



VERMONT

Occupant Protection Program Assessment

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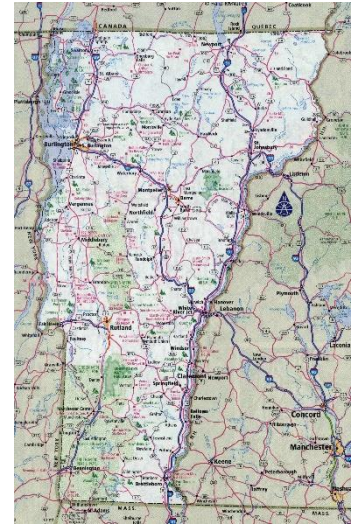
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INTRODUCTION

Vermont is the sixth smallest state in the nation by area, consisting of 9,616 square miles. It is one of the least populated states, with the United States Census Bureau estimating the population of Vermont to be at 623,989 (July 1, 2019), a 0.3 percent decrease from 2010. Vermont ranks 31st in the nation in terms of population density with 68.0 people per square mile. Vermont has 14 counties and none with a population greater than 50,000. Burlington is the largest city with a population of 42,417.



In 2019, there were 36,096 motor vehicle-related fatalities in traffic crashes across the United States. Although the observed daytime seat belt use rate for the United States overall in 2019 was 90.7 percent, almost half of all passenger vehicle occupant fatalities (47%) were unrestrained. The lack of proper restraint use therefore remains a serious highway safety, public health, and societal issue. This is true in Vermont where in 2019, there were 15 unrestrained passenger fatalities, which accounts for 48 percent of all fatal crashes.

The Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO) is a section within the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and coordinates the statewide behavioral highway safety program making effective use of federal and state highway safety funds and other resources to save lives and reduce injuries on the State's roads. In FY 2019, the VSHSO managed about 100 projects throughout the State targeting traffic safety efforts for impaired driving, occupant protection (OP), speed, traffic records, distracted driving, youth initiatives, and public awareness.

OP is the foundation of any sound traffic safety program, and increased seat belt use can provide reductions in fatalities and injuries. Using a seat belt properly is the single most effective thing people can do to protect themselves in a crash. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that 28 lives were saved by seat belts in Vermont in 2017. An additional seven lives could have been saved if everyone in the state buckled up.

Per the State seat belt use survey, the seat belt use rate fell from 89.3 percent in 2019 to 88.8 percent in 2020. Vermont has a secondary enforcement seat belt law for adults in passenger vehicles. However, of the 15 states in the country with secondary seat belt laws, Vermont had the fifth highest seat belt use rate in 2020.

This report presents the results of an assessment of the OP component of Vermont's highway safety program. The VSHSO elected to undergo this assessment to get an outside perspective and review of the challenges the State is facing to increase seat belt and child restraint use throughout the State, and to receive innovative ideas and approaches from the assessment team of subject matter experts to improve OP use rates. This report provides a summary of the strengths and challenges of Vermont's OP program and presents recommendations to continue to improve OP in the State.

The highlighted key recommendations in this report are recommendations the Assessment Team found to be the most crucial for improving the State's OP program. While Vermont has multiple initiatives in place to improve its program, there is always room for growth. All recommendations presented in this report are intended to help increase restraint use and decrease unrestrained fatalities and injuries statewide.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The assessment team would like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of all the statewide partners, advocates, and stakeholders who took the time to contribute their knowledge and expertise during the assessment.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Vermont's Secretary of Transportation and Governor's Highway Safety Representative, Joe Flynn; Director of the Operations and Safety Bureau Joshua Schultz; State Highway Safety Office Administrator, Allison Laflamme; Program Coordinators James Baraw, Susan McAvoy, and Rachel Noyes; Administrative Services Manager Danielle Record; and Law Enforcement Liaisons Paul White and Bill Jenkins, for their support, level of effort, and commitment to occupant protection in Vermont. Special thanks go to Mr. Baraw and Ms. McAvoy for their support in developing the assessment agenda, administering the information questionnaires, compiling briefing materials, and providing logistical support to the team.

