traffic safety bliss. This article was initially spurred on by proposed legislation brought forth by Representative Carolyn Tomei, D—Milwaukie. She wants to ban handheld phones and require drivers to use hands-free devices while making calls.

Nielsen thinks this legislation is unnecessary because Oregon already has a law against careless driving. The proposal is also arbitrary, since studies suggest that hands-free devices don't make calling safer and even contribute to a false sense of security.

Many readers shared their horror stories and comments about the cell phone issue. These stories ranged from eye witness accounts of driving with pets on laps, eating breakfast sandwiches during rush hour, and texting at stop lights. One reader exclaimed, "Honestly, it's amazing we don't all get in crashes every day."

"Many people think they can multitask, but what they are doing is splitting their energy and attention from both things and doing neither justice," says Wade Coykendall of unincorporated Washington County.

Nielsen shared her own reasons for becoming a chronic dial-and-driver. She has zero down time at work and home, and her extended family lives far away. Driving is a fleeting chance to connect. Second, she has become so accustomed to multitasking that merely driving feels boring and inefficient.

This type of reasoning is common place. We are all so busy just trying to get through the day that we have to find creative ways to schedule in time for friends and family. It's easy to forget that statistically driving is the most risky thing people do all day.

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## The Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey (MVOSS): Driver Education and Graduated Driver Licensing

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**Driver Licensing/GDL**—Thirty-two percent of the population ages 16 and older believe the youngest age at which teenagers should be allowed to get a learner's permit to drive is 15 or younger. Most of those favor age 15 (27%), but 4% prefer age 14 and 1% prefer younger. Thirty-nine percent believe the minimum age should be 16, 28% believe it should be older than 16, and 2% "don't know."

Among those living with a child 15 or younger, 36% favor a minimum age of 15 or younger for the learner's permit compared to 29% among those not living with a child in this age range. The single year of age preferred most often by both groups was 16, with 35% of those living with a child believing that was the appropriate minimum age compared to 41% of those not living with a child.

The public does not believe that a teenager's participation in a formal driver's education course makes it unnecessary for parents to participate in the teenager's training. Instead, 78% consider it very important that parents or guardians help teach their teenagers to drive in addition to the course instruction. Fifteen percent consider it somewhat important; 6% believe it not that important.

About four-out-of-five people (82%) recommend that parents or guardians spend 25 hours or more teaching their teenagers how to drive. More than one-third (35%) recommend spending 50 or more hours. Table 4 shows the recommended number of hours broken out by demographic characteristics. The numbers do not total 100% as the table excludes the percentages of those who said they did not know.

For more information on the survey visit: [www.nhtsa.gov/portal/nhtsa\\_static\\_file\\_downloader.jsp?file=/staticfiles/DOT/NHTSA/Traffic Injury Control/Articles/Associated Files/811047.pdf](http://www.nhtsa.gov/portal/nhtsa_static_file_downloader.jsp?file=/staticfiles/DOT/NHTSA/Traffic%20Injury%20Control/Articles/Associated%20Files/811047.pdf).



## Check Up Clinics and Fitting Stations

Please check [www.childsafetyseat.org](http://www.childsafetyseat.org) under Child Passenger Safety/Calendar for current list, specific dates, locations and times.

Date	City	Location	Address	Time
3/11/09	McMinnville	Fire Department	Please Call: 503-435-5800	
3/12/09	La Grande	Fire Department	1806 Cove Avenue	9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
3/12/09	Ontario	Fire Department	444 SW 4th Street	3:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.
3/12/09	Scappoose	Rural Fire Station	52751 Columbia River Hwy	4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.
3/14/09	Beaverton	Police Department	4755 SW Griffith Drive	9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
3/14/09	Portland	Good Samaritan Hospital Parking Structure 3	1015 NW 22nd	10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.
3/18/09	Corvallis	Fire Department	400 NW Harrison Street	8:00 A.M. to 11:30 A.M.
3/18/09	Bend	Fire Department	1212 SW Simpson	10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.
3/19/09	La Grande	Fire Department	1806 Cove Avenue	9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
3/19/09	Beaverton	NW Jeep	10600 SW Canyon Road	5:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.
3/21/09	Milwaukie	Fire Department	2930 SE Oak Grove Boulevard	10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
3/21/09	Salem	Hospital	Corner of Mission & Capitol Street	11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.
3/26/09	La Grande	Fire Department	1806 Cove Avenue	9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
4/02/09	Redmond	Fire Department	341 Dogwood Avenue	10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

## Child Safety Seats Are Safe

Recently there was an article in the Chicago Tribune about flaws in the testing of infant child safety seats that may raise concerns for parents and caregivers. ACTS Oregon Child Safety Seat Resource Center reminds consumers that correctly used car seats and booster seats are extremely effective, reducing the risk of death in a crash by as much as 71 percent. And the number of children killed in crashes over the past 30 years has dropped significantly, mostly due to the widespread use of car seats and enhanced child passenger safety laws.

## Driving While Deluded

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Another reader comments, "If you don't want the government to treat you like a child, don't act like one." After much persuading Nielsen decided to give up driving and dialing for Lent—and perhaps for good. No more social calls during rush hour. No more dialing while moving, ever. If we all followed this example, maybe we'd have fewer horror stories and close calls. That, in turn, would give Oregon lawmakers fewer reasons to indulge in backseat driving. Find Susan Nielsen's blog and comments on her column at [oregonlive.com/nielsen](http://oregonlive.com/nielsen).

# 2009 Oregon Transportation SAFETY CONFERENCE

## Facing the Challenge of Change

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October 27 to 29

at the Best Western Hood River Inn