

Revised 05-2017



Utah Department of Public Safety  
Highway Safety Office

## TOGETHER FOR LIFE PROJECT

# KEY LEADER BOOKLET

Increasing Seat Belt Use  
in Cache County



**MOST** adults (96%) in  
Cache County agree they should  
**ALWAYS** wear seat belts.

(Center for Health and Safety Culture, 2016)



As a leader  
in your community,  
we need your support to  
make this effort successful  
and improve the health  
and safety of our rural  
communities.

## STANDARD DISCLAIMER

This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of the Highway Safety Office of the Utah Department of Public Safety and the United States Department of Transportation in the interest of information exchange. The State of Utah and the United States Government assume no liability of its contents or use thereof.

The contents of this report reflect the view of the authors, who are responsible for the facts and accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Utah Department of Public Safety or the United States Department of Transportation.

The State of Utah and the United States Government do not endorse products or manufacturers. Trademarks or manufacturers' names appear herein only because they are considered essential to the object of this document.

This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation.

Utah Department of Public Safety  
Highway Safety Office  
5500 Amelia Earhart Drive, Suite 155  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116  
Phone: 801-366-6040  
Fax: 801-366-6044

Center for Health and Safety Culture  
Montana State University  
P.O. Box 170548  
Bozeman, MT 59717-0548  
Phone: 406-994-7873  
Fax: 406-994-7285  
<http://www.CHSCulture.org>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Together for Life – An Overview .....	5
A Call to Action .....	6
Facts about Seat Belt Use in Utah .....	7
Facts about Seat Belt Use in San Juan County .....	8
Important Values and Beliefs Shared among Key Leaders .....	9
Conversation Starters .....	10
Community Speaking Points.....	11
Sample Statements for Community Outreach .....	12
References .....	13
Appendix A: Utah Key Leader Survey on Seat Belt Use.....	14
Appendix B: Utah Community Survey of Adults on Seat Belt Use.....	22

## TOGETHER FOR LIFE — AN OVERVIEW

The Highway Safety Office (HSO) of the Utah Department of Public Safety has initiated a multi-year pilot project called “Together for Life” to increase seat belt use in rural Utah counties. The Highway Safety Office recognizes that while various efforts have been successful at achieving higher seat belt use in Utah’s more urban areas, these efforts have not been as effective in rural environments. This project engages a variety of stakeholders including leaders from law enforcement, public health, traffic safety, local government, education, and private business.

Building on the strengths and resources that exist in Utah communities, the Together for Life Project offers multiple “tools” to increase seat belt use. Each tool is intended to guide conversations about seat belt use and promote engagement in this issue. The goals of the Utah Together for Life Project include: 1.) confront the seriousness of not wearing a seat belt, and 2.) build hope that communities can work together to reduce risk and create positive change.

### Current Efforts

To better understand each community, their beliefs, values, and behaviors, three important surveys were completed as a part of this project. The first survey gathered beliefs and behaviors from adults about seat belt use and getting others to wear a seat belt. The second survey gathered information from law enforcement about seat belt use and enforcement. The third survey gathered important information from key leaders about seat belt use and getting others to wear a seat belt. The results of the Utah Key Leader Survey on Seat Belt Use is referenced throughout this booklet and can be found in Appendix A



## A CALL TO ACTION

Wearing a seat belt is important and saves lives. Unfortunately, a leading risk factor for death and serious injury in Utah is not wearing a seat belt.<sup>2</sup> Significant disparities exist between urban and rural rates of seat belt use among roadway users in Utah.<sup>3</sup> Seat belts are used less frequently in rural areas of Utah than in urban areas.<sup>3</sup> Rates of not using a seat belt are three-times higher in some rural areas compared to urban areas of the state.<sup>2</sup> From the research we know that over the past 10 years, approximately 35% of crash deaths in Utah have involved unrestrained occupants.<sup>2</sup> Further, unrestrained crash occupants were over 30 times more likely to be killed than restrained crash occupants.<sup>2</sup>

While these statistics are staggering, there is hope. Utah residents share unifying values about seat belt use. They also share critical attitudes and beliefs that are protective. The 2016 Community Survey of Utah Adults on Seat Belt Use revealed:

- MOST Cache adults strongly agree it is important to protect themselves by always wearing a seat belt.<sup>1</sup>
- MOST Cache adults strongly agree they want people they care about to always wear a seat belt.<sup>1</sup>

Utah communities share common values toward caring, health, and safety. In the Together for Life Project, we highlight how seat belt use reflects these common values in Utah. Increasing seat belt use is important and ultimately improves the health and safety of our communities. As a key leader, you have a strong voice in the community. People listen to what you say. We need your help to increase seat belt use.

