



# **Corazón de mi vida**

## **Child Passenger Safety Initiative**

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## **Acknowledgments**

*Corazón de mi vida* is a Latino child passenger safety initiative of the National Latino Children's Institute (NLCI). This effort is funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Nationwide Insurance.

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

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### **Nationwide Insurance**

Tim Hoyt                                      Marco Capalino                      Eric Troy  
Kathy Ricord                              Lorraine Brock                      Steve Rish  
Steve Johnston                              Barb Weaver                      Shelly Hoffman

## **Pilot Teams**

NLCI's programs are developed with the advice of 100 community organizations selected as winners of the *La Promesa de un Futuro Brillante* awards. Chosen for their exemplary work with Latino children and youth, these organizations have identified the best strategies for removing barriers and incorporating culture into NLCI's programs. We are grateful to the following people and organizations for their assistance in developing *Corazón de mi vida*.

Eva Wedholm, AVANCE, San Antonio, TX  
Lisa Ogelsby Rocha, AVANCE, Dallas, TX  
Raquel Oliva, AVANCE, McAllen, TX  
Celine Woznica, Child to Child, Alivio Medical Center, Chicago, IL  
Shari Schwartz, Focus on First Graders, El Paso, TX  
Gerald Rivera, LARASA, Denver, CO  
Maggie Cervantes, Mariposa Program, Los Angeles, CA  
Adelina Fritz, Parent Child, Inc., San Antonio, TX  
Elsie Hunt, Plainfield Bilingual Day Care Center, Plainfield, NJ  
María Sáenz, RN, Spanish Language Parenting Education, Yakima, WA  
Arturo Lopez, Texas Migrant Head Start, Laredo, TX

## **Materials Review**

We also appreciate the help of the following organizations in the review of materials:

The NHTSA National Outreach and Occupant Protection Divisions  
National Safe Kids  
Texas Department of Health Safe Rider Program  
Texas Department of Transportation  
Texas Migrant Council Head Start parents and staff  
California Department of Health Services  
California Child Passenger Safety Materials Review Committee

Special thanks to Veronica Nora Comstock, Ph.D., Rosalie Mendez Arguelles and Sarah Nawrocki, M.F.A.



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## Corazón de mi vida

**C**orazón. For most Latinos this word evokes memories of their mother, grandmother or other family member lovingly calling them *corazón*. While the simple translation of the word is heart, the cultural meaning is more complex, with a deeper message: “You are the center of my life.” It is this concept that is the focus of *Corazón de mi vida*, a new initiative to inform Latino families, childcare providers and the community about child passenger safety. The model uses bilingual and culturally relevant educational materials and community outreach strategies.

The messages for Latino families (loosely translated) are:

“You are the center of my life and I love you so much, that I will

... put you in a car seat.”

... put you in the backseat.”

... wear my own seat belt.”

*Corazón de mi vida* builds on the strengths of the Latino family and the value they place on children.

### Why a new initiative?

In the Latino community, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children between five and fourteen years of age. Several studies have begun to document child passenger safety issues by ethnicity, race and sex. These studies indicate that Hispanics have lower rates of child safety seat and seat belt use than non-Hispanic Whites.

The reasons for these statistics are numerous, but the numbers are a chilling reminder that children are dying. However, while numerous campaigns about child passenger safety have been launched for the general population, very few have resonated with the Latino community. Most of the campaigns are translations, using images and messages that do not connect with the Latino community, while others use only Spanish language, completely leaving out those whose preferred language is English. Other campaigns are negative, using a “scolding” tone to try to get the point across.

*Corazón de mi vida* was conceptualized and created with the understanding that to be successful, the initiative had to connect with the community by using images, messages and strategies that made sense to all Latinos in the United States—Mexican-American, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran or others. Materials in the program are tied to an activity that connects to celebrations in the community. The activities invite Latino families to participate and to partner with others in keeping children safe.

Everyone has a role to play—child care providers, medical practitioners, the clergy, business people, teachers, public servants, the media—in ensuring that children grow up safe. Only by involving the whole community and working together can a reduction in child passenger deaths become a reality.





## Creating Safe Latino Communities

**A** family is getting ready to go to the store. Each person has a job: the father has to find the keys, the mother gets the two youngest children ready—shoes, jackets, a favorite blanket for the baby. The eldest is in charge of putting the dog outside.

The family piles into a pickup truck. The three-year-old sits in the middle, between her parents, while the oldest climbs in the bed of the truck. The mother takes the baby in her arms. He wiggles, trying to sit next to her. “*Ay mi amor*, sit on your Mami’s lap where you’ll be safe!” The father starts the truck and they drive to the store.

This scene is played over and over again every day in different combinations across the country. Children ride unrestrained in laps or standing on the front or back seats. And they die.

### Why People Don’t Use Restraints

In a study conducted by the Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign, three out of four drivers said they do not always place their children in a safety restraint. Of the 800 phone interviews conducted in November 1999, 71 percent of those respondents who drive with children under 12 admitted to not having their young passengers buckled up and were aware that motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death to children.

When asked why they do not use child safety seats or seat belts, Latino families provide a variety of reasons:

“I’m just going to the store around the corner. I’m not going on the highway!”

“He hates the car seat. He always screams and climbs out anyway.”

“A friend of mine crashed when she was wearing a seat belt and it killed her.”

“I’m a great driver. I’ve never been in an accident!”

“I usually use a car seat, but I was in a hurry today.”

“If I buckle my seatbelt, I’m inviting an accident.”

“My husband refuses to use his seatbelt because he feels tied down.”

The goal of the *Corazón de mi vida* initiative is to make buckling up a habit, one that builds on the parents’ love for their children, that invites them to become active partners in keeping their children safe and helping to create a safe community.

### Young Families

The Latino population is younger and growing faster than any other population group in the United States. The median age for the Latino population is 26 years, while the median age for non-Hispanic Whites is 35 years and will increase to 38 years by 2020. This means that a greater proportion of the Latino community lives in young family households. In fact, Latino



children are now the second largest group of children in the United States. Eleven percent of the Latino population is under the age of five, and approximately 40 percent is under 19 years of age.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of Hispanic children has increased faster than any other racial or ethnic group, from 9 percent of the child population in 1980 to 15 percent in 1998. By 2020 the bureau projects that more than one in five children will be of Hispanic descent. This is due to higher fertility rates as well as immigration.

### **The Realities of Poverty**

Latino poverty has been increasing since the 1980s despite the fact that male Latinos are employed at a higher rate than any other group: 79 percent versus 67.1 percent for African-Americans and 74.6 percent for non-Hispanic Whites. In many families both parents must work, and many children work before and after school to augment the family income. Despite these efforts, 40 percent of Hispanic children live in poverty.

Latino children living in poverty may be more susceptible to injury and death because

- ♥ family finances may not stretch to buy a child safety seat
- ♥ old vehicles frequently have worn or damaged seat belts
- ♥ crowded vehicles leave little room for a child safety seat or
- ♥ a truck is used as the family vehicle and there is not enough room for a child safety seat

### **Language**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 32 million people over the age of five speak a language other than English in the home. Although most U.S. Latinos speak English (74 percent), Spanish continues to be the favored language in the home. The shared border between the United States and Mexico; the mobility of Puerto Ricans, who move between living on the island and on the mainland; the strong ties with families living in the home country; and strong cultural traditions encourage the use of Spanish in the home.

### **Spirituality**

Spirituality plays a central role in the lives of many Latinos. There is a strong, unshakable belief that a higher power dispenses justice and wisdom and watches over everyone. This belief is manifested in the commonly used phrase, “*Si Dios quiera* (if God wills it).”

According to the staff of Avance-Dallas, an NLCI *La Promesa* program, this belief may cause some families to feel that using seat belts or child safety seats is “being distrustful of God’s ability to keep their children safe.” Others may feel that they are tempting fate, inviting a car crash.





While some groups may see this as a barrier, *Corazón de mi vida* uses this belief as the foundation for an activity. (See Child Safety Seat Blessing)

### **The Heart of the Matter**

*Corazón de mi vida* builds a safe future for young Latinos by connecting childcare providers, medical practitioners, law enforcement officers, businesses, clergy and others with families in a unique partnership to change practices and beliefs regarding child passenger safety.

The *Corazón de mi vida* kit has taken into account a number of principles essential for successful Latino community outreach. Among these are:

1. Materials invite Latinos to become involved in the campaign and to recognize their role in saving lives.
2. Images in the materials are representative of the Latino culture and include graphics that are visually and culturally appealing.
3. Messages are positive and uplifting, building on what people are already doing right.
4. Messages are bilingual, with Spanish language materials written in the formal *usted* form.
5. Materials focus on one message at a time to avoid confusing the audience.
6. Messages are embedded in familiar riddles, stories and rhymes.
7. Religious or community celebrations, such as the April 30 celebration of *El Día de los Niños*, are used to conduct outreach activities.
8. Materials are authentic and created for the audience, not translated from English.
9. The most common Spanish terms are used in the materials. Each product was tested with different Latino groups in various regions of the country.
10. Collaborations with community-based organizations in Latino neighborhoods are woven into the design of the activities.







# The Corazón de mi vida Kit

**T**he *Corazón de mi vida* kit contains bilingual educational materials on child passenger safety for Latino parents and communities. The messages are positive and uplifting, building on what families and the community are already doing right. The materials encourage people to make child passenger safety a priority in their lives by making the use of child safety seats and seat belts a lifetime habit. The materials remind parents and other caregivers of the most important reason for complying: they love their children.

