



## INTRODUCTION

Do seat belts save lives? Emphatically YES! You Betcha! Seat belts prevent ejection from vehicles and reduce head and spinal cord injuries by spreading the forces of a crash over a wider area of the body.

Did you know young people ages 16-20 years old are most likely to be involved in car crashes because they have the highest crash rate per mile driven? And sadly, many of those teens are injured or killed. Statistics show passengers have a higher likelihood of surviving crashes when restrained by seat belts. For that reason, we developed THE MILE-HIGH TEEN SEAT BELT CHALLENGE: a friendly competition that encourages teens at local high schools to increase seat belt usage.

This is a great way for teens to contribute to something positive within their schools and communities.

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A volunteer from the Mile-High RETAC visits your school, and calculates the percentage of students that wear seat belts. Next, a group of students sponsored by an adult within your school, implement activities designed to increase seat belt use. This group also documents activities in a Power-Point. Then, the same Mile-High RETAC volunteer collects the power point, and calculates the percentage of students that wear seat belts. The school with the best Power Point and improved seat belt use - wins the competition - bragging rights, and a school-wide celebration!

## 5 SIMPLE RULES TO REMEMBER

- (1) Have fun.
- (2) Four-weeks to improve seat belt use.
- (3) Sign a pledge promising to “Buckle Up Every Time.”
- (4) Promote activities that get the attention of your peers, bear in mind activities should Educate, Encourage, Enforce, and Evaluate seat belt use.
- (5) Submit a **Power-Point** presentation to the Mile-High RETAC.

# FAQ's

## **What is the Mile-High RETAC?**

The Mile-High Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Council (“Mile-High RETAC”) is a group of highly skilled professionals that ensure quality systems of emergency, medical, and trauma care for patients within Adams County, Arapahoe County, the City and County of Broomfield, the City and County of Denver, Douglas County, and Elbert County. The primary goal of the Mile-High RETAC is saving lives.

## **What qualifications does the Mile-High RETAC have?**

The Mile-High RETAC is one of eleven RETAC organizations, authorized under Colorado Revised Statutes, to provide a coordinated approach to emergency medical and trauma care in Colorado.

## **Why did the Mile- High RETAC initiate the Teen Seat Belt Challenge?**

Growing concerns in the Mile-High RETAC counties and across the state of Colorado culminated in 2004, when car crashes killed ninety-six teenagers (16 – 20 years of age). More alarming, two thirds of them were not using seat belts, of which seventy-one percent (45/63) were ejected from the vehicle.

## **What is the Mile-High RETAC Teen Seat Belt Challenge?**

The Teen Seat Belt Challenge is a friendly competition, and a fun way for participating high schools to increase seat belt use among teens. It consists of a four-week campaign led by students. They compete to increase seat belt use because car crashes are one of the leading causes of death for teenagers, and seat belts help save lives. The winning high school receives a school wide celebration with cake and popcorn, as well as bragging rights, and a plaque in recognition of their effort.

## **How does the Mile-High RETAC assist our school with the Teen Seat Belt Challenge?**

The Mile-High RETAC provides volunteers (often nurses and doctors), so teachers and administrators do not have to do additional work assisting students with seat belt related activities.

## **How much money does it cost for our school to participate in the Teen Seat Belt Challenge?**

Nothing, because the Mile-High RETAC is a 501 (c) 3 Tax Exempt organization funded through grants by organizations like the Colorado Department Of Transportation. Materials are provided.

## **Why should our school participate in the Teen Seat Belt Challenge?**

When teens from local high schools get involved in the Teen Seat Belt Challenge, they have a real chance to make a serious difference in the community. In this case, they are potentially saving the lives of their peers. Moreover, volunteering always looks great on a student's resume.

**Could our school discuss driving issues besides seat belt use?**

This is a teen driven program so naturally teens ought to address driving issues important to teens; however, we prefer the major focus relates to seat belts.

**When is the Teen Seat Belt Challenge?**

Each fall and spring. During the fall, it begins the final week in September. In the spring (only first time schools participate), it begins the first week in April.

**What if our school wants to participate but we have a crammed calendar?**

We encourage you to participate anyway because of the seriousness of seat belt use. However, schools with crammed calendars have often asked underclassmen with less responsibilities i.e., without graduation, college, etc., to lead the Teen Seat Belt Challenge. And it turned out very successful.

**What happens if our school wins the Teen Seat Belt Challenge?**

You will receive an all school celebration, and your school's name will be engraved on the circulating "Winning Plaque." In addition, your school will most likely be featured in local news publications.

# ACTIVITIES

A minimum of four activities including the *Pledge Cards* must be completed. All of the activities must be student driven (this is a peer-to-peer challenge); consequently, the concepts for many activities have been developed by teens. Each activity is designed to increase teen seat belt use. The FOUR E's (*Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation*) underlie the purpose of each activity. Most activities include awards, rewards, and incentives for participation. The following list is composed of activities that a school may choose to implement during its campaign.