**This Key Leader Booklet provides information on how to advocate for seat belt use and specific tools to assist you in your efforts.**

### Tools include:

- facts about Utah and specifically about your county. These facts will help you better understand your community and will also help guide your advocacy efforts to engage others to always wear a seat belt;
- a summary of important values and beliefs that are shared among key leaders;
- conversation starters;
- community speaking points; and
- sample statements about seat belt use to help rally support and advocate for seat belt use.



## FACTS ABOUT SEAT BELT USE IN UTAH



- A motor vehicle crash occurs approximately every 9 minutes in Utah.<sup>2</sup>



- A person is injured in a crash approximately every 23 minutes in Utah.<sup>2</sup>



- It is estimated that a person dies in a crash every 39.5 hours.<sup>2</sup>



- Over the past 10 years, approximately 35% of crash deaths in Utah involved unrestrained occupants.<sup>2</sup>



- Unrestrained crash occupants were over 30 times more likely to be killed than restrained crash occupants.<sup>2</sup>



- Approximately \$1.54 billion dollars was estimated statewide to be the economic loss due to motor vehicle crashes in Utah (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).<sup>2</sup>



- Hospital and emergency department charges for the treatment of Utah residents in motor vehicle crashes were \$163 million.<sup>2</sup>

### A significant impact on Utah's rural communities



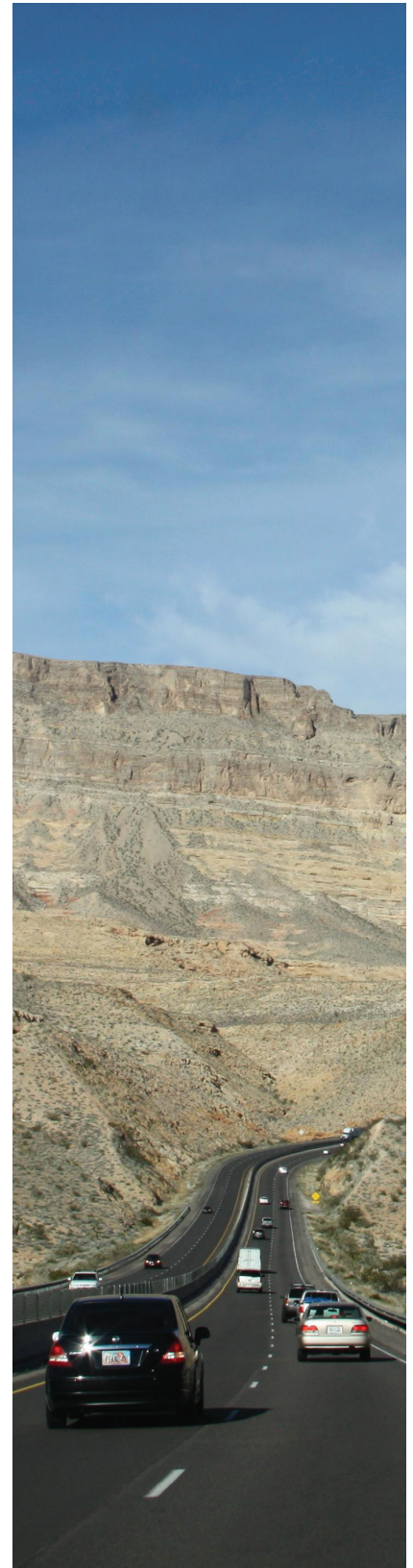
- Seat belts are used less frequently in rural areas of Utah than in urban areas.<sup>2</sup>



- Rural crashes were 3.3 times more likely to be fatal than urban crashes.<sup>2</sup>



- Occupants in rural crashes were 2.1 times more likely to be unrestrained than urban occupants.<sup>2</sup>



## FACTS ABOUT SEAT BELT USE IN CACHE COUNTY

Getting an accurate understanding of the current beliefs and behaviors in your community is critical.

### FACT IS:

#### **MOST Adults Always Wear Seat Belts**

	Cache
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2012 <sup>2</sup>	75%
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2013 <sup>2</sup>	72%
Self-Reported “Always” Wear a Seat Belt, 2016 <sup>1</sup>	81%
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2014 <sup>2</sup>	85%
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2015 <sup>2</sup>	86%
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2016 <sup>2</sup>	92%

*\*Protocol was changed between 2012 and 2013.*

#### **MOST Adults Believe Wearing Seat Belts Is Important<sup>1</sup>**

	Cache
Adults who agree “it is important to protect myself by always wearing a seat belt”	96%
Adults who agree they should always wear a seat belt	96%
Adults who agree they want people they care about to always wear a seat belt	98%
Adults who report having a family rule about wearing a seat belt (among those with families)	79%

#### **MOST Adults Believe It Is Their Responsibility As A Driver To Make Sure Others Are Wearing A Seat Belt.<sup>1</sup>**

	Cache
Adults who agree it is their responsibility to make sure others were wearing their seat belts when they were the driver	92%

See Appendix B for more details on the Utah Community Survey of Adults on Seat Belt Use.