The team would also like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of representatives from the Vermont State Police, the Vermont Agency of Transportation, the Vermont Highway Safety Alliance, the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles, the Vermont Department of Health, local law enforcement, emergency medical services, and many others who volunteered their time to share their knowledge and expertise during the assessment. A special thanks goes to everyone committed to saving lives on the Green Mountain State's roads and highways.

This assessment benefitted from the guidance of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration headquarters and regional staff: Laura Dunn and Aleigh Jerome, with support from their respective supervisors, Occupant Protection Chief Marietta Bowen and Regional Administrator Art Kinsman and Deputy Regional Administrator Gabriel J. Cano.

Special recognition and appreciation also goes to Laura Nichols for her able assistance throughout the assessment process and in producing this report.

Each member of the team appreciates the opportunity to have served on this assessment and hopes that consideration and implementation of the proposed recommendations will enable Vermont to continue to improve its occupant protection program.

Notes:

The information included in this document has been collected from a variety of sources including interviews, official documents, websites, and other materials. Sources may not be consistent. Some copyrighted material has been used under the "Fair Use" Doctrine of the US copyright statute.

ASSESSMENT BACKGROUND

All states, in cooperation with their political subdivisions, should have a comprehensive occupant protection (OP) program that educates and motivates its citizens to use available motor vehicle OP systems. A combination of use requirements, enforcement, public information, education, and outreach is necessary to achieve significant, lasting increases in seat belt and child restraint use, which will prevent fatalities and decrease the number and severity of injuries.

The purpose of the OP Program Assessment is to provide Vermont with an extensive review of its statewide OP program through the identification of programmatic strengths and accomplishments, the identification of challenge areas, and recommendations for enhancement or improvement. The assessment is intended to serve as a tool for OP program planning, development, and implementation purposes, and for making decisions about how to best prioritize programs and use available resources.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) headquarters and regional office staff facilitated this OP Program Assessment. Working with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO), NHTSA recommended a team of five individuals with demonstrated subject matter expertise in the areas of Program Management; Legislation, Regulation, and Policy; Law Enforcement; Communication; Occupant Protection for Children; Outreach; and Data and Evaluation. The assessment team conducted the assessment process based on the *Uniform Guidelines for State Highway Safety Programs, Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 20, Occupant Protection* (November 2006). The U.S. Department of Transportation developed the guidelines in collaboration with states to support technical guidance for the states. The assessment follows the guidelines and each section of this report reflects this guiding document.

The assessment consisted of a thorough review of State-provided OP program briefing materials and interviews with state and community-level program directors, coordinators, advocates, traffic safety partners, law enforcement personnel, and VSHSO staff. The team convened to review and analyze the information presented, noting the OP program's strengths and challenges, as well as recommendations for improvement. The recommendations provided are based on the unique characteristics of the State and what the assessment team members believe Vermont and its partners could do to improve the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of their OP activities. The conclusions drawn by the assessment team are based upon, and limited by, the facts and information provided in the briefing materials and by the various stakeholders who presented information to the assessment team.

This assessment report is a consensus report. The assessment team recognizes the commendable and committed work conducted throughout Vermont in the area of OP. It is not the intent of this report to thoroughly document all of these successes, nor to give credit to the large number of individuals at all levels who are dedicated to traffic safety. By its very nature, this report focuses on areas that need improvement. The report should not be viewed as criticism. Rather, it is an opportunity to provide assistance and encourage improvement, which is consistent with the overall goals of traffic safety program assessments.