The kit contains:

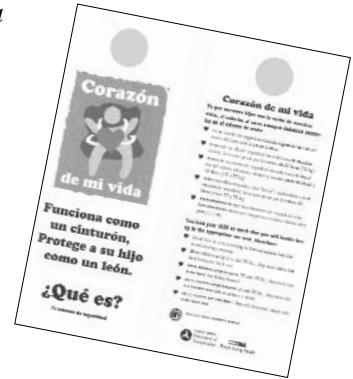
- ♥ handbook
- ♥ bilingual hangers
- ♥ bumper stickers
- ♥ location event posters
- ♥ Safety Lotería game
- ♥ *Corazón de mi vida* stickers
- ♥ Mini Checklists

## Hangers

Using riddles and rhymes, these bilingual hangers remind parents to use safety seats and seat belts and to reinforce the three campaign messages:

- ♥ Children are safest when riding in a properly installed safety seat
- ♥ Children should ride in the middle of the backseat, or if there isn't a backseat, in the center of the front seat away from airbags
- ♥ Adults should use seatbelts and set a good example for children.

**Hanger #1:** *Funciona como un cinturón. Protege su hijo como un león. ¿Qué es? El asiento de seguridad.* The translation of the riddle is: "It works like a belt. It protects your child like a lion. What is it? A child safety seat."



The back of this hanger has reminders and important information about the proper use and the correct position of the safety seat, as well as the weight limitation for the seats.

**Hanger #2:** *Tris, Tras no adelante, pero siempre atrás. Estará más seguro, y ¡sí lo verás!* The translation of the rhyme is: "Tic, tac, not in front but in the back. Your child will be safer and you can still see him!"

The back of this hanger reminds parents to always place their child in the back seat.

**Hanger #3:** *Tú eres el son de mi corazón, por eso me abrocho mi cinturón.* The translation is: "You are the rhythm of my heart, and that's why I'll buckle up."

The back of this hanger reminds parents that, as role models, they should set an example for their child and buckle up.

**Suggested Use:** The hangers are an easy tool to communicate key messages on child passenger safety to parents and other caregivers. Hangers can be distributed at *El Día de los Niños* celebrations, Child Passenger week or at a parenting meeting.



Work with a radio station to distribute the hangers during a planned giveaway. Hangers can be displayed on the radio button or even from the back of the driver's seat.

### Corazón de mi vida Stickers

The large round stickers are perfect as gifts to children for playing Safety Lotería, or for adhering to car seats, diaper bags, strollers, etc. The brightly colored logo can remind children to always ride in their safety seat, buckled up.

### Bumper Sticker



The brightly colored bumper sticker says it all: *Estás en mi corazón y te abrocho el cinturón.* In English the words mean, “You are in my heart and I will buckle you up.”

**Suggested Use:** Bumper stickers can be affixed not only to car bumpers, but also to diaper bags and strollers. Ask for permission to place them on exit doors at various sites around town (grocery, pharmacy, doctor's offices). Distribute the bumper stickers to parents at the *Corazón de mi vida* events. Bumper stickers can also be used as raffle or door prizes for the Lotería game.

### Mini Checklists

These tags were designed for busy parents and other adults who need a quick refresher course on installing the safety seat. The Mini Checklists include instructions for each of the three most commonly used child safety seats—rear facing, forward facing and booster seats.

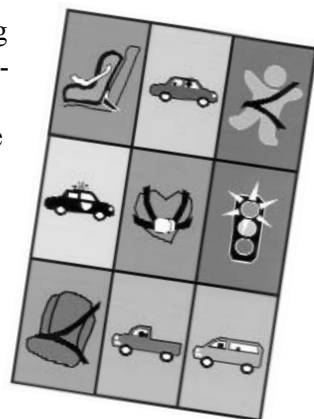
The laminated safety seat checklists are 3" x 2" business card size tags, similar to a luggage tag. The back of each tag contains a quick checklist

of key points for proper installation of that particular safety seat. The checklists are available in English or Spanish.

**Suggested Use:** Tags can be attached to a diaper bag or a stroller, on the safety seat itself. Use the tag as a bow on a baby shower package. Remove the hang tag and the laminated card can be hung on a key chain for easy access to this important information.

### Safety Lotería

This game teaches passenger safety to children ages three to eight. The bingo-like game stresses the importance of using safety seats and belts, and encourages children to cooperate with their parents when asked to ride safely in a vehicle. The brightly colored game contains eight boards illustrated with various images about child passenger safety. The set contains 14 cards and markers. The back of each playing card has a teaching point that reinforces a safety message and corresponds to the image on the front of each card.



**Suggested Use:** Play Lotería with children during *El Día de los Niños*. Invite a leader in the community to join the children in playing the game. Serve cookies and milk as a snack. Invite the press.

### Other Materials

Supplementary materials including a *Corazón de mi vida* video, tip sheets, T-shirts and a CD-Rom are available separately.





## Connecting with the Community

**C**orazón de mi vida is a comprehensive initiative that includes not only materials, but activities for connecting with the Latino community.

To conduct successful outreach campaigns for Latinos, families must feel that they have a relationship with the people providing the information, that the experience is an equal exchange with each party providing an important service. Persons conducting outreach in the Latino community must establish *confianza*—a deep connection. When *confianza* with another person is established, trust and caring are implicit.

Contrary to popular beliefs, the majority of Latinos speak English. Some Latinos are bilingual while others are monolingual Spanish or English. When choosing the best medium for contacting Latinos, remember that both languages are spoken. A recent study found that 25 percent of Latinos watch Spanish language television exclusively, 25 percent watch English language, and 50 percent switch back and forth between the two depending on the programming. Therefore, it is imperative that invitations to events are produced in Spanish and English, whether the medium used is radio, television or written materials.



Various campaigns have attempted to change the low rate of safety seat usage in the Latino community, but these campaigns were designed for the general population with little planning or understanding of how to successfully reach Latinos. Many of the campaigns employed word-for-word translations, using English syntax and grammar, thus making the message almost incomprehensible to Spanish speakers. Others

distributed materials such as pamphlets and posters that were discarded because the distribution process was not connected to culturally relevant activities or interpersonal interactions.

*Corazón de mi vida* uses culturally significant holidays and celebrations that invite Latino families and the whole community to become partners in assuring that children will be safe.

### **Births, Baptisms and First Birthdays**

Family celebrations are important events for

Latinos—weddings, funerals, birthdays and *quinceañeras*—everyone attends, from the youngest to the oldest. Often, the celebrations last all day or even throughout the weekend.

Births, baptisms and first birthdays are important milestones in a child's life. The celebrations can be used to spread the message of child passenger safety to the adults in the child's life.



Birth is a joyful event in Latino families. The whole family goes to the hospital to welcome their newest member, with cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles camping out until they hear the good news. This provides an opportunity for working with clinics, hospitals and midwives to include *Corazón de mi vida* materials in the new baby packages they distribute.

During a baptism, the *padrinos* (godparents) pledge to assist the parents in raising the child, to help keep the child safe. Individuals can work with the clergy to include *Corazón de mi vida* materials in their classes for godparents. Godparents and parents can pledge that they will always use child safety seats.

In many Latino communities, a child's first birthday is a huge celebration. Historically, many children died before their first birthday; therefore, if a child survived, the family rejoiced. Plan quarterly birthday parties for one-year-olds and their parents. Hold Safety Seat Clinics during the birthday parties and distribute the *Corazón de mi vida* materials.

### **El Día de los Niños—Celebrating Young Americans**

This new national holiday, celebrated every year on April 30, can be used to focus attention on child passenger safety. All across the country, communities celebrate children and youth by planning activities such as health fairs, parades, cultural festivals and concerts. Coordinators can plan a Safety Seat Clinic and Blessing or a Safety Fair for *El Día de los Niños*. Because of the national media attention focused on the day, this provides an excellent opportunity to plan a press conference and highlight the campaign. NLCI's *El Día de los Niños Kit* contains additional information and ideas on how to use the day to highlight specific issues.



### **El día de los muertos**

This religious holiday is celebrated in Mexico and the United States every year on November 2. Families work for days to prepare for the festival: tombstones are cleaned, plots are weeded and special foods are cooked, including *pan de muertos*. Families attend church and then go to the cemeteries to have a picnic and remember their loved ones who have died.

While *Corazón de mi vida* emphasizes using positive and uplifting messages, this day lends itself to a more somber message. Use the day to draw attention to the number of children who have died because they were not properly restrained in cars.

Work with churches to create *altares*. Many families create *altares* in their homes. Typically, the *altar* is created on a table using photographs of the person being honored, candles, religious icons, flowers and food offerings.





## Activity 1

# Parent Pláticas

**P**arents need the opportunity to meet together to discuss important topics. A *plática*—a chat or talk—offers the perfect opportunity to discuss issues of child passenger safety. Parents are often frustrated by the bewildering array of child safety seats on the market, the best ways to get their children to stay in the child safety seat or how to stress the importance of children riding in child safety seats to their mothers and grandmothers, who may not share the same beliefs. During a *plática*, parents can share the strategies they've employed to ensure that their children stay safe while riding in cars.