## IMPORTANT VALUES AND BELIEFS SHARED AMONG KEY LEADERS

Attitudes and beliefs are important because they influence behaviors. Utah key leaders have strong protective beliefs about seat belt use. These beliefs provide a solid foundation for efforts to improve health and safety.

### Support for wearing seat belts is high among key leaders:

- Most key leaders surveyed in Cache County (88%), agree it is important to protect themselves by always wearing a seat belt.<sup>4</sup>
- Most key leaders surveyed Cache County (94%), agree they should always wear a seat belt.<sup>4</sup>
- Most key leaders surveyed in Cache County (94%), want people they care about to always wear a seat belt.<sup>4</sup>

### Key leaders have protective beliefs about seat belts:

- Most key leaders surveyed in Cache County (92%), agree it is their responsibility to make sure others in the vehicle wear a seat belt when they are the driver;<sup>4</sup> and,
- Most key leaders surveyed in Cache County (79%), have a family rule about always wearing a seat belt.<sup>4</sup>

Key leaders are concerned about safety on Utah's roads and highways.

**MOST key leaders surveyed believe the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on Utah roadways is zero.<sup>4</sup>**



## CONVERSATION STARTERS

As a key leader in your community, you have the capacity to bring people together to engage in conversations about a particular issue. You can create opportunities for collaboration. While you cannot force people to change behavior, you can cultivate conditions where people choose to be healthy and safer. Engaging community members and other key leaders is important. You are in a position to get the conversation started about the importance of always wearing a seat belt.

Conversations can help to clarify existing norms about seat belt use; reveal gaps between values, beliefs, and behaviors; and motivate action to change. Active, two-way conversation is one of the best ways to foster lasting, sustainable change in beliefs and behaviors.

### Tips for Effective Conversations

- Encourage dialogue.
- Build connections between various thoughts—listen for what is emerging.
- Provide enough time for meaningful engagement—this investment will pay off many times over in the future.

### Survey results on seat belt use among adults in Cache County revealed some interesting information:

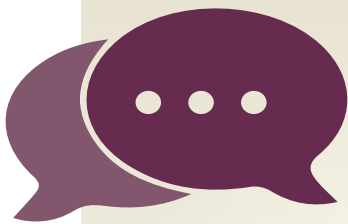
- MOST adults in Cache County (81%), report always wearing their seat belt.<sup>1</sup>
- MOST adults in Cache County (96%), agree that “it is important to protect myself by always wearing a seat belt.”<sup>1</sup>
- MOST families in Cache County (79%) have a rule about always wearing a seat belt.<sup>1</sup>

### QUESTIONS TO SPARK MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION:

1. What do these results say about our community?
2. What surprises you about these results?
3. Based on these results, how might we continue to increase seat belt use in our county?

## COMMUNITY SPEAKING POINTS

These speaking points are a communication tool to help you engage in meaningful conversations within your community. They are designed to help you advocate for the Together for Life Project and to connect county residents based on their common values toward caring, health, and safety. Having community conversations will draw attention to seat belt use and promote engagement in this issue.

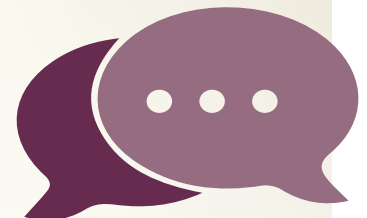


### Revealing Concern about Seat Belt Use

Most Utah adults believe it is important to always wear a seat belt.<sup>1</sup> Most Utah adults want people they care about to always wear a seat belt; and most Utah adults support enforcement of Utah seat belt laws.<sup>1</sup> However, despite these protective beliefs, not wearing a seat belt remains a leading risk factor for death and serious injury in Utah.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, seat belts are used less frequently in rural areas of Utah than in urban areas.<sup>3</sup>

### Costs to Utah Residents

- Unrestrained crash occupants were over 30 times more likely to be killed than restrained crash occupants.<sup>2</sup>
- Approximately \$1.54 billion dollars was estimated statewide to be the economic loss due to motor vehicle crashes in Utah (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).<sup>2</sup>
- Hospital and emergency department charges for the treatment of Utah residents in motor vehicle crashes were \$163 million.<sup>2</sup>



### Why Together for Life?

Most Utah adults have protective attitudes about seat belt use.<sup>1</sup> Most Utah adults always wear a seat belt.<sup>1</sup> The Together for Life Project is a multi-year pilot project to increase seat belt use by promoting these common, healthy values (known as “positive norms”) and ultimately improve health and safety in Utah.