On the final day of the assessment, the team briefed the VSHSO on the results of the assessment and discussed major points and recommendations. This report belongs to the VSHSO; it is not a NHTSA-owned document. The VSHSO may use this assessment report as the basis for planning OP program improvements, assessing legislative priorities, providing for additional training, and evaluating funding priorities. The final report is provided to the VSHSO and NHTSA.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- **Establish a process to proactively renew the contractual employees of the Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO) on a regular basis. This will ensure continuity of outreach programs that provide significant benefit to the VSHSO and their highway safety partners.**

2. LEGISLATION/REGULATION AND POLICY

- **Upgrade Vermont’s adult seat belt law to allow primary enforcement, consistent with the child restraint law. Alternatively, remove the requirement to issue a citation for the violation that prompted the traffic stop.**

3. LAW ENFORCEMENT

- **Revise law enforcement agency seat belt use policies to reflect mandatory use of occupant restraint systems at all times without exceptions for exigent circumstances with administrative sanctions for noncompliance.**
- **Address the apparent disconnect between the availability of electronic citation capability throughout the State and the large number of paper citations being delivered to the Judicial Bureau for entry into the statewide database.**

4. COMMUNICATION

- **Develop and make available a series of standardized earned media materials (talking points, social media templates, letters to the editor, etc.) for use by stakeholders and partners to support the State’s occupant protection programs at the local level. Tie these materials to the “Drive Well Vermont” tagline to enhance Vermont’s strategy to promote positive messaging to change behavior.**
- **Ensure specific occupant protection messaging is included as part of the “Drive Well Vermont” communications strategy, to better evaluate the effectiveness of the occupant protection portion of that strategy.**

5. OCCUPANT PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN

- **Enhance the Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Law to include mandated appropriate child restraint systems for children. A well-crafted CPS law should include the following elements:**
 - **Children should be correctly restrained in a child restraint system appropriate for their age, weight, and height until age 13.**

- **Children should remain in rear-facing child restraints, used according to manufacturer instructions, for as long as possible and to the uppermost weight and height limit of the child restraint but to a minimum of age two.**
 - **Children should remain in child restraint systems with a harness and used according to manufacturer instructions, for as long as possible.**
 - **Children should remain in a booster seat or child restraint system until they are tall enough to fit into vehicle seat belt systems according to vehicle manufacturer instructions.**
 - **Children should be correctly restrained in appropriate child restraint systems in the rear seat of vehicles until age 13 if possible.**
 - **The number of child passengers should be limited to the number of seating positions with available seat belts.**
 - **Children should be prohibited from riding in the cargo area of pickup trucks.**
 - **No exemption for trucks or vans that exceed 6,500 pounds gross vehicle weight.**
 - **No exemptions for vehicles owned by childcare providers, school systems, churches, and private busses.**
 - **No exemptions for rideshare vehicles, including taxis and all other passenger vehicles for hire.**
- **Support and prioritize the implementation of child passenger safety-focused outreach for law enforcement officers to include continuing education and reference cards that provide an easy explanation of the child passenger safety law and best practice recommendations.**

6. OUTREACH PROGRAM

- **Develop a relationship with State-level leaders of ‘non-traditional’ stakeholder organizations that represent the State’s target audience (e.g., Future Farmers of America, 4-H clubs, National Organizations for Youth Safety) and enlist their support for programs that affect their membership. Use these leaders as a conduit for local affiliates to become engaged in supporting local traffic safety programs, and their members as informal focus groups to ensure that materials developed will resonate with these target audiences.**
- **Design outreach training subgrant request for proposals to include outcome measures (pre-post testing, observational surveys, etc.) to capture changes in knowledge and behavior of the participants to determine the effectiveness of those programs.**

7. DATA AND EVALUATION

- **Conduct a statewide observational child restraint survey. Analyze and share the available misuse data to estimate a surrogate state usage rate.**
- **Solicit attitudinal survey responses from the entire Vermont population and focus the media campaign recognition questions to each branded program.**

1. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

GUIDELINE:

Each state should have centralized program planning, implementation and coordination to achieve and sustain high rates of seat belt use. Evaluation is also important for determining progress and ultimate success of occupant protection programs.

