TOGETHER FOR LIFE

Key Leader & Workplace Toolkit

for Community Coordinators

A pilot project to increase seat belt
use in Utah's rural communities

www.togetherforlifeutah.org

Utah Key Leaders and Workplaces are important stakeholders that influence community health and safety. Their help is needed to increase seat belt use. The purpose of this toolkit is to provide community coordinatiors with specific tools designed to guide conversations and promote engagement on wearing a seat belt.

The existing positive beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors reported throughout this toolkit reveal the strengths that already exist in Utah about seat belt use.

- Most Utah adults always wear a seat belt.[1]
- Most drivers believe it is their responsibility to get others to always wear a seat belt.[1]
- Most drivers are making sure others are wearing a seat belt.[1]

By helping key leaders and workplaces learn about the concern regarding not wearing a seat belt and the hope that most do wear their seat belts, a new story can emerge and further grow the positive norm, attitudes, and behaviors regarding seat belt use in Utah.

Key leaders and workplaces can be a part of the community wide effort to increase seat belt use. Prevention efforts targeting key leaders and workplaces reinforce the behaviors we are seeking to grow which include:

- always wearing a seat belt;
- getting others to always wear a seat belt.

The actions of the Key Leader and Workplace Toolkit are based on research and current survey results in Utah. Using this information, community coordinators can engage key leaders and workplaces in dialogue about this important topic by:

- steering conversations;
- highlighting common protective beliefs and behaviors among Utah residents; and
- closing misperceptions.

Specific tools for key leaders focus on advocating for seat belt use. Those include:

1. ask key leaders to speak up about the importance of always wearing a seat belt;

2. request that they talk to other key leaders; and

3. ask them to get involved and support the issue in their workplaces.

Specific tools for workplaces focus on two actions. Those include:

1. establish and enforce a workplace policy about always wearing a seat belt, and

2. implement driver agreements.

1. Workplace Policy

A core action of the Together for Life Key Leader and Workplace Toolkit is to establish and enforce a workplace policy about always wearing a seat belt. Developing a workplace policy about always wearing a seat belt is a strategy that has multiple benefits. First, a workplace policy can reduce costs. The emotional and economic toll of traffic crashes are significant. It was estimated that failing to wear a seat belt costs society $14 billion in economic costs and $72 billion in societal harm annually.[2] Missing work due to injury from traffic crashes, lost productivity, and financial loss are burdensome to the individual and also to the employer.[3] Nationally, over a 5-year period, people involved in motor vehicle crashes who were not wearing a seat belt lost approximately 7.3 million work days, and lost $566 million in wages.[3] Additionally, $1.25 billion in workplace costs were due to lack of seat belt use.[3] Second, a policy about always wearing a seat belt helps to create a culture of safety at work, and helps to establish this behavior as the "norm." Workplace culture has been defined as "the specific collection of values and norms that are shared by people and groups in an organization and that control the way they interact with each other and with stakeholders outside the organization."[4] A policy about always wearing a seat belt reinforces the shared values and beliefs about health and safety in the workplace.

When establishing a policy about always wearing a seat belt, clear communication is essential. A policy about always wearing a seat belt will be easy for some employees because their behaviors are already aligned with this policy. They

are already always wearing a seat belt. For others, it may mean that behavior needs to change. Change can be difficult and may elicit reaction from employees. The Workplace Booklet provides leaders with specific strategies to successfully navigate employees' reactions. Effective communication reduces employees' uncertainty[5] and is vital to the successful implementation of a seat belt use policy in the workplace.

2. Implement Driver Agreements

The Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) developed a 10-Step Program Guide for employers to reduce risk associated with traffic crashes. In NETS *Traffic Safety Primer: A Guidebook for Employers* one strategy to promote and strengthen protective driver behaviors is to establish driver agreements.[6] Driver agreements are designed to be a contract between employers and employees.[6] In a driver agreement to always wear a seat belt, the driver agrees that he or she is aware of and understands the organization's policy about always wearing a seat belt, and agrees to abide by the policy which includes always wearing a seat belt and ensuring other occupants in the vehicle are always wearing a seat belt.[6] Further, the agreement identifies the consequences of violating the agreement.[6] Driver agreements are a simple strategy to increase seat belt use by requiring drivers to always wear a seat belt and to ensure other occupants in the vehicle are always wearing a seat belt.

