

Toyota and Cincinnati Children's Partner with Children's Health to Launch Buckle Up for Life in North Texas

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Dallas (July 21, 2016) – What if there was a way to help prevent a leading cause of childhood death, but three out of four of us were doing it wrong? The startling truth is that 75 percent of car seats in the U.S. are not used correctly.^[1] Additionally, 78.6% of children inspected at The Safety Source-Injury Prevention Service’s 2013 child passenger safety program at Children’s Medical Center Dallas were riding incorrectly, or worse, arrived at inspection stations unrestrained.^[2]

To help address this, [Toyota](#) and [Cincinnati Children’s](#) have partnered with [Children’s Health](#), the leading pediatric health care system in North Texas, to launch the national education program [Buckle Up for Life](#) in North Texas. During the six week program, trained specialists work closely with parents and caregivers to teach them about all aspects of car seats, booster seats and seat belts. The program is offered in English and Spanish and provides free seats to families in need.

“*Buckle Up for Life* is a great example of how Toyota partners with others to help solve problems in our communities,” said Mike Goss, General Manager, Social Innovation, Toyota Motor North America. “One of our deepest priorities is helping people get to their destinations safely. We know *Buckle Up for Life* helps protect kids and we are excited to share it with families in our new hometown of Plano and in North Texas.”

“According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, automobile crashes are one of the leading causes of accidental death for children,” said Christopher J. Durovich, president and chief executive officer of Children’s Health. “Injury prevention and education are critical components of our mission to make life better for children. The partnership with Toyota and Cincinnati Children’s further extends our care beyond the hospital walls – teaching families about proper car seat safety with the ultimate goal of preventing unnecessary injury.”

Children’s Health joins leading children’s hospitals across the country that have offered *Buckle Up for Life*. The program has reached more than 30,000 people in 16 cities, including New York, Memphis, Phoenix, Chicago, Cincinnati, Houston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Orange County, and San Antonio – and expands to new cities each year. Toyota has provided funding for over 40,000 car seats for families in need.

“For some people, car seats aren’t always the easiest things to figure out – from choosing the right one to making sure the straps are tight enough,” said Gloria Del Castillo, child passenger safety expert at Cincinnati Children’s and senior outreach specialist for *Buckle Up for Life*. “But in some situations, a properly installed seat can mean the difference between life and death in a crash. That’s why *Buckle Up for Life* is so important. Our children deserve no less.”

Buckle Up for Life was created by Toyota and Cincinnati Children’s in 2004. In one city alone, the program nearly tripled the use of proper car seats among participating families. Community organizations that have offered the program say they have observed a marked improvement in participants’ auto safety behaviors, including:

- The average rate of children unrestrained in cars decreased from one in four to fewer than one in 20;
- The average rate of children in car seats increased from roughly one in four to one in two; and
- The use of seat belts by adults increased by an average of 13 percent, from 68 percent to 81 percent.

For more information about *Buckle Up for Life*, please visit www.buckleupforlife.org.

[1] National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/LATCH>

[2] Injury Prevention Service, Children’s Medical Center & Department of Pediatrics, UT Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas Texas