- *Provide leadership, training and technical assistance to other State agencies and local occupant protection programs and projects;*
- *Establish and convene an occupant protection advisory task force or coalition to organize and generate broad-based support for programs. The coalition should include agencies and organizations that are representative of the State's demographic composition and critical to the implementation of occupant protection initiatives;*
- *Integrate occupant protection programs into community/corridor traffic safety and other injury prevention programs; and*
- *Evaluate the effectiveness of the State's occupant protection program.*

1A. STRENGTHS

- The Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO) operates within the Agency of Transportation's (AOT or VTrans) Highway Division's Operations and Safety Bureau.
- The VSHSO is a leading partner in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the State's *Strategic Highway Safety Plan* (SHSP). Occupant protection (OP) is currently included as one of seven critical emphasis areas of the SHSP.
- The OP strategies that have been selected for the SHSP include:
 - Raise awareness of the importance of using seat belts and OP for all users;
 - Increase enforcement and strengthen seat belt laws;
 - Increase proper use and installation of child restraints;
 - Strengthen child restraint use laws;
 - Implement programs for consistent education for a wide range of stakeholders including motorists, parents, and schools;
 - Implement programs that target at-risk demographics (such as 21-35 year-old males);
 - Continue education and outreach for vulnerable users (pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists); and
 - Implement programs for OP use on busses.
- The VSHSO receives most of its funding from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. In addition, the VSHSO has oversight and administration of designated State funds specifically obligated for salary support. Vermont consistently obligates 100 percent of their allocated 405b funding annually.

- The Vermont Highway Safety Alliance (VHSA) is a network of private and public organizations and a key partner in the development of highway safety strategies that integrate road engineering and infrastructure, law enforcement, emergency medical services, and education and outreach – the four Es of highway safety. VHSA conducts an annual Highway Safety Conference highlighting the State’s highway safety efforts.
- The HS802 task force focuses on a variety of highway safety efforts and serves as the statewide OP task force.
- Since the last assessment, the VSHSO developed the Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System (GEARS), an electronic management tool for the State’s highway safety grants. This is a notable improvement over the previous paper-based system and significantly streamlines the grant application, review, and evaluation processes allowing VSHSO staff to devote more time to program management activities.
- The VSHSO contracts with two Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs) to support its enforcement campaigns and activities. The use of contracted personnel enhances the VSHSO’s ability to conduct their highway safety programs.
- The VSHSO utilizes statewide crash data to support problem identification activities for grant proposals. Vermont crash data is also used to establish the performance measures used for the State’s SHSP and Highway Safety Plan (HSP).
- Vermont’s most recent three-year average (2018-2020) observed seat belt use rate was 89.3 percent, which reflects a record high use for the State.
- The strategies included in the State’s HSP to increase OP are directly associated with the strategies in the State’s SHSP.
- Despite the restrictions imposed by the State’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Vermont successfully conducted a modified 10-day *Click It or Ticket* media campaign in May 2020. In addition to the media efforts, 39 law enforcement agencies were able to participate. The annual OP use observation survey was also conducted during the summer. While the survey was not able to be conducted in conjunction with the media campaign, it provided valuable information on the use of seat belts in Vermont during a time of reduced travel.
- The VSHSO is comprised of a small staff of highly motivated individuals committed to reducing traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities on Vermont roadways. Duties for each program area are divided among the staff which fosters a strong cooperative working relationship within the office and with their primary highway safety partners.
- The Vermont Department of Health coordinates the child passenger safety technicians and car seat distribution in conjunction with multiple partners across the State.

- Vermont's 2021 HSP has established goals pertaining to OP:
 - decrease unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities 5.5 percent from the five-year average of 22 in 2013-2017 to a five-year average of 21 by December 31, 2020; and
 - maintain or increase the statewide observed seat belt use of front seat outboard occupants in passenger vehicles at or above the five-year average of 86.8 percent (2013-2017) by December 31, 2020.
- The annual statewide seat belt survey was redesigned in 2018 and is conducted according to the federal methodology.
- As a condition of the VSHSO's grant awards, grantees are required to have and implement a written seat belt use policy for their employees.