## Alcohol & Drugs Driving Speaker



Invite a speaker to your school who has been involved in an alcohol or drug related car crash.

## Booth



Set up a booth in your school hallway to distribute educational materials, posters, or flyers that teach teens how to maintain a safe driving environment.

## **Bumper Stickers**

Have students design a bumper sticker centered on buckling up or safe driving.

## **Candle Light Ceremony**

Hold a candle light ceremony for all Colorado Teens killed in motor vehicle crashes last year

## **Choose A Slogan**



Come up with a clever slogan or motto that summarizes the purpose of the activities implemented within your four-week campaign. For example “To Be Or Not To Be?” Buckle up! Or, “Don’t become Humpty Dumpty!” Buckle Up!

## **Crash Car Reenactment**



Stage a realistic teen car crash with help from the local police, fire, and emergency medical services. Allow 3-4 weeks for planning and organization of resources.

### **Classroom Presentations**



Give one or two minute presentations to students in different classrooms. Discuss why motor vehicle crashes are the #1 killer of teens, and emphasize the importance of wearing a seat belt.

### **Classroom Videos**

Show a Mile-High Teen Seat Belt Challenge approved video and facilitate a discussion about the content.

### **Click it or Ticket Teen Driving Campaign**

Convince teens that wearing a seat belt is not only the law in Colorado, but that they saves lives, money and prevent having teen licenses revoked.

### **Commercial**



Make a commercial advertisement that encourages teens to Buckle Up! The commercial can be made for television or radio, and should consist of facts and statistics that are likely to influence teens to be safe drivers.

### Crashed Car Display



Families of teen drivers who were involved in a fatal car crash have donated crashed cars. This powerful display will be delivered to the school and parked where students can view the torn metal and read the story of how the crash happened and perhaps could have been prevented.

### Design a Seat Belt Pledge (Mandatory)



Design a seat belt pledge, and ask students in your school to sign the pledge as a promise to always wear a seat belt.

### Design a Tee Shirt



Design a tee shirt with a buckle message, or come up with a design for us to print onto several T-Shirts.

## Door Decorating

Decorate the entrance to a classroom with teen driving and seat belt messages.

## Dum Dum's



As a friendly reminder pass out “Dum Dum” suckers in your school parking lot to students who are not buckled because driving without a seat belt is “Dumb.” This activity may include other types of candy to raise awareness of seat belt use such as Crunch Bars, Smarties, or Life Savers.

## Fact Flyers & Brochures



Create your own teen driving and seat belt flyers to post on visible locations such as cars, or lockers.

## Fatal Vision Goggles



Fatal Vision Goggles are a training tool used to vividly demonstrate the concept of impairment and the dangers of impaired driving. Students will discuss the impact of drunk, drugged, drowsy and distracted driving.

## Group Research



Students may choose to research a seat belt organization within their community, and team up with that organization to achieve a common goal.

## Guest Speakers

Arrange for a guest speaker to talk to students about teen driving and motor vehicle crashes. Speakers may include: Doctors, Nurses, EMT/Paramedics, Police Officers, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Teen Survivors of motor vehicle crashes, Judges, Insurance companies, Rehabilitation facility staff, Alive at 25 etc.

## Hospital Visit



What happens after a crash? Usually victims are taken to the hospital. Arrange a visit to learn more about the trauma unit at local hospital.

## Know Colorado's Teen Driving Laws

Teach student drivers the 3 phases of the Colorado Teen Driving Laws (1) Instruction Permit, (2) Restricted License, and (3) Full Privilege License. Distribute brochures provided in English and Spanish from the Colorado Department Of Transportation that display the laws.

### Law enforcement guest speaker



Arrange for a law-enforcement, community resource officer, or judge talk to your school about teen driving and motor vehicle crashes. In addition, students should take the time to learn the penalties for breaking the laws such as driving under the influence of alcohol, or other traffic infractions and offenses.

### Lunch Room Table Tents



Print teen driving facts on card stock “table tents” then place the “table tents” on the tables in the school cafeteria.

### Music video

Grab your video camera, and warm up your voice to make a music video with a smart teen driving message.

Make a remix of your favorite songs, or even nursery rhymes.