### Messages

*Children are safer in cars when buckled in a properly installed child safety seat.*

*Different safety seats are used depending on the weight of the child and the make and model of the car.*

*Children are safest when the child safety seat is placed in the backseat, or, if there isn't a backseat, in the middle of the front seat.*

### Plática Topics

- ♥ choosing the best safety seat for the child's height and weight and matching the best seat for the model of the car.
- ♥ tips for getting children to stay in the safety seats.
- ♥ what to say when other family members or friends don't believe in using child safety seats or seat belts.
- ♥ the do's and don'ts of safety seat installation.
- ♥ becoming a role model for the children and the community.
- ♥ driver's liability for unrestrained passengers.

### Planning

Facilitators should consider scheduling a series of *pláticas* so that families have the opportunity to fully discuss each issue. Parents will have suggestions, problems, solutions and even new ways to look at a particularly thorny issue.

Check with the families before scheduling a *plática*. Many Latinos work multiple jobs or late shifts, and attending a meeting at 6 p.m. may be impossible. Also, it is necessary to take into account regular family activities that might prevent them from attending a meeting.

Remember that the whole family will attend, so providing child care, with activities for a range of ages, is necessary. Family elders also may choose to attend.



## Staffing

Three to five people are needed to help set up, especially if child care will be provided. Depending on the number and ages of the children, four to ten bilingual staff members are needed. If possible, the child care providers should be known to the children. Staff-child ratio should, at a minimum, adhere to state standards.

Two people should facilitate the *plática*, and both must be bilingual and bicultural. If possible, one person should be a Child Passenger Safety technician. If the agency is involved in a multitude of child passenger activities, a staff member may wish to become a certified technician. (See Resource Section at the end of this book.)

## Contacting Families

Families must feel that they have a personal invitation to the *plática*. It may be necessary to visit families in their homes to invite them to the *plática*. Explain that parents will be getting together to discuss the safety of children in cars and that there will be a short presentation. Ask families to invite their friends to the event.

### Materials Needed

- ♥ snacks
- ♥ chart tablet
- ♥ chart markers
- ♥ sign-in sheet
- ♥ nametags
- ♥ pens or markers
- ♥ *Corazón de mi vida* Hangers
- ♥ Mini Checklist Tags in English and Spanish
- ♥ Safety Lotería game
- ♥ television
- ♥ VCR
- ♥ extension cord
- ♥ child safety seats for demonstration

## Setup

The chairs should be placed in a circle around the room to encourage discussion between the participants. A table with nametags and the sign-in sheet can be set up outside the room. If the *Corazón de mi vida* video will be shown, the television should be set up where everyone can see the screen.

## The Plática

Greet everyone as they come in the door. If there are new people in the group, facilitators should allow them to introduce themselves. Schedule time before the *plática* begins for participants to meet and get to know each other, or just to chat. This should feel as if friends have gotten together at someone's home.

Invite parents to sit. If people don't know each other, ask them to introduce themselves: name, where they were born and how many children they have. The facilitators should also introduce themselves. Explain the purpose of the meeting, any ground rules and the approximate time the *plática* will end. If it is a small group, use the Safety Lotería as an ice breaker.

The first scene in the *Corazón de mi vida* video is a great way to start the meeting. The scene can be played and the participants can be questioned about what they think happened next. If possible, include statistics on the number of young Latinos in the community who have died due to car crashes.

Once the presentation is concluded, ask the parents to reflect on the information they have received. Ask them to share specific problems they have with using child safety seats. It may be necessary to ask probing questions. Some of the answers elicited could be used as topics for other *pláticas*.



Problems might include

- ♥ children refuse to stay in a child safety seat
- ♥ they are not sure if they are using the correct seat
- ♥ they do not know how to correctly install the seat
- ♥ other family members undermine the rules for riding in child safety seats or
- ♥ a spouse or other loved family member refuses to wear a seat belt

Write down each problem as it is voiced. Ask if anyone has dealt with the problem successfully or has a solution to the problem. Discussions may be very lively, especially if the spouses do not agree. Each time a solution is presented, write it down.

As solutions are suggested, ask the person who voiced the problem whether they think that particular solution will help them keep their children safe. Ask if they are willing to try it out.

At the end of the *plática*, praise the families for their commitment to keeping their children safe. Each family member should receive a hanger or Mini Checklist to remind them that children can ride safely in child safety seats. If a Car Safety Seat Clinic has been scheduled, invite them to attend.

Thank the families for attending. If there is any food left over, invite the families to take it home.

## Evaluation

The Parent *Plática* is a perfect opportunity to evaluate not only the participants' prior knowledge and understanding of child passenger safety, but also how much they learned during the *plática*. The following questions can be used as a starting point for creating an evaluation.

- ♥ What was the most helpful information you learned?
- ♥ With whom will you share the information?
- ♥ Did the demonstration provide you with new information about installing the safety seat?
- ♥ What did you learn from the other participants?
- ♥ Did you learn new tips on how to keep children happy in a safety seat?
- ♥ What other child passenger safety topics would you like to see?

Evaluations should be developed in both Spanish and English. Use the participants' suggestions as topics for other *pláticas*.

## Clean-up

Encourage children to help clean up the activities and toys they used in the childcare area. Parents also can assist by putting chairs away, throwing away the trash, etc.





## Activity 2

# Safety Seat Clinics

Studies have shown that up to 85 percent of the safety seats checked are improperly used and installed. Children riding in these seats are in great danger of death or serious injury in a car crash. Safety Seat Clinics provide a non-threatening venue for child safety seats to be inspected by professionals trained to instruct parents in the correct selection and installation of safety seats.

### Messages

*Up to 85 percent of child safety seats are improperly used and installed.*

*The age, weight and height of the child, as well as the type of vehicle, determine the type of safety seat to use.*

*The best child safety seat is one that fits the child and the vehicle, will be used correctly every time and is affordable.*

*Children are safest when the child safety seat is placed in the backseat.*

*Airbags in cars where children must ride in the front seat should be deactivated or have an off-on switch installed.*

### Materials

Banner, *Corazón de mi vida* hangers, sign-in sheets, Mini Checklists, bumper stickers and Safety Lotería game; safety seats, two tables, clipboards, pens, water or soft drinks, cups, orange traffic cones, tape or rope, ice and an ice chest. In warm climates, a tent may be necessary to provide shade. Signs or tag-board and markers.

CPS technicians will also need other items. Talk to them about these items and decide who will be responsible for procuring them.

### Items to budget for

Child safety seats

Water, soft drinks and ice

Tent rental (for inclement or hot weather)

Liability/event insurance

### Planning

Plan the clinic to coincide with a holiday such as *El Día de los Niños* on April 30 or *El día de los muertos* on November 2. Local businesses near the Latino community should be contacted to secure a location with a large parking lot and access to restrooms. Potential sponsors should be contacted with a letter requesting funds to purchase safety seats, and a follow-up phone call should be made within a few days of mailing the request. Publicity is vital to ensuring that the Safety Seat Clinic is a success. Television and radio stations should be contacted for possible partnerships and sponsorship, including requesting public service announcements to publicize the event.



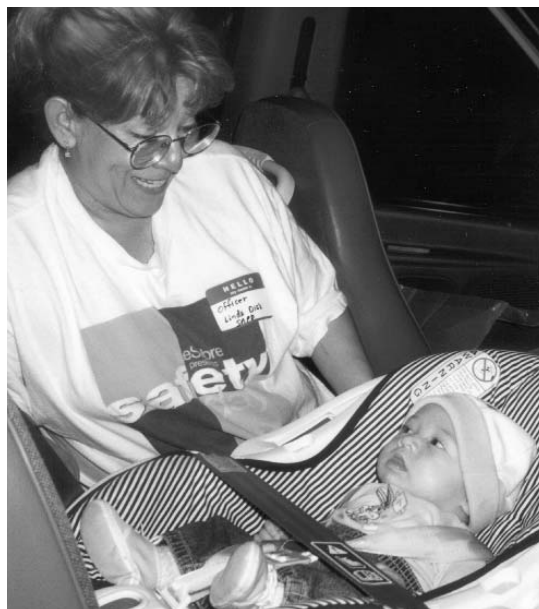


It is imperative that event liability insurance for the event be purchased by the sponsoring agency.

## Partners and Sponsors

Holding a Safety Seat Clinic requires the assistance of not only the sponsoring agency, but additional partners that can help by promoting, sponsoring and staffing the clinic. There are groups in every community that are willing to help. The following is a partial list of possible partners.

- ♥ The local or regional Department of Transportation maintains a list of Child Passenger Safety (CPS) technicians. The technicians must be contacted and their assistance in performing the safety seat checks requested. Only National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) certified Child Passenger Safety technicians, who have undergone training on the proper installation of child safety seats, can perform the checks.
- ♥ Many auto dealers, auto parts stores, fast food restaurants or department stores have participated in Safety Seat Clinics by allowing the use of their parking lots and helping publicize the event. Local businesses in the area, such as an insurance company, fast food restaurant, auto dealer, hospital, etc., can also be contacted to raise money to buy safety seats.
- ♥ The local police department should be invited to participate. Some departments have programs or funds for buying safety seats.
- ♥ Some communities also have a child safety seat loaner program that can help find child safety seats for the clinic.
- ♥ This is a great opportunity to include local churches by requesting their participation in a child safety seat blessing before the clinic begins. (see Child Safety Seat Blessing.)



- ♥ Radio and television stations should be contacted for sponsorship, which can include free advertising for the clinic.