1B. CHALLENGES

- The VSHSO operates with a small number of staff, requiring each person to carry multiple responsibilities.
- The 2020 observed seat belt use rate for pick-up trucks was 76.2 percent. This was lower than the previous year's use rate of 79.0 percent and well below the State average of 88.8 percent.
- The VSHSO's organizational placement requires additional coordination within VTrans. This is especially true regarding OP media campaigns and communication efforts, given restrictions on media campaign funding.
- As contractual employees, VSHSO's LEL program is contingent upon successful navigation of the State's procurement process on a regular basis which may hamper smooth continuity of the program.
- The most recent driver behavior survey (2018) indicated that over one-third of respondents were unsure of the age that the law requires a child to remain in a car seat. Additionally, just over one-half of respondents (56.6%) indicated that the chances of getting a seat belt ticket were very or somewhat likely.
- VSHSO has not developed an outcome performance measure to evaluate the impact of child passenger safety efforts.

1C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish an outcome performance measure related to proper installation of child restraints in Vermont.
- **Establish a process to proactively renew the contractual employees of the Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO) on a regular basis. This will ensure continuity of outreach programs that provide significant benefit to the VSHSO and their highway safety partners.**

2. LEGISLATION/REGULATION AND POLICY

GUIDELINE:

Each state should enact and vigorously enforce primary enforcement occupant protection use laws. Each state should develop public information programs to provide clear guidance to the motoring public concerning motor vehicle occupant protection systems. This legal framework should include:

- *Legislation permitting primary enforcement that requires all motor vehicle occupants to use systems provided by the vehicle manufacturer;*
- *Legislation permitting primary enforcement that requires that children birth to 16 years old (or the State's driving age) be properly restrained in an appropriate child restraint system (i.e., certified by the manufacturer to meet all applicable Federal safety standards) or seat belt;*
- *Legislation permitting primary enforcement that requires children under 13 years old to be properly restrained in the rear seat (unless all available rear seats are occupied by younger children);*
- *Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws that include three stages of licensure, and that place restrictions and sanctions on high-risk driving situations for novice drivers (i.e., nighttime driving restrictions, passenger restrictions, zero tolerance, required seat belt use);*
- *Regulations requiring employees and contractors at all levels of government to wear seat belts when traveling on official business;*
- *Official policies requiring that organizations receiving Federal highway safety program grant funds develop and enforce an employee seat belt use policy; and*
- *Outreach to state insurance commissioners to encourage them to persuade insurers to offer incentives to policyholders who use seat belts and child restraints. Insurance commissioners are likely to have significant influence with insurers that write policies in their states.*

2A. STRENGTHS

- Although Vermont's seat belt law includes a secondary enforcement component, the law does incorporate elements designed to increase seat belt use, such as: requiring drivers and all passengers in all seating positions to wear a properly fastened safety restraint at all times while the vehicle is in motion; progressively higher fines for each subsequent offense, up to three offenses; and primary enforcement of the seat belt law for those driving commercial vehicles.
- Vermont's child restraint law allows primary enforcement and includes several components to support the correct and consistent use of child restraint seats, including:
 - rear facing seats must be used at least until age one and for all children under twenty pounds and shall not be placed in front of an air bag;

- a child over 20 pounds and between the ages of one and seven shall be seated in a child restraint seat;
 - a child between the ages of eight and 17 years shall be restrained in a seat belt or child restraint seat; and
 - fines are progressively higher for each subsequent offense, up to three offenses.
- Vermont has a Graduated Driver Licensing law that includes three stages of licensure: a learner's license; a Junior license; and a full privilege license. Violations of the State's texting law, a speeding violation resulting in a three-point assessment, and other specified violations may result in a 90-day recall of the learner's permit or Junior operator's license.
 - Questions regarding seat belt use are included on the State's driver attitude and awareness surveys.
 - Legislation enabling primary enforcement of Vermont's adult seat belt law is introduced during each legislative session and is overwhelmingly supported by the House of Representatives.

2B. CHALLENGES

- The State does not allow primary enforcement of the adult seat belt law.
- Enforcement of the secondary adult vehicle occupant law requires officers to stop the vehicle for another offense. To issue a seat belt citation, the officer must also write a citation for the primary offense resulting in the stop. This requirement has a detrimental effect on the issuance of seat belt citations.
- The political climate in Vermont does not fully support legislative initiatives to enhance OP laws that might be considered an infringement on individual rights.
- Despite the progressive fines, penