

**Title of Intervention:** Promoting Automobile Safety Belt Use by Young Children

**Intervention Strategies:** Group Education

**Purpose of the Intervention:** To increase seatbelt usage among young children

**Population:** Children aged 4-7 years

**Setting:** Afterschool program at an elementary school; school-based

**Partners:** None mentioned

**Intervention Description:**

- Group Education: The four major components of the program were education, assertiveness training, behavioral rehearsal and a lottery. Each component was delivered in a small group setting. In the education session, a trainer shared facts about the use of safety belts. The trainer and children talked about famous role models who are known to use safety belts. The trainer presented the use of safety belts as a grown-up and responsible behavior. In the assertiveness training, the trainer presented several scenarios to the children that involved safety belt use. The children practiced requesting help from the driver or other passengers and asking that the automobile remain stationary while fastening their seatbelts. In the behavioral rehearsal, children practiced buckling and unbuckling seatbelts in three automobiles with different types of safety belts. The practice was made into a game in which the children conducted small speed and agility contests. In the lottery activity, each child observed wearing a seatbelt became eligible to participate in a lottery the following day. Small prizes were awarded to those whose names were drawn.

**Theory:** Social Cognitive Theory

**Resources Required:**

- Staff/Volunteers: Trainer
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Room for education session, parking lot
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Educational materials, teaching guides, prizes, safety award certificates, vehicles with different types of seatbelts, stopwatch
- Evaluation: Parent questionnaire, trained observers

**Evaluation:**

- Design: Pre- and post-evaluation
- Methods and Measures:
  - Direct observations documented children's seatbelt use
  - Parent questionnaire measured child seatbelt use and discussion of seatbelt use at home

**Outcomes:**

- Short Term Impact: The parents' responses indicated that children did discuss use of seat belts at home.
- Long Term Impact: There was a significant increase in seatbelt use in the intervention group. Follow-up observations found seatbelt use remained significantly higher.

**Maintenance:** Not mentioned

**Lessons Learned:** The results of this study show that the seatbelt use program was effective for young children. The study adds to the growing body of research on promoting independent health and safety skills by young children.

**Citation(s):**

Sowers-Hoag, K. M., B. A. Thyer, et al. (1987). "Promoting automobile safety belt use by young children." *J Appl Behav Anal* 20(2): 133-8.