## Staffing

Three to five people will need to set up. The number of hours the clinic is open will determine the number of volunteers needed, as well as the number of Child Passenger Safety (CPS) technicians needed. At least two people should be available to support each technician—one person to guide the cars into the clinic and the other to assist the technician. A team of traffic flow coordinators should be assigned to make sure that everyone is safe and that the flow of traffic moves smoothly through the area. Two people should staff the sign in table. Also, two to four volunteers should be available to play Safety Lotería with children while the child safety seats are being inspected. All volunteers should be bilingual.

CPS technicians have a wealth of knowledge in making a Safety Seat Clinic run smoothly and are very eager to share their experiences.

Organizing agencies should use their expertise to plan and coordinate the event.



## Setup

The banner should be hung where it will be visible to people looking for the clinic, and signs thanking the sponsors should be highly visible. One table should be placed near the entrance to the area where the clinic will be held and set up with sign-in sheets. A sign or banner can be used to designate the purpose of the table. The other table can be used to hold the *Corazón de mi vida* information and other appropriate



materials. In hot climates, a tent may be necessary to help keep people and the safety seats from overheating. The drinks can also be set up under the tent.

The CPS technician should design the safety zone—how the traffic should flow, where the cars will enter, wait, be inspected and depart. The orange traffic cones can be used to mark traffic lanes.

An area should be set up where children can wait for their parents and play the *Corazón de mi vida* Safety Lotería game. Children who use car seats will need to be available so that the CPS technician can make sure parents know how to correctly secure a child in the safety seat.

## The Day of the Event

Each family should be greeted as they arrive and directed to the sign-in table. The process for getting the child safety seats checked should be explained, and children should be invited to play while they wait their turn. Some parents may feel dismayed if they see a long line, but encourage them to wait for their turn. This is the perfect opportunity to gather information about the family's views on passenger safety, or to discuss any issues they may have. If a Parent *Plática* is planned, the families can be invited to attend.

As each car moves through the line, it is important that the adults in the family observe and speak with the CPS technician. The technician will work with the family to help them learn the correct methods of using and installing the car seat and buckling the child. The technician will also ask families a number of questions. Organizers should contact the Governor's State Highway Representative to get copies of the Child Safety Seat Checklists. This documentation is very important. After the technician has demonstrated the process, the safety seats should be removed and the adults should install the seat. Because of issues of liability, this step is very important—the adult, not the technician, must be the last person to touch the safety seat. This is also an excellent way to ensure that adults have learned how to correctly install the seat.

As the families leave, provide each one with a *Corazón de mi vida* hanger, Mini Checklist or bumper sticker and invite them to the next event. If possible, conduct a quick evaluation and ask the adults:

What was the most important thing you learned today?

Would you recommend this activity to other people?



The answers to these questions can be included in the thank yous that are sent to the sponsoring agencies and businesses.

## Radio Station Fun

If a radio station agrees to sponsor the clinic, suggest that the station set up a remote near the site of the clinic. Families who attended the clinic and placed the bumper sticker on their car can stop by for a prize.

The radio station can continue the focus on child passenger safety by playing a “spot the bumper sticker” game for the week following the Safety Seat Clinic. Many radio stations use this game to highlight an issue or to increase their listener share. Mobile D.J.s drive around town during specific hours, and if they spot a car with the bumper sticker, that driver wins a prize. Live interviews can be conducted as the motorist is asked about what they learned at the safety seat clinic.

## Cleanup and Follow-up

The banner should be removed, rolled up and stored for use at the next clinic, and the area should be cleaned and trash deposited in the appropriate containers.

Each sponsor, including the technician, should be thanked, with any comments made by parents included in the letter. Pictures are always appreciated by everyone and should also be sent. Write thank you letters to all of the sponsors, including the group that provided the site, the radio stations and the technicians.

**Operation Kids Child Safety Seat Checklist**

Date: / /  
Team Members: \_\_\_\_\_  
Senior Checker Sign-Off:  
 Seat came into the checkpoint installed and used correctly

Driver's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to child:  Other  
 Parent/Guardian  Grandparent  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Child Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight (LBS): \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Expectant Mother:  Yes  Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vehicle Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle Model: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of seat:  Infant  Convertible  Forward Facing Only  Booster  Other:  
Make of seat:  Evenflo  Century  Cosco  Britax  Fisher Price  Kwikraft  Other:  
Name of Seat: \_\_\_\_\_ Model Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Manufacture: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meets FMVSS 213:  No  Yes Seat Involved in Crash:  No  Yes Recalled:  Yes  No  Unknown  
Passenger Air Bag Present:  No  Yes Disabled:  No  Yes On/OR Switch:  No  Yes

D = Driver  
Mark position seat found with an X  
Mark position seat moved to with M

I understand and agree that the sole purpose of this program is to help reduce the incident of the improper installation of child safety seats; that this inspection is being provided as a free service to me; that this program cannot fully evaluate the quality, safety, or condition of the car safety seat, the car safety seat provided or any component of my vehicle, including the seats or safety belts; and this program cannot guarantee my child's safety in a crash. For these reasons, I hereby release any program participants, from any present or future liability for any injuries or dangers that may result from a vehicle collision or otherwise.  
Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Rear-facing Infant Seat or Convertible Seat (Note: A child should be rear-facing until at least one year of age and at least 20 lbs.. If a child is less than one year and over 20 lbs., then a seat with greater weight limits in the rear-facing position should be obtained)  
Seat Installed:  With Child Present  Without Child Present  
 Yes  No  N/A Seat in Front of Air Bag  
 Yes  No  N/A Child Within Mfg.'s Recommended Weight/Height Range  
 Yes  No  N/A Seat Rear-Facing  
 Yes  No  N/A Seat Reclined 45 degrees  
 Yes  No  N/A Harness Straps at or Below Shoulders  
 Yes  No  N/A Harness Straps Snug (one-finger test)  
 Yes  No  N/A Harness Retainer Clip Present (if required in instructions)  
 Yes  No  N/A Harness Retainer Clip Threaded Correctly  
 Yes  No  N/A Harness Retainer Clip at Armpit Level  
 Yes  No  N/A Safety Belt Routed Correctly  
 Yes  No  N/A Safety Belt Holding Seat Tightly in Vehicle (one inch test)  
 Yes  No  N/A Safety Belt in Locked Mode (locking clip, switched retractor or locking latch plate)  
 Yes  No  N/A Locking Clip Used Correctly (if needed)

Yes  No  N/A Mfg.'s Recommended Weight/Height Range  
Restraint used according to directions

Operation Kids Handbook #1  
January 6, 1999





## Activity 3

# Safety Fair

**A** Safety Fair provides an opportunity to discuss child passenger safety issues with children, youth, parents and extended family members through activities, demonstrations and games.

This event can help highlight and promote child passenger safety in the Latino community on April 30, *El Día de los Niños*. The activities remind adults to show their love for their children by ensuring that they are always buckled up when riding in the car. Children can also make buckling up a lifetime habit.

### Messages

*Placing children in the backseat is the best way to keep them safe.*

*Passenger safety is a lifelong habit.*

*Children can learn to stay in their child safety seat.*

*Children can learn to like staying in the child safety seat.*

*Everyone can become a partner in child passenger safety and in creating safer communities.*

### Partners and Sponsors

To be successful, many people must help organize and run the fair. Form a committee of people who work in safety-related and child-focused organizations such as clinics, hospitals, physician associations, police and fire departments, local and regional departments of transportation, churches, schools, childcare centers and children's museums. Each organization can sponsor one or two booths and run the activities for that booth.

Invite businesses to sponsor specific booths. Contact insurance companies, auto dealers, grocery and food stores, etc. Contact expert builders for help in building booths and stages.

### Items to Budget For

If a Safety Seat Clinic is planned in conjunction with this event, event liability insurance is necessary. Other budget items are dependent on the planned activities.

### The Media

Media must be involved from the start. Ask a television and radio station to help sponsor the day. Use media wisely: promote the fair on local talk shows, early morning newscasts, radio and print media. Ask celebrities or public officials to write op-ed pieces about the importance of child passenger safety for the newspaper. Invite parents to be interviewed for newspapers, radio or television.

Four days before the fair, a media advisory should be sent to the press that includes basic information: who, what, where, when and why.

The day before the event, a press release should be sent out that describes the event, including a list of the celebrities or dignitaries who will be attending and whether there will be photo opportunities.

On the day of the event, a media table should be set up that includes a sign-in sheet, press badges



and a press kit. The press kit should include the press release previously sent to the media, a fact sheet on child passenger safety, including local statistics, and press releases from partner organizations, sponsors, the mayor, etc. The volunteer should keep a list of all media that attends the event to facilitate follow-up and to add to (or begin) a media database.

## Location, Location, Location

The fair should take place in an area that is large enough to handle not only the booths and the crowds, but also has ample parking. The most successful fairs are those that are on a bus route or other metro line, and in places where Latinos frequently gather.

Organizers should consider scheduling the Safety Fair during a week or day that already receives media attention: April 30 for *El Día de los Niños*, National Child Passenger Safety Week or Buckle Up America. This provides the perfect opportunity to connect with national media campaigns. Check the NHTSA Web site, [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov), for information on these celebrations.

## Staffing the Event

The number of volunteers needed will be determined by the size of the fair and the number of activities.

Usually, approximately 40 to 50 people are needed to build, set up and decorate the area; four or five people to man each booth, 30 people to clean up, two people to work with the media, two or three people to handle celebrities and entertainers, and three people to handle the logistics and keep everything running smoothly.

## Getting Started

The Safety Fair should begin with an opening ceremony, perhaps with a local celebrity, the mayor or another dignitary who can proclaim the day Child Safety Day. Children who represent the community can cut the ribbon.

## Activities

Plan for a minimum of ten booths, each hosting a different hands-on activity. Local health care groups can be invited to host booths with hands-on activities that promote healthy habits such as good nutrition, tooth brushing, the importance of immunizations, etc. Each booth should provide the information through a hands-on activity rather than just distributing pamphlets or brochures. People are more likely to retain information when they are engaged in the learning.

## Follow-up

Meet with the committee to evaluate the success of the fair.

Some questions to consider include:

- ♥ Was the fair well attended?
- ♥ Did the children and adults enjoy the activities?
- ♥ Did the press cover the event?
- ♥ Were there any follow-up articles written in the newspaper (post-event)?
- ♥ What feedback, if any, did the committee receive?
- ♥ Were there enough volunteers?
- ♥ What really worked?
- ♥ What could be improved?

Record the answers and begin the process of planning the next Safety Fair.

### Important Celebrations

- February - National Child Passenger Safety Week
- April 30 - El Día de los Niños
- May - Buckle Up America!
- September - Speak out and make NOYS
- November 2 - El día de los muertos



## Safety Fair Activities

A number of booths and activities relating to child safety seat safety can be set up. These include:

### Safety Seat Clinic

This event provides the perfect opportunity to incorporate a Safety Seat Clinic in the fair. (See the information on page 16 to plan the clinic.)



### Safety Lotería Game

Safety Lotería is a bingo-like game. The pictures and phrases can be used to teach safety concepts while families play together. Winners can receive prizes such as bumper stickers, hangers or other donated items that promote child passenger safety.

### Scavenger Hunt

Scavenger hunts are fun for the whole family. Prepare a sheet with the list (in Spanish and English) of various items promoting child passenger safety that can be found around the fair. Families receive a sheet, and together walk around the fair to look for the items. For example:

- ♥ A picture of a child appropriately buckled in a safety seat
- ♥ A bumper sticker promoting child passenger safety
- ♥ A reminder for installing safety seats
- ♥ A Safety Safety Lotería card
- ♥ Child passenger safety seat: an infant, car or booster seat

The family hunts for each item, participates in the activity and receives a stamp in the appropriate space that verifies that they completed the activity. After all the spaces are stamped, the family returns to the start and receives a gift.

### In the Car, Out of the Car

Both children and adults must make using seat belts and sitting in properly installed child safety seats a lifelong habit. Use this activity to encourage families to foster that habit.

Ask a car dealership to donate a demonstration van for the day of the fair. Work with the technicians to properly install a child safety seat and booster seat. Using life-sized dolls, ask children to place their babies in the child safety seats. Explain the importance of sitting in the child safety seat. Children over the age of three also can learn how to properly buckle themselves. This activity is great for the Scavenger Hunt.

### Child Safety Seat Blessing

Schedule a Child Safety Seat Blessing for the fair. Work with local churches to plan the event. The information on page 19 gives tips on planning the event.

#### Materials

*Corazón de mi vida* hangers, Mini Checklists, bumper stickers, Safety Lotería game, child safety seats, banners, tables, chairs, sign thanking the sponsors





## Activity 4

# Child Safety Seat Blessings

**C**orazón de mi vida uses the cultural strengths of the Latino community as the foundation for passenger restraint education. The influence of religion and spirituality, for example, can sometimes be a barrier to new ideas. Instead of ignoring or blaming these beliefs, *Corazón de mi vida* incorporates religious beliefs by holding Child Safety Seat Blessings to “help God keep them safe.”

### Messages

*Everyone has a role to play in keeping children safe.*

*Parents love their children so much that they will always buckle them up.*

*Adults are the best role models for children, so they will always use their seat belts.*

### Planning

A Safety Fair or Safety Seat Clinic during *El Día de los Niños* celebrations is the perfect opportunity to hold a Safety Seat Blessing. A well-known priest or minister in the Latino community should be contacted and asked to officiate at the blessing.

This event is a wonderful photo opportunity, so it is important to contact the media—print, television and radio—and ask them to advertise and sponsor the event. A possible list of people to be interviewed should be developed. Local dignitaries or celebrities should be invited to the event. The mayor, his wife or a celebrity may wish to speak at the event.



One person must produce an agenda for the event that includes the order of speakers, who introduces whom, etc.

### **Staffing**

A minimum of two people are needed to help set up the area for the blessing. The safety seats should be set up on a table. A bilingual priest or minister should be scheduled to perform the blessing.

### **Location**

A church can be the perfect site for the blessing, or, if there is a Safety Seat Clinic or Safety Fair planned, a car dealership, auto supply store, or

store parking lot can be used for the blessing.

#### **Materials**

banner  
child safety seats  
podium  
table  
microphone  
press materials  
refreshments  
*Corazón de mi vida*  
materials

#### **Setup**

Banners should be hung announcing the event and a display created of child safety seats near the banner. A table placed near the entrance can hold the *Corazón de mi vida* materials and press kits.

### **The Blessing**

The event should begin with a welcome and the introduction of any dignitaries or special guests in attendance. After the priest or minister has blessed the child safety seats, he may wish to bless child safety seats that are already installed in cars as well as seat belts.

### **Follow-up**

Event organizers should write a story about the event for the newspaper and include photographs for publication. Send thank you letters to sponsors and the priest or minister, and include positive comments about the event.

The diocese can also print information about child passenger safety in its church bulletin, using the *Corazón de mi vida* materials as a guide.







## Working with the Media

**I**t is important to develop a media plan for every *Corazón de mi vida* event targeting the public. Getting the message out and creating a stir about child passenger safety is critical to changing people's behavior. Since most messages about safety seats have been targeted to the general market, any effort to publicize *Corazón de mi vida* will result in new information to Latinos.

One of the best ways to create a stir about child safety is to connect the topic to high media activity days such as *El Día de los Niños—Celebrating Young Americans*, observed now in over 100 communities. This new national holiday honors and uplifts children on April 30. It is recognized by the U.S. Senate with a senate resolution and in many cities and states with resolutions passed by their governing bodies. The reading of these resolutions at citywide press conferences draws attention to children, and when possible the issue of safety should be included. Free-standing press events can also be planned to promote *Corazón de mi vida* activities.

### Volunteers and Committees

A committee of volunteers should be organized before beginning the media work. Brainstorming sessions with the committee can produce innovative ideas for the media plan. In many cases, volunteers and committee members are the best contacts. These people will have a wide range of ideas and skills.

- ♥ Make assignments for each person clear, and eliminate any confusion over who will be responsible for each part of the plan.
- ♥ Designate a spokesperson as the media contact.
- ♥ Circulate weekly memos via fax or e-mail to inform fellow committee members of any interviews, events or changes in the schedule.
- ♥ Keep minutes from meetings to document assignments and progress.

- ♥ Plan a recognition ceremony or luncheon with certificates or mementos to thank the committee after the work is complete.

### Three Stages

There are three stages to media coverage of any activity: **Pre-event**, **On the Spot Event**, and **Post-event** coverage. Each of these stages requires different materials and media tactics, and each is critical to promote maximum media coverage of the event. Additional elements such as “photo ops,” technical or equipment needs, media access and other special considerations must be taken into account when planning the logistics of a press event. This media plan outlines each of the essential steps for maximum media coverage of a *Corazón de mi vida* activity.



# 1. Pre-event Coverage

## Creating the Media Plan

Organization is the key to planning a successful media plan. Formulate a detailed schedule outlining each step of the plan.

### Consider the larger goals.

What type and scope of media will the plan target at which time? What kind of information does the press need at each point in the plan? What information and materials will be necessary for each type of media to cover the event successfully?

Once the overall goals of the media plan have been outlined, each of the small steps necessary to achieve them can be completed.

When planning the schedule, remember the time constraints of each type of media and how the nature of the media outlets affect coverage of

the event. For example, a monthly magazine may need information and photographs six to eight weeks in advance in order to include a story on *Corazón de mi vida* in its next issue. A television station can provide instantaneous coverage of the event itself and may want to do a follow-up story on the local progress of the plan. A national paper may require several press releases spaced several weeks apart, including a media advisory the day before the event, in order to pique interest in covering the event.

Remember that each type of media, depending on its target audience, may take a different slant on *Corazón de mi vida* unless they are provided with the key points of the initiative. Plan which kinds of information and press releases should go to which type of media sources. For example, a local television station may want more information on Latino children and safety seats, while a national paper may take a broader perspective, such as children and safety.



## A Typical Plan

Media outlet	Four weeks before the event	Three weeks before the event	Two weeks before the event	Day before the event	Day of the event
Television news media	Plan appropriate angle for story, call to inquire about interest	Send general press release on the event	Call to get interest in the event Send more detailed press release	Send press reminder Call to see who is coming	Provide press kit Coordinate interview
Spanish language radio talk show	Send letter with news release regarding event	Call to get on the schedule	Send additional information about the speaker and the issue	Air the interview, provide information about the next day's event	Set up on-the-spot interviews with parents and children
English language daily newspaper	Meet with editorial board to draw attention to the issue	Develop op-ed column Send press release	Get people to send letters to the editor responding to column	Send press release for reporter to cover story	Editorial appears regarding the issue
Weekly Spanish language newspaper	Meet with a reporter about the upcoming event	Provide Spanish language article on the topic	Announce the event and invite the public to participate	Send reminder to cover the event	Provide press kit with Spanish press release Arrange for Spanish speakers to be interviewed at event

Review the plan and be prepared for unexpected changes along the way.