## SAMPLE STATEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

These statements are provided as samples of community conversations you can use to engage the community about the importance of always wearing a seat belt.



### General Statement About Seat Belt Use

Cache County aims to increase seat belt use by focusing on adults' common values toward caring, health, and safety. The Together for Life Project targets all county residents and emphasizes the healthy values (known as "positive norms") that Utah residents already have about seat belt use.

I'm [name and key leader position], and I urge you to get involved in this project and protect yourself by always wearing a seat belt.



### Family Rules

Family rules about seat belt use are important. In a recent survey of Utah adults, 79% of Cache County adults have a family rule about seat belt use.<sup>1</sup> I encourage you to develop a family rule about seat belt use.

#### Family rules could include:

- Always wear a seat belt when driving or riding in a vehicle.
- Ask others to always wear a seat belt.

I'm [name and key leader position], I encourage you to protect yourself by always wearing a seat belt and protect the people you care about by creating family rules about always wearing a seat belt.



### Before a Community Event

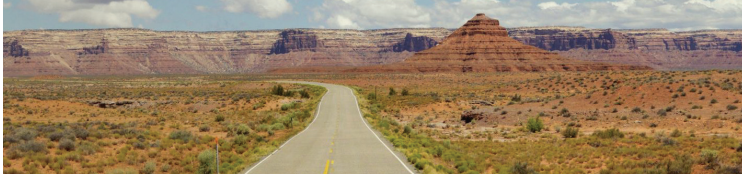
The upcoming [event] on [date] is an exciting time for our community. Please be safe and always wear a seat belt when driving or riding in a vehicle. Most Cache County adults always wear a seat belt.<sup>1</sup>

It is our community responsibility to keep ourselves and others safe during this time of celebration for our community. As your [key leader position] I encourage you to protect yourself by always wearing a seat belt.

## REFERENCES

1. Center for Health and Safety Culture. (2016). *Utah community survey of adults on seat belt use in Cache, Carbon, Sevier, and Tooele Counties*. Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. (N=1831)
2. Utah Department of Public Safety, Highway Safety Office. (2015). *Utah Crash Summaries*. Salt Lake City, UT. Utah Department of Public Safety. Retrieved from: <http://highwaysafety.utah.gov/crash-data/utah-crash-summaries/>.
3. Perkins, MPH, Ron. (2016). *Utah Observational Surveys on Seat Belt Use*
4. Center for Health and Safety Culture. (2014). *Utah Key Leader Survey on seat belt use in Cache, Carbon, Sevier, and Tooele Counties*. Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. (N=103).

# Key Findings Report



## *Key Leader*

### *Cache County*

---

Based on the 2017 Utah Key Leader Survey on  
Seat Belt Use in Cache County

---

Prepared for the  
Highway Safety Office,  
Utah Department of Public Safety



### **Standard Disclaimer**

This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of the Highway Safety Office of the Utah Department of Public Safety and the United States Department of Transportation in the interest of information exchange. The State of Utah and the United States Government assume no liability of its contents or use thereof.

The contents of this report reflect the view of the authors, who are responsible for the facts and accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Utah Department of Public Safety or the United States Department of Transportation.

The State of Utah and the United States Government do not endorse products or manufacturers. Trademarks or manufacturers' names appear herein only because they are considered essential to the object of this document.

**This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation.**

# Increasing Seat Belt Use in Rural Utah

## Executive Summary

The Highway Safety Office (HSO) of the Utah Department of Public Safety has recognized that significant disparities exist between urban and rural rates of seat belt use among citizens of Utah.<sup>1</sup> The Utah Seat Belt Observational Survey revealed that 90 percent of motorists in urban counties buckle up, whereas only 80 percent of rural motorists wear their seat belt.<sup>2</sup> Driving or riding in a vehicle without a seat belt is a well-recognized contributing factor to fatality, serious injury and harm associated with car crashes.

A recent survey conducted by the Center for Health and Safety Culture on behalf of the HSO revealed strong positive norms regarding protective behaviors and attitudes about seat belts among leaders in four rural counties of Utah: Cache, Carbon, Sevier, and Tooele. However, many of these leaders misperceived these positive norms.<sup>3</sup> For example, while most adults in these counties are wearing seat belts (based on observational studies), many leaders do not believe that MOST adults are wearing their seat belts.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, leaders underestimated the prevalence of protective beliefs and behaviors about seat belts among adults in their communities as well.<sup>3</sup>

Most leaders agree it is important to protect themselves by always wearing a seat belt, agree they should always wear a seat belt, and want people they care about to always wear a seat belt.<sup>3</sup> However, too many leaders are not always wearing a seat belt.

Most leaders agree local law enforcement should enforce Utah seat belt laws and agree with encouraging others in the vehicle with them to wear their seat belts.<sup>3</sup> However, many leaders misperceived these positive norms.<sup>3</sup> For example, while most leaders strongly agreed that a driver has the responsibility to make sure others in the vehicle wear a seat belt, many did not believe that MOST adults in their community felt the same way.<sup>3</sup>

Recommendations are made to correct misperceptions and address gaps in knowledge

## Background

The Center for Health and Safety Culture developed a survey to better understand the behaviors, beliefs and attitudes of leaders in rural Utah regarding seat belts. The survey was conducted using an online survey of a convenience sample of leaders in Cache, Carbon, Sevier, and Tooele Counties in Utah in 2017. Local safety coalition members identified and recruited leaders among a variety of sectors including local government, law enforcement, business and education to participate in the survey. These leaders were also asked to forward the survey link using email to other leaders that they knew. In Cache County, 38 individuals completed the survey. The survey represents those individuals

## Survey Respondents Are Leaders in a Variety of Sectors

Sector	Percentage of Respondents
Government / Elected Official	18%
Private For-Profit Business	11%
Private Non-Profit Business	11%
Public Social Service Provider	5%
Education	29%
Healthcare	11%
Public Health	21%
Faith Community	5%
Law Enforcement	45%
Fire / Emergency Services	3%
Judicial	3%

Note: Percengages may total greater than 100% as respondents could select more than one sector.

## Seat Belt Use Among Leaders – Actual and Perceived Norms

In 2017, MOST leaders in Cache County, 91%, report always or almost always wearing their seat belts. However, 68% perceive that most other adults in their counties wear a seat belt less frequently (Q8, Q9).

- 65% report always wearing their seat belt when driving within a few miles of their home. However 97% perceive that most other adults in their counties do **not** always wear their seat belts (Q6).
- 85% report always wearing their seat belt when driving many miles from their home. However 94% perceive that most other adults in their counties do **not** always wear their seat belts (Q7).

## Cache County Key Findings

### Observational Studies Reveal Most Adults Wear Their Seat Belts

Observational studies completed in June of 2015 and 2016 show **MOST** adults are wearing their seat belts.

#### Observed and Self-Reported Seat Belt Usage

	Cache
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2015	86%
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2016	92%
Self-Reported “Always” Wear a Seat Belt, 2016	81%

### Most Leaders Have Positive Beliefs about Wearing Seat Belts

- In 2017, **MOST** leaders in Cache County, 79%, strongly agree that “it is important to protect myself by always wearing a seat belt.” However, 24% perceive that **most law enforcement officers** in their counties **do NOT strongly agree**, 50% perceived that **most elected officials** in their cities / counties **do NOT strongly agree**, 56% perceive that **most elected officials** in their state **do NOT strongly agree**, and 82% perceived that **most adults** in their county **do NOT strongly agree** (Q10).
- 58% strongly or mostly agree that they wear a seat belt because they want to set a good example for their community (Q11a).
- 83% strongly or mostly agree that they wear a seat belt because they want to set a good example for their children (11b).
- 82% strongly or mostly disagree that seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you (Q11d).
- 94% strongly or mostly agree that people are less likely to be seriously injured or killed if they always wear their seat belt (Q11e).
- 94% strongly or mostly agree that seat belts help prevent lifelong disabilities such as paralysis, spinal cord injuries and serious brain injuries (Q11f).
- 88% strongly agree that parents should require their children to always use an appropriate child car seat or, when big enough, a seat belt (Q11j).
- In 2017, **MOST** leaders in Cache County, 85%, strongly agree that they should always wear a seat belt (Q11g).
  - 88% strongly agree that they want people they care about to always wear a seat belt (Q11h).
  - 82% strongly agree that “people who care about me want me to always wear a seat belt” (Q11i).

## Cache County Key Findings

### Getting Others to Wear a Seat Belt: Actual and Perceived Norms

- In 2017, MOST leaders in Cache County, 73% strongly agree that it is their responsibility to make sure others are wearing their seat belts when they are the driver. However, 84% perceive that most other adults in their counties do NOT feel this way (Q13).