### Place Buckle Up signs your parking lot



Remind students as they enter and leave your schools parking lot that they should

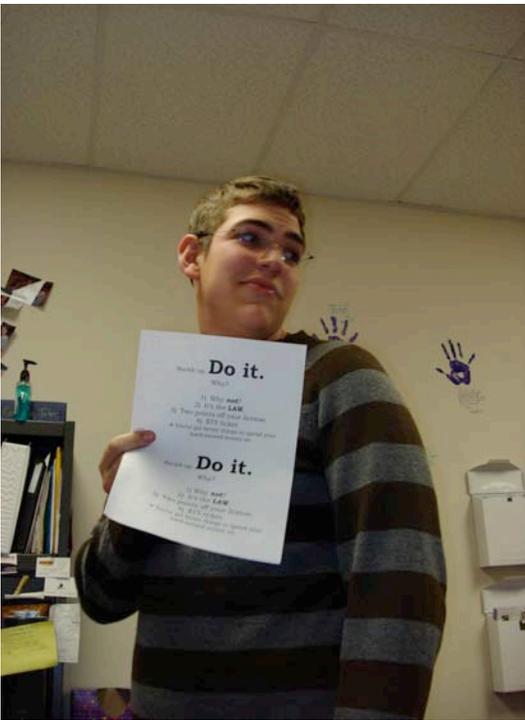
Buckle Up Every Time.

## Poster Contests



Encourage students to create posters with Teen Driving and Seat Belt statistics to display in common areas. In addition, schools may hold a contest to create the dynamic posters.

## Potty Talks



Make a flyer on teen driving that includes statistics, pictures, stories and tips to get students to wear their seat belts. Post flyers in the bathroom stalls so students have something to read while going potty.

## Ribbon Week

Have students wear a ribbon or bracelet to increase awareness of seat belt use.

## School Announcements

Ask a Teen Seat Belt Challenge participant to read a school announcement intended to *Educate, Encourage, Enforce, or Evaluate* seat belt use.

## Seat Belt Observation

Conduct an unannounced seat belt observation in the student parking lot before or after school to better understand whether your peers have a tendency to buckle up.

## Seat Belt Pledge Banner



Have students pledge to wear their seat belt by signing a banner that can be displayed in the school.

## Seat Belt Super Hero



Dress up as a seat belt super hero, and encourage classmates to wear a seat belt.

## Seat Belt Ticket Reminders



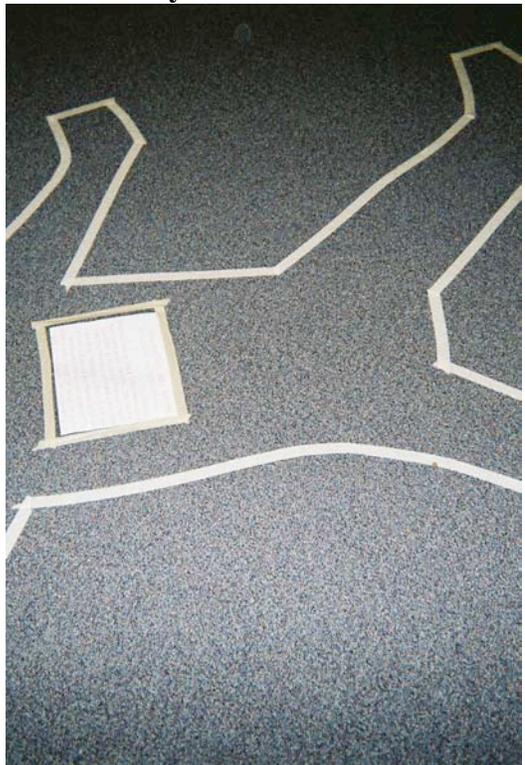
Issue reminder seat belt tickets in the school parking lot before or after school. Provided incentives for students who buckle up!

## Simulator



Allow students to feel the impact of wearing a seat belt during a simulated experience of a low speed collision.

## Student Body Outline



Trace the outline of a student to raise awareness about the number of teen drivers that died from car crashes in the past year.

## Student Survey on Driving Behaviors

Create a survey geared toward students, and analyze the survey to provide suggestions to make driving safer for teens.

## Teens In The News

Collect newspaper or Internet articles on teen driving issues. Creatively frame the issues to illustrate experiences of other teen drivers.

## Teen Seat Belt Line 9

Work with Teen Seat Belt Challenge Committee members from other schools and choose 5 members to go to Channel 9 News and answer questions from callers. There may be a chance for an on camera interview.

## Walk In Their Shoes



Display shoes that equal the number of Colorado teens killed in traffic crashes each year.

As an example line the shoes up on the stairs or sidewalk leading to the school. Write statistics with sidewalk chalk on the walkway up to school as well.



## PREVIOUS WINNERS

2010 Fall SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL  
2010 Spring DOUGLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL  
2009 Fall EAST HIGH SCHOOL  
2009 Spring THOMAS JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL  
2008 Fall SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL  
2008 Spring WEST HIGH SCHOOL  
2007 Fall LITTLETON HIGH SCHOOL  
2007 Spring BROOMFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

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Click [here](#) for the Observation Form