# Media Outreach

## Approaching the Media

The objective of media outreach is to make favorable contacts with the media to advance publicity for *Corazón de mi vida*.

Begin by developing a database for your media contacts. This will save time when you're mailing out information or letters. In many communities a list of contacts can be obtained from the Public Relations Division of the Convention and Visitors Bureau. The list can be used to find out who might be interested and receptive to the *Corazón de mi vida* initiative.

Look through the local newspaper to identify the section of the newspaper most suitable for reporting on *Corazón de mi vida* and contact a reporter who writes for that section. Become familiar with the specific reporter and the subject matter, as well as the style and format—not just how the reporter writes on what he reports.



## Television

Television is one of the fastest ways to get a story out to the community. The steps for creating contacts are the same as for working with the newspapers: identify local news and community programs to contact, and then target specific reporters.

Before making the call, be prepared—television reporters work in soundbites so it is necessary to state the request in a clear and concise manner. Make sure that the media contact is interested or willing to report on the subject. The simplest way of finding out is by asking, “If you are not the appropriate person I should be talking to could you please direct me to the correct individual?”

Reporters are always working on deadlines. Therefore, it is important to ask the reporter if it is a good time to talk; then describe who, what, when, where, why and how. Be prepared to answer questions. The reporter may then ask for a press release, fact sheet, background and other information.

As a courtesy to the reporter, phone ahead first before sending an e-mail or fax. Follow up several times with this individual before, during and after the event. It usually takes many phone conversations to get a story covered.

Organizers should remember the lead times for each type of media. Ask about deadlines for the story, and respond in a timely manner. Address all correspondence using the reporter's name. Do not address to “publisher” or “editor.”

Don't assume that the communication has been received. Letters, faxes, e-mails and voice mails can get lost in a big organization. Follow-up to ensure that the most important media contacts have received the information.



Once *Corazón de mi vida* has been presented, the material sent and the follow up call made, call again. Don't assume that the topic will automatically get press time. Ask if additional information is needed. Also have another angle on the subject available to further entice the reporter. For example, if the reporter is not interested in doing a family story, ask him to approach it as a safety issue.

If all avenues of communication with a reporter have failed, it is time to move on. Knowing when to move on is important, but just because the story is turned down with one media contact doesn't mean others will not be interested.

The media coordinator should keep accurate and updated files of who was approached, what information was sent to them and how the information was used.

## Writing a Press Release

Press releases are essential for communicating directly with the media. They are the main vehicle for providing reporters with pre-event information and updates. The press release should include all the information the reporter needs to easily cover the event. Whenever possible, media releases should be written on an organization's letterhead to lend credence to the information being released and give the press a main contact name and how to reach someone who knows everything about the event. The following tips may be useful in writing press releases for *Corazón de mi vida* events.

**Keep it short.** Most press releases are one or two pages long. Most reporters don't have time to read anything longer than two pages.

**Choose one main message.** The release should carry one main message, which is usually a single sentence stated clearly as part of the first paragraph. All paragraphs should be between one and three sentences long. Use outline form

or bullets whenever possible—whatever makes the release quick and easy to read. Try to include at least one relevant, publishable quote in every press release.

**Include contact information and a release date.** At the top of the release, be sure to include a date for release and the name and phone number of someone in the work group who the media can call for more information. Bold lettering, all capital letters or larger font sizes help this information stand out for quick identification.

**Use the inverted pyramid structure.** The easiest method of organizing a press release is an inverted pyramid structure, beginning with general information and giving progressively more specific information in each additional paragraph. Again, the first paragraph should be a statement of the main message of the press release. Remember that the purpose of a press release is not to give the entire story of the event in a single page; rather, the goal should be to convey the most essential information about the event in the fewest, clearest possible words. The last paragraph should be information about the organization releasing the media advisory: the mission statement, the goals of the organization and a repetition of the contact name and/or phone number.

**Give them the basics: Who, what, where, when and why.** Who is organizing the event? Who are some of the main people and groups attending? Who will be speaking at the press conference? What is *Corazón de mi vida*? What kind of activities will take place at the event—a children's parade, a press conference, a safety seat check? Where will it be held? When will the event take place? Why is it important that a *Corazón de mi vida* event is being held? And most important, why is this event newsworthy? All of this information should be worked into every press release sent to the media.



**Ask for confirmation.** At the bottom of the release, ask media to call the contact person to confirm their attendance at the *Corazón de mi vida* press event. During follow-up telephone calls, request confirmation from reporters who have not responded previously. An initial, general press release should first be sent out two weeks in advance of the event. Throughout the following week, updates on speakers, celebrities and other new developments regarding *Corazón de mi vida* can be sent out as well. The week before the event, send out another release as a reminder to the media. Continue sending updates whenever relevant. Information sent during the final week should be followed up with phone calls to each person in the media database, assuring that each media contact has received the information and helping to build a relationship with each contact person.

A final press release should go out the night before or the morning of the event, and should give a precise schedule, places and times for photo “ops” and interviews; information on the location of press tables and where to pick up media passes and press kits; and information on parking for the event. As follow-up, a press release describing the success of the event, giving quotes from the press conference and mentioning the availability of photos should go out as soon as possible.

**Ask partner organizations to get the word out.** Ask each of your partner organizations to prepare and distribute a press release in support of *Corazón de mi vida*. The release should be on their letterhead and should emphasize the importance of *Corazón de mi vida* to children. It should include supportive, substantive statements about why the organization supports this initiative, and should outline what action they plan to take on behalf of children in support of the new holiday. It should also include a quote from the president of the organization praising

and supporting *Corazón de mi vida*. Ask them to include their contact information on the release and distribute it to their own media constituency. These press releases will be included in the *Corazón de mi vida* press kit, so be sure to request additional copies for the kits. Otherwise, the responsibility for making copies for press kits will fall to the media committee members.

## Writing a Public Service Announcement

Although press releases will be used mostly by print media, the information will also be useful to the broadcast media (television and radio). Since broadcast media usually have even less time to cover events than print media, additional preparation of public service announcements (PSAs) for local and national radio and television stations is recommended. PSAs are usually 30 seconds long or less, so state only the basics—who, what, when, where and why. Send PSA scripts to the radio stations listed in the media database, in addition to the regular press releases. Some local public television stations air text-only “community calendars” on a daily basis. Also, local newspapers have “event calendars” and city Web sites. Send them abbreviated versions of the press releases and ask them to run the PSAs on their station. Television PSAs usually require additional time and work because of the visual elements involved. Begin working with television stations several months ahead of time to develop appropriate visual footage and dialogue for *Corazón de mi vida* PSAs.

**Using the wire.** Not everyone creates their own media database to send out press information, although most organizations maintain at least a few main contacts of their own. Most large organizations and major corporations use wire



services to get their press releases to the media. Wire services can send any press release to a number of specific target media constituencies, including national, regional, state or city media, radio or television stations, newspapers, magazines or trade publications. Some wire services can also send photos or sound bites over the wire, which media can pick up and use to augment their stories. Unfortunately, these services are usually expensive, with prices ranging between \$50 (major local newspapers) and \$500 (major nationwide newspapers) each time a press release goes out. If one of the *Corazón de mi vida* partner organizations has an affiliation with a national wire service, ask if they can get a discount or possibly sponsor a *Corazón de mi vida* press release on the wire.

## 2. On-the-Spot Event Coverage

### Creating a Press Kit

In order to be prepared for a press conference, it is important to have all press materials ready for immediate distribution on the morning of the event. Contents of the press kit should be prepared at least one week in advance (except for late-running press releases, which may be added as they go out). Estimate the number of media who will attend based on the number of responses and media confirmations received, and prepare at least five to ten extra press kits and media badges, just



in case. Materials in the *Corazón de mi vida* press kit should include:

- ♥ A copy of each of the press releases prepared
- ♥ A fact sheet on *Corazón de mi vida*, listing the answers to some of the most commonly asked questions
- ♥ A fact sheet with local and national traffic fatality statistics on Latino children and youth
- ♥ A list of partner organizations for the event
- ♥ The name, phone number and e-mail address of a contact person
- ♥ Any relevant copies of press clippings that provide texture to the subject

Send the media personal invitations, VIP passes, guest passes, reserved seating and follow-up. Set up a press table where reporters can sign in and receive badges and press kits.

### Planning a Press Conference

The press conference is the event where live coverage and most interviews are likely to take place—this is the time to shine! It is important to schedule the event at an easy-to-find spacious location with electrical service for microphones and lights.

Remember to arrange for a podium, a podium sign and at least



two microphones placed at the scene at least 30 minutes before the press conference begins. Volunteers may be needed to assist in the preparation for the press conference. Here are some pointers to remember.

**Pick a highly visible spot.** The location of the press conference should be easy to find, with enough space to comfortably accommodate the number of people anticipated. Choose a spot as close as possible to the site of the *Corazón de mi vida* activities. If an outdoor location is chosen, be sure to prepare an alternative location nearby in case of bad weather.