### Many Leaders Have Family Rules and Workplace Policies about Wearing Seat Belts

- In 2017, MOST leaders in Cache County, 79%, indicate their family has a rule about always wearing a seat belt (12% said they do not have a family rule, and 3% said they do not know) (Q14).
  - 44% of leaders in Cache County perceive that about half or less (60% or less) of families in their counties have a family rule about always wearing a seat belt (Q15).
- In 2017, many leaders in Cache County, 70%, indicate their workplace has a policy about always wearing a seat belt (15% said they do not have a workplace policy, 12% said they do not know, and 3% said they do not have a workplace) (Q18).
  - 73% indicate their workplace enforces the policy about always wearing a seat belt (Q20).
  - 70% indicate their workplace provide education or training about always wearing a seat belt (Q21).
  - 70% strongly or mostly agree that workplaces in their counties should require employees to wear seat belts (Q22).
  - 48% perceive that most workplaces in their counties (60% or more) have a policy about always wearing a seat belt (Q19).
- In 2017, 71% of leaders in Cache County, strongly or mostly agree that county government should request employees to wear seat belts (Q24).

### **Most Leaders Support Seat Belt Enforcement**

- **MOST leaders in Cache County, 85%, strongly or mostly agree that local law enforcement should enforce Utah seat belt laws (Q12a).**
  - However, 72% perceive that most other adults in the counties would NOT feel the same way (Q12e).
  - 30% perceive that most elected officials in their cities / counties would NOT feel the same way (Q12c).
  - 39% perceive that most elected officials in their state would NOT feel the same way (Q12d).
  - And, 30% perceive that most law enforcement officers in their counties would NOT feel the same way (Q12b).



## Recommended Next Steps

- ✓ **Correct misperceptions about seat belt use in the county.**
  - Seek to communicate to all citizens that MOST adults in the county are wearing seat belts<sup>1</sup>.
- ✓ **Take steps to bolster strategies to increase seat belt use in the county.**
  - Seek to communicate to all aspects of the community – elected officials, law enforcement leaders, business owners, schools, families and citizens, that
    - MOST adults believe it is important to always wear a seat belt;<sup>2</sup>
    - MOST adults want people they care about to always wear a seat belt;<sup>2</sup>
    - MOST adults support enforcement of Utah seat belt laws;<sup>2</sup>
    - MOST have a families rule about always wearing a seat belt. <sup>2</sup>
- ✓ **Take steps to increase the likelihood that citizens will encourage others to wear their seat belts.**
  - Build on the existing strong positive norms outlined in this report:
    - MOST drivers make sure everyone is wearing a seat belt;<sup>2</sup>
    - MOST drivers believe it is their responsibility to make sure everyone is wearing a seat belt.<sup>2</sup>

## Questions to Foster Meaningful Dialogue<sup>4</sup>

### Questions to Focus Collective Attention

- What opportunities can you see that the data are revealing?
- What do we still need to learn about this issue?
- What would someone who had a very different set of beliefs than you do say about these data?

### Questions to Reveal Deeper Insights

- What has had real meaning for you from what you've seen in the data?
- What surprised you? What challenged you? What encouraged you?
- What needs clarification?
- What's been your major learning, insight, or discovery so far from these data?

### Questions to Create Forward Movement

- What's possible here?
- What will it take to create change?
- What needs our immediate attention going forward?

Adapted from Brown, Isaacs, and Community, 2005<sup>4</sup>

# Cache County Key Findings

## References

1. Utah Department of Public Safety, Highway Safety Office. (2015). *Utah Crash Summaries*. Salt Lake City, UT. Utah Department of Public Safety. Retrieved from: <http://highwaysafety.utah.gov/Crash-Data/Utah-Crash-Summaries/>
2. Perkins, MPH, Ron. (2016). *Utah observational surveys on seat belt use*
3. Center for Health and Safety Culture. (2017). *Utah key leader survey on seat belt use in Cache, Carbon, Sevier, and Tooele Counties*. Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. (N=103)
4. Brown., J., Isaacs, D., & Community, W.C. (2005). *The World Café: Shaping Our Futures Through Conversations That Matter* (1st ed.). Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

# Key Findings Report



*Adult*

## *Cache County*

---

Based on the 2016 Utah Community  
Survey of Adults on Seat Belt Use in Cache County

---

Prepared for the  
Highway Safety Office,  
Utah Department of Public Safety



### **Standard Disclaimer**

This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of the Highway Safety Office of the Utah Department of Public Safety and the United States Department of Transportation in the interest of information exchange. The State of Utah and the United States Government assume no liability of its contents or use thereof.