Opportunities exist for meaningful dialogue when drivers are asked to sign a driver agreement in the workplace. This tool can be used to initiate conversation about the importance of always wearing a seat belt and getting others to always wear a seat belt. This tool can be used to clarify expectations and to reinforce the established safety culture within the workplace. An example is provided in the Workplace Booklet.

Both implementing a policy about always wearing a seat belt and implementing driver agreements in the workplace may require multiple leaders and employees to be involved in the process. It is a community coordinator's job to facilitate communication. An in-person meeting with the safety officer or others responsible for this initiative may be beneficial. In the meeting they should be prepared to discuss the specific actions they are asking them to complete and why this is beneficial to their workplace.

- Offer to help.
- Offer to attend the safety meeting.
- Be available to answer questions when the policy about always wearing a seat belt and driver agreement is implemented.
- Be prepared to talk about the concern regarding not wearing a seat belt and the hope that most Utah adults always wear a seat belt.

Workplace Speaking Points are provided to assist in delivering these messages. The goal in this process is to be supportive, offer resources, help to problem-solve if needed, and engage in conversations that seek to grow protection and reduce risk.

Conclusion

Key leaders and workplaces are influential and can make a difference to improve health and safety in Utah's rural counties. Community coordinators can engage key leaders and workplaces through conversations by highlighting the shared protective beliefs and behaviors of their communities. Community coordinators can also provide specific actions that key leaders and workplaces can take to increase seat belt use and build on the existing strong positive norms in Utah.

Tools

1. Statistical Report
Complete Utah Key Leader Survey on Seat Belt Use.

2. Key Findings Report
An overview of the beliefs and attitudes of key leaders based on the Utah Key Leader Survey on Seat Belt Use.

3. Activity Decision Making Worksheet
A worksheet designed to examine the impact of an activity to increase protective behaviors of adults.

4. Key Leader Speaking Points
Important information to engage Key Leaders in meaningful conversations.

5. Key Leader Press Release
Sample press release.

6. Key Leader Booklet
The Key Leader Booklet provides guidance on how key leaders can advocate for seat belt use and provides specific tools to assist them in their efforts. Tools include facts about seat belt use in Utah, facts about seat belt use in this county, a summary of important values and beliefs that are shared among key leaders, conversation starters, community speaking points, and sample statements sample statements for community outreach.

7. Workplace Speaking Points
Important information to engage workplaces in meaningful conversations.

8. Workplace Press Release
Sample press release.

9. Workplace Booklet
The Workplace Booklet provides guidance for workplace leaders on how to increase seat belt use by focusing on the key behaviors of always wearing a seat belt and getting others to always wear a seat belt. The booklet contains several tools to grow these behaviors among all employees including community perceptions about seat belt use and the misperceptions that can affect seat belt use, sample workplace emails, a conversation guide to clarify existing norms about seat belts; reveal gaps between values, beliefs and behaviors; and motivate action to change. In addition, the booklet includes a sample policy and communication tools such as a sample meeting agenda, power point presentation, and employee handouts to support workplace leaders.

10. Key Leader and Workplace Media, including:
- audio suitable for radio or web placement
- pieces to coordinate with audio.

References

1. Center for Health and Safety Culture. (2019, 2020). *Utah Community Survey of Adults on Seat Belt Use.* Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. (*N*=3114, *N*=673)

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3. Metzger, J., McGwin, G., MacLennan, P., and Rue L. (2004). Is seat belt use associated with fewer days of lost work after motor vehicle collisions? *The Journal of Trauma*, 56(5), 1009-1014.

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5. Wittig, C. (2012). Employee' reactions to organizational change. *OD Practitioner,* 44(2) 23 28.

6. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). (nd). *Guidelines for employers to reduce motor vehicle crashes.* No: B-9-4-2-3576 Washington, DC: Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Retrieved from: https://www.osha.gov/Publications/motor_vehicle_guide.pdf