**Limit it to no more than 30 minutes.** The entire press conference should last between 15-30 minutes. Try to keep each speaker's time at the microphone to three minutes or less.

**Check the equipment in advance.** Check all the sound and lighting equipment at least 15 minutes before the press conference begins, and arrange to have at least two microphones on the scene in case of a malfunction.

**Prepare your speakers.** Have a short script or talking points for each of the speakers at the press conference. Include the time and order in which they will speak. Give each speaker their script the day before the press conference to give them time to become familiar with it.

**Prepare a press conference binder.** Organize a three-ring binder that includes a minute-by-minute schedule for the press conference and each of the speaker's scripted remarks, in the correct order. Label the binder clearly with "*Corazón de mi vida* Press Conference" and place it in plain view on the podium. Tell the speakers to feel free to refer to it as needed, but to leave it on the podium for the next person. This will minimize the stress of speaking in front of the cameras and make it easier to answer questions and remember key phrases.

**Put the organization's name out there.** Prepare a podium sign with the name and logo of the sponsoring organization. This will provide a clear image for the cameras and a way to pick up the name and logo.





### 3. Post-Event Coverage

The press conference is over—but the work isn't finished yet! Here are some things to do to maintain media excitement about *Corazón de mi vida*.

- ♥ Send out a follow-up press release describing the success of the event. Include some of the best quotes from the press conference and mention that photos are available upon request.
- ♥ Write a press release to create excitement about the national *Corazón de mi vida* initiative, mentioning the success of the local event.
- ♥ Call the media who attended the event. Work with their editorial boards to create op-ed articles in the following week.
- ♥ Watch for press coverage of the event that evening and the following day. Collect clippings from newspapers and magazines; videotape television coverage. Clipping services are also available for a fee to help collect media coverage of the event. These clippings can be put into a promotional package to send to prospective sponsors for the next event.
- ♥ Follow up immediately with those who didn't show up to the press conference. Deliver a press kit and press release. The fact that a reporter was not at the press conference it does not mean he won't write about the subject. Reporters also appreciate persistence!





## Measuring Success

**T**o improve services it is necessary to continually evaluate the success of any venture and review whether the goals and objectives were met. For instance, if the goal of the event or activity was to inform 20 parents about the importance of child passenger safety, a tally should be kept of how many people received the information.

The following are some questions to ask before the event takes place:

- ♥ What is the goal of the activity or event?
- ♥ What will the children, parents or other adults learn from this activity?
- ♥ What behaviors will be changed or skills learned from the activity?
- ♥ What processes or events need to take place for learning to occur?
- ♥ How can those processes or events be documented?
- ♥ How will the change be measured?

Answering these questions will provide the framework for evaluating the results and measuring the success of every activity.

After the event or activity takes place, answer the following questions:

- ♥ How many families attended?
- ♥ If the event was advertised, where did the families hear about the event?
- ♥ How many parents received hangers and Mini Checklists?

- ♥ Was the venue effective? Was it easy to get there? Was there enough room for the activity?
- ♥ Were people able to hear the presentations? Were there any other distractions that kept people from hearing the message?
- ♥ Were the partners and sponsors helpful? Are there other partners/sponsors that can be added for the next time?
- ♥ Was there media coverage? Was the letter to the editor published?

The information gleaned from the evaluation will help ensure that next time the activity will be even more successful.

### Tracking the Results

Keep a tally of how many families participate, what activities they enjoyed, and if possible, the kinds of questions parents asked about child passenger safety, proper installation of child safety seats, etc. Also, keep an account of how long children spent in each activity. Understanding parents' questions and concerns can help in planning other activities. Finally, observe if the parents' attitudes change as they learn about the importance of properly restraining their children while riding in the car. Observe whether parents are complying with the laws. Are children still fighting parents about staying in the child safety seat? Are more adults wearing seat belts? How many bumper stickers can be seen around town?

Each time an event or activity is held, repeat the evaluation. Compare the results with the previous events to come up with the best formulas for your community in terms of time, place, event, etc.





## Resources

### Moving Kids Safely in Childcare Training Program

Moving Kids Safely in Childcare is a 12-hour training session for childcare providers to become more aware of and prepare to help parents with issues related to child passenger safety.

This is the first national training program developed by the nation's leading childcare professionals. The training is in response to a growing need for all caregivers to become involved with national and local efforts to increase child passenger safety awareness.

The course combines lecture and discussion on passenger safety and parent concerns and a demonstration on safety seat installation. The training provides answers about provider liability, safe transportation practices and guidelines for children in childcare programs. Instructors are required to be NHTSA-Certified Child Safety Seat technicians. In addition, the training provides continuing education credits.

The course is part of the Healthy Child Care America Campaign, which is coordinated by the American Academy of Pediatrics and supported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Bureau and Maternal Child Health Bureau.

### Some key Web sites for information on child passenger and driver safety.

- ♥ Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety Campaign  
[www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)
- ♥ American Academy of Pediatrics  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)
- ♥ Mothers Against Drunk Driving  
[www.madd.org](http://www.madd.org)
- ♥ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)  
[www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)

### Presidential Initiative to Increase Seat Belt Use Nationwide

This initiative is an ambitious safety seat and seat belt effort to save lives, reduce health care costs and prevent fatalities and injuries related to motor vehicle crashes. The goals are to

- ♥ Increase national seat belt use to 85 percent by 2000 and 90 percent by 2005
- ♥ Reduce child occupant fatalities for 0—4-year-olds by 15 percent in 2000 and by 25 percent in 2005

This initiative is proven effective in increasing seat belt and safety seat usage when the following four elements are combined:

- ♥ Building partnerships between public and private sectors
- ♥ Enacting strong legislation on passenger and driver safety
- ♥ Having an active and highly visible enforcement plan
- ♥ Conducting effective public education strategies



# NHTSA Regional Offices

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has ten regional offices that provide numerous services to the states and other public and private sector customers, including technical assistance, promoting legislation, administering the agency's grant programs, assisting in coalition building and delivering training.

## REGION I

(CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)  
Volpe National Transportation Systems Center  
Kendall Square, Code 903  
Cambridge, MA 02142  
Phone: 617/494-3427  
Fax: 617/494-3646

## REGION II

(NY, NJ, PR, VI)  
222 Mamaroneck Avenue, Suite 204  
White Plains, NY 10605  
Phone: 914/682-6162  
Fax: 914/682-6239

## REGION III

(DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV)  
10 South Howard Street, Suite 4000  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: 410/962-0077  
Fax: 410/962-2770

## REGION IV

(AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)  
Atlanta Federal Center  
61 Forsyth Street, Suite 17T30  
Atlanta, GA 30303-3104  
Phone: 404/562-3739  
Fax: 404/562-3763

## REGION V

(IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)  
19900 Governors Drive, Suite 201  
Olympia Fields, IL 60461  
Phone: 708/503-8822  
Fax: 708/503-8991

## REGION VI

(AR, LA, NM, OK, TX, INDIAN NATIONS)  
819 Taylor Street, Room 8A38  
Fort Worth, TX 76102-6177  
Phone: 817/978-3653  
Fax: 817/978-8339

## REGION VII

(IA, KS, MO, NE)  
6301 Rockhill Road, Room 100  
Kansas City, MO 64131  
Phone: 816/822-7233  
Fax: 816/822-2069

## REGION VIII

(CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)  
555 Zang Street, Room 430  
Lakewood, CO 80228  
Phone: 303/969-6917  
Fax: 303/969-6294

## REGION IX

(AZ, CA, HI, NV, AMERICAN SAMOA, GUAM,  
N. MARIANA ISLANDS)  
201 Mission Street, Suite 2230  
San Francisco, CA  
Phone: 415/744-3089  
Fax: 415/744-2532

## REGION X

(AK, ID, OR, WA)  
3140 Jackson Federal Building  
915 Second Street  
Seattle, WA 98174  
Phone: 206/220-7640  
Fax: 206/220-7651



## State Highway Safety Offices

The governors' highway safety representatives manage each state's highway safety program and serve as liaisons between the governor and the highway safety community. They also work closely with NHTSA on the administration of federal highway safety grant programs. These professionals and their staffs are a great resource for all highway safety issues.