The contents of this report reflect the view of the authors, who are responsible for the facts and accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Utah Department of Public Safety or the United States Department of Transportation.

The State of Utah and the United States Government do not endorse products or manufacturers. Trademarks or manufacturers' names appear herein only because they are considered essential to the object of this document.

**This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation.**

# Increasing Seat Belt Use in Rural Utah

## Executive Summary

The Highway Safety Office (HSO) of the Utah Department of Public Safety has recognized that significant disparities exist between urban and rural rates of seat belt use among citizens of Utah. The Utah Seat Belt Observational Survey revealed that seat belts are used less frequently in rural areas of Utah than the statewide average in urban areas.<sup>1</sup> Driving or riding in a vehicle without a seat belt is a well-recognized contributing factor to fatality, serious injury, and harm associated with traffic crashes.

A recent survey conducted by the Center for Health and Safety Culture on behalf of the HSO revealed strong positive norms regarding protective behaviors and attitudes about seat belts among adults in four rural counties of Utah: Cache, Carbon, Sevier, and Tooele.<sup>2</sup> However, many adults misperceived these positive norms.<sup>2</sup> For example, while most adults are wearing seat belts, many adults do not believe that MOST others in the communities are engaging in these protective behaviors.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, adults significantly underestimated the prevalence of protective beliefs and behaviors about seat belts among adults in the communities.<sup>2</sup>

Most adults support strong enforcement of seat belt laws and agree with encouraging others in the vehicle with them to wear their seat belts.<sup>2</sup> However, many adults misperceived these positive norms.<sup>2</sup> For example, while most adults strongly agreed that a driver has the responsibility to make sure others in the vehicle wear a seat belt, many did not believe that MOST adults in their community felt the same way.<sup>2</sup> Recommendations are made to correct misperceptions and address gaps in knowledge.

## Background

The Center for Health and Safety Culture developed a survey to better understand the behaviors, beliefs and attitudes of adults in rural Utah regarding seat belts. The survey was conducted using a paper survey mailed to a representative sample of households in Cache, Carbon, Sevier, and Tooele Counties between November and December, 2016. About 1,200 households were sent an introductory letter followed by a survey and up to two follow-up requests. In Cache, 487 individuals responded resulting in an overall response rate of 41%, and a confidence interval for the results is  $\pm 4.4\%$  with a 95% confidence level. The results of this survey only represent the behaviors and beliefs of those adults in the four counties surveyed and cannot be generalized to adults in other counties in Utah or adults in other states.

### Seat Belt Use among Adults – Actual and Perceived Norms

In 2016, MOST adults in Cache County, 81%, report always wearing their seat belt. However, 94% perceived that most other adults in their county **do NOT** always wear their seat belt (Q14).

- 72% report always wearing their seat belt when driving within a few miles of their home. However, 91% perceive that most other adults in their county do not always wear their seat belts (Q12).
- 94% report always wearing their seat belt when driving many miles from their home. However, 84% perceive that most other adults in their county **do not** always wear their seat belts (Q13).

### Observational Studies Reveal Most Adults Wear Their Seat Belts

Observational studies completed in June of 2013 & 2015 show MOST adults are wearing their seat belts.

- In 2013, observational studies conducted in Cache County revealed that **72% of adults were wearing their seat belts**. In 2015, similar studies revealed that **86% of adults were wearing their seat belts** (Source: UTAH OBSERVATIONAL SURVEYS OF SEAT BELT USE 2015, Ron Perkins, September 2015).



### Most Adults Have Positive Beliefs about Wearing Seat Belts

- In 2016, MOST adults in Cache County, 87%, strongly agree that “it is important to protect myself by always wearing a seat belt.” However, 81% perceive that most other adults in their county do NOT strongly agree (Q15).
  - 44% strongly or mostly agree that they wear a seat belt because they don’t want to get a ticket (Q16).
  - 82% strongly or mostly agree that they wear a seat belt because they want to set a good example for their children (Q17).
  - 63% strongly or mostly disagree that seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you (Q18).
  - 91% strongly or mostly agree that people are less likely to be seriously injured or killed if they always wear their seat belt (Q19).
  - 86% strongly or mostly agree that seat belts help prevent lifelong disabilities such as paralysis, spinal cord injuries and serious brain injuries (Q20).
  - 90% strongly agree that parents should require their children to always use an appropriate child car seat or, when big enough, a seat belt (Q24).
- In 2016, MOST adults in Cache County, 87%, strongly agree that they should always wear a seat belt (Q21).
  - 89% strongly agree that they want people they care about to always wear a seat belt (Q22).
  - 81% strongly agree that “people who care about me want me to always wear a seat belt” (Q23).
  - 89% strongly or mostly agree that they are comfortable wearing their seat belt even if others in the vehicle are not (Q26).
- In 2016, MOST adults in Cache County, 80%, indicate they are extremely likely to wear their seat belt every time they are in a vehicle. However, 94% perceive that most other adults in their county are NOT extremely likely (Q27).

### Many Adults Have Family Rules and Workplace Policies about Wearing Seat Belts

- In 2016, MOST adults in Cache County, 79%, indicate their family has a rule about always wearing a seat belt (11% said they do not have a family rule, 4% said they do not know, and 6% said they do not have a family) (Q28).
- In 2016, many adults in Cache County, 26%, indicate their workplace has a policy about always wearing a seat belt (22% said they do not have a workplace policy, 19% said they do not know, and 33% said they do not have a workplace) (Q29).

### Most Adults Support Seat Belt Enforcement

- MOST adults in Cache County, 83%, strongly or mostly agree that local law enforcement should enforce Utah seat belt laws (Q25a).
  - However, 59% perceive that most other adults in the county would NOT feel the same way (Q25b).
  - And, 36% perceive that most law enforcement officers in their county would NOT feel the same way (Q25c).
  - Among those surveyed, 36% indicate they would receive a ticket half the time or more often if they did not wear their seat belt at all for the next six months (Q30).

### Getting Others to Wear a Seat Belt: Actual and Perceived Norms

- In 2016, MOST adults in Cache County, 63%, report always making sure others were wearing their seat belt when they were the driver. However, 93% perceive that most other adults in their county did NOT always do this (Q31).
  - Some adults in Cache County, 44%, report always making sure others were wearing their seat belt when they were the passenger (Q32).
- In 2016, MOST adults in Cache County, 86%, mostly or strongly agree that it was their responsibility to make sure others were wearing their seat belts when they were the driver. However, 56% perceive that most other adults in their county do NOT feel this way (Q33).
  - 85% mostly or strongly agree that they are comfortable asking other people to wear their seat belts when they were the driver (Q34).
  - 58% mostly or strongly agree that they were comfortable asking other people to wear their seat belts when they are a passenger (Q35).
  - 71% report they are extremely likely to ask everyone in the vehicle to wear a seat belt when they were the driver. However, 93% perceived that most adults in their county were NOT extremely likely to do the same (Q36).
  - Only 32% report they are extremely likely to ask everyone in the vehicle to wear a seat belt when they were a passenger (Q37).

## Recommended Next Steps

- ✓ **Correct misperceptions about seat belt use in the county.**
  - Seek to communicate to all citizens that MOST adults in the county are wearing seat belts<sup>1</sup>.
- ✓ **Take steps to bolster strategies to increase seat belt use in the county.**
  - Seek to communicate to all aspects of the community – elected officials, law enforcement leaders, business owners, schools, families and citizens, that
    - MOST adults believe it is important to always wear a seat belt;<sup>2</sup>
    - MOST adults want people they care about to always wear a seat belt;<sup>2</sup>
    - MOST adults support enforcement of Utah seat belt laws;<sup>2</sup>
    - MOST families have a family rule about always wearing a seat belt. <sup>2</sup>
- ✓ **Take steps to increase the likelihood that citizens will encourage others to wear their seat belts.**
  - Build on the existing strong positive norms outlined in this report:
    - MOST drivers make sure everyone is wearing a seat belt;<sup>2</sup>
    - MOST drivers believe it is their responsibility to make sure everyone is wearing a seat belt.<sup>2</sup>

## Questions to Foster Meaningful Dialogue<sup>3</sup>

### Questions to Focus Collective Attention

- What opportunities can you see that the data are revealing?
- What do we still need to learn about this issue?
- What would someone who had a very different set of beliefs than you do say about these data?

### Questions to Reveal Deeper Insights

- What has had real meaning for you from what you've seen in the data?
- What surprised you? What challenged you? What encouraged you?
- What needs clarification?
- What's been your major learning, insight, or discovery so far from these data?

### Questions to Create Forward Movement

- What's possible here?
- What will it take to create change?
- What needs our immediate attention going forward?

Adapted from Brown, Isaacs, and Community, 2005<sup>3</sup>

### References

1. Perkins, MPH, Ron. (2016). *Utah observational surveys on seat belt use*
2. Center for Health and Safety Culture. (2016). *Utah community survey of adults on seat belt use in Cache, Carbon, Sevier, and Tooele Counties*. Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. (N=1831)
3. Brown, J., Isaacs, D., & Community, W.C. (2005). *The World Café: Shaping Our Futures Through Conversations That Matter (1st ed.)*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.