### Alabama Law Enforcement/Traffic Safety Division

Dept. of Economic and Community Affairs  
PO Box 5690  
401 Adams Avenue, Suite 580  
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690  
Phone: 334/242-5803 Fax: 334/242-0712

### Alaska Highway Safety Planning Agency

Department of Public Safety  
PO Box 111200  
Juneau, AK 99811-1200  
Phone: 907/465-4374 Fax: 907/463-5860

### American Samoa Department of Public Safety

PO Box 1086  
Pago Pago, AS 96799  
Phone: 011-684-633-1111 Fax: 011-684-633-5111

### Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety

Department of Public Safety  
3030 N. Central St., Suite 1550  
Phoenix, AZ 85012  
Phone: 602/255-3216 Fax: 602/255-1265

### Arkansas Highway Safety Program

Highway and Transportation Department  
PO Box 2261, 11300 Baseline Road  
Little Rock, AR 72203  
Phone: 501/569-2648 Fax: 501/569-2651

### California Office of Traffic Safety

Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency  
7000 Franklin Blvd., Suite 440  
Sacramento, CA 95823  
Phone: 916/262-0990 Fax: 916/262-2960

### Colorado Office of Transportation Safety

Department of Transportation  
Headquarters Complex  
4201 East Arkansas Avenue  
Denver, CO 80222  
Phone: 303/757-9381 Fax: 303/757-9439

### Connecticut Division of Highway Safety

Department of Transportation  
2800 Berlin Tpk., PO Box 317546  
Newington, CT 06131-7546  
Phone: 860/594-2370 Fax: 860/594-2374

### Delaware Office of Highway Safety

Department of Public Safety  
PO Box 1321  
Dover, DE 19903-1321  
Phone: 302/739-3295 Fax: 302/739-5995

### DC Transportation Safety Branch

Department of Public Works  
2000 14th Street, NW, 7th Floor  
Washington, DC 20009  
Phone: 202/939-8018 Fax: 202/939-7185

### Florida Safety Office

Department of Transportation  
605 Suwannee Street, MS 53  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450  
Phone: 904/488-3546 Fax: 904/922-2935

### Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety

One Park Tower  
34 Peachtree Street, Suite 1600  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Phone: 404/656-6996 Fax: 404/651-9107

### Guam Office of Highway Safety

Department of Public Works  
PO Box 2950  
Agana, GU 96910  
Phone: 011-671-646-3211 Fax: 011-671-646-3733

### Hawaii Motor Vehicle Safety Office

Department of Transportation  
1505 Dillingham Blvd., Suite 214  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
Phone: 808/832-5820 Fax: 808/832-5830

### Idaho Office of Highway Safety

Transportation Department  
PO Box 7129, 3311 West State St.  
Boise, ID 83707-1129  
Phone: 208/334-8101 Fax: 208/334-4430

### Illinois Division of Traffic Safety

Department of Transportation  
PO Box 19245  
3215 Executive Park Drive  
Springfield, IL 62794-9245  
Phone: 217/782-4972 Fax: 217/782-9159

### Indian Highway Safety Program

Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Department of the Interior  
505 Marquette, NW, Suite 1705  
Albuquerque, NM 87102-2181  
Phone: 505/248-5053 Fax: 505/248-5064

### Indiana Governor's Council on Impaired and Dangerous Driving

150 West Market Street, Suite 330  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Phone: 317/232-4220 Fax: 317/232-5150



**Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau**

Department of Public Safety  
 307 East Seventh Street  
 Des Moines, IA 50319-0248  
 Phone: 515/281-3907 Fax: 515/281-6190

**Kansas Bureau of Traffic Safety**

Thacher Building, 3rd Floor  
 217 SE 4th Street  
 Topeka, KS 66603-3504  
 Phone: 913/296-3756 Fax: 913/291-3010

**Kentucky Hwy. Safety Standards Branch**

State Police Headquarters  
 919 Versailles Road  
 Frankfort, KY 40601  
 Phone: 502/695-6356 Fax: 502/573-1634

**Louisiana Hwy. Safety Commission**

Department of Public Safety  
 PO Box 66336  
 Baton Rouge, LA 70896  
 Phone: 504/925-6991 Fax: 504/922-0083

**Maine Bureau of Highway Safety**

Department of Public Safety  
 164 State House Station  
 Augusta, ME 04333-0164  
 Phone: 207/624-8756 Fax: 207/624-8768

**Mariana Island Department of Public Safety, CNMI**

PO Box 791  
 Saipan, MP 96950  
 Phone: 670/034-6505 Fax: 670/234-8531

**Maryland Office of Traffic and Safety**

State Highway Administration  
 7491 Connelley Drive  
 Hanover, MD 21076  
 Phone: 410/787-5822 Fax: 410/787-5823

**Massachusetts Governor's Highway Safety Bureau**

100 Cambridge Street, Room 2104  
 Boston, MA 02202  
 Phone: 617/727-5073 Fax: 617/727-5077

**Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning**

4000 Collins Road, PO Box 30633  
 Lansing, MI 48909-8133  
 Phone: 517/333-5291  
 Fax: 517/333-5756

**Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety**

Department of Public Safety  
 Town Square, Suite 150  
 444 Cedar Street  
 St. Paul, MN 55101-2150  
 Phone: 612/296-9507 Fax: 612/297-4844

**Mississippi Office of Highway Safety**

Department of Public Safety  
 PO Box 23039  
 401 North West Street, 8th Floor  
 Jackson, MS 39225-3039  
 Phone: 601/359-7842 Fax: 601/359-7832

**Missouri Division of Highway Safety**

1719 Southridge Drive  
 PO Box 104808  
 Jefferson City, MO 65110-4808  
 Phone: 573/751-7643 Fax: 573/634-5977

**Montana Traffic Safety Bureau**

Department of Transportation  
 2701 Prospect Avenue  
 Helena, MT 59620  
 Phone: 406/444-7301 Fax: 406/444-7303

**Nebraska Office of Highway Safety**

Department of Motor Vehicles  
 PO Box 94612  
 301 Centennial Mall South  
 Lincoln, NE 68509-4789  
 Phone: 402/471-2515 Fax: 402/471-3865

**Nevada Office of Traffic Safety**

Dept. of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety  
 555 Wright Way  
 Carson City, NV 89711-0900  
 Phone: 702/687-3243 Fax: 702/687-5328

**New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency**

Pine Inn Plaza, 117 Manchester St.  
 Concord, NH 03301  
 Phone: 603/271-2131 Fax: 603/271-3790

**New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety**

Department of Law and Public Safety  
 PO Box 048  
 Trenton, NJ 08625-0048  
 Phone: 609/633-9300 Fax: 609/633-9020

**New Mexico Traffic Safety Bureau**

State Hwy. and Transportation Dept.  
 PO Box 1149  
 Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149  
 Phone: 505/827-0429 Fax: 505/827-0431

**New York State Governor's Highway Safety Committee**

Empire State Plaza  
 Swan Street Bldg., Room 521  
 Albany, NY 12228  
 Phone: 518/474-0858 Fax: 518/473-1069

**North Dakota Dept. of Transportation**

608 East Boulevard Avenue  
 Bismarck, ND 58505-0700  
 Phone: 701/328-2601 Fax: 701/328-2435



**Ohio Office of the Governor's Highway Safety Representative**

Department of Public Safety  
PO Box 7167, 240 Parsons Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43205-0167  
Phone: 614/466-7076 Fax: 614/466-0433

**Oklahoma Highway Safety Office**

3223 North Lincoln  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
Phone: 405/521-3314 Fax: 405/524-4906

**Oregon Transportation Safety Section**

Department of Transportation  
555 13th Street, NE  
Salem, OR 97310-1333  
Phone: 503/986-4192 Fax: 503/986-4189

**Pennsylvania Bureau of Highway & Traffic Engineering**

PO Box 2047  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2047  
Phone: 717/787-7350 Fax: 717/783-8012

**Puerto Rico Traffic Safety Commission**

Department of Public Works  
Box 41289, Minillas Station  
Santurce, PR 00940  
Phone: 787/723-3590 Fax: 787/727-0486

**Rhode Island Governor's Office of Highway Safety**

345 Harris Avenue  
Providence, RI 02909  
Phone: 401/277-3024 Fax: 401/277-3942

**South Carolina Office of Safety and Grants**

Department of Public Safety  
5400 Broad River Road  
Columbia, SC 29210  
Phone: 803/896-8391 Fax: 803/896-8393

**South Dakota Office of Highway Safety**

Dept. of Commerce and Regulation  
118 West Capital  
Pierre, SD 57501  
Phone: 605/773-3178 Fax: 605/773-3018

**Tennessee Governor's Highway Safety Program**

Department of Transportation  
505 Deaderick Street, Suite 600  
James K. Polk State Office Bldg.  
Nashville, TN 37243-0341  
Phone: 615/741-7590 Fax: 615/741-9673

**Texas Traffic Operations Division**

Department of Transportation  
125 East 11th Street  
Austin, TX 78701-2483  
Phone: 512/416-3167 Fax: 512/416-3349

**Utah Highway Safety Office**

Department of Public Safety  
411 West, 7200 South, Suite 300  
Midvale, UT 84047-1016  
Phone: 801/225-0573 Fax: 801/225-0823

**Vermont Governor's Highway Safety Program**

Department of Public Safety  
103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, VT 05671-2101  
Phone: 802/244-4126 Fax: 802/244-1106

**Virginia Transportation Safety Office**

Department of Motor Vehicles  
PO Box 27412, 2300 W. Broad St.  
Richmond, VA 23269  
Phone: 804/367-8140 Fax: 804/367-6631

**Virgin Islands Office of Highway Safety**

Governor's Representative  
Lagoon Street Complex, Fredricksted  
St. Croix, VI 00840  
Phone: 809/776-5820 Fax: 809/772-2626

**Washington Traffic Safety Commission**

PO Box 40944, 1000 South Cherry St.  
Olympia, WA 98504-0944  
Phone: 360/753-6197 Fax: 360/586-6489

**West Virginia Governor's Highway Safety Program**

The Miller Building  
2 Hale Street, Suite 100  
Charleston, WV 25301  
Phone: 304/558-8814 Fax: 304/558-0391

**Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety**

Department of Transportation  
PO Box 7936  
4802 Sheboygan Ave., Suite 809  
Madison, WI 53707  
Phone: 608/266-0402 Fax: 608/267-0441

**Wyoming Highway Safety Program**

Transportation Department  
PO Box 1708  
Cheyenne, WY 82003-1708  
Phone: 307/777-4450 Fax: 307/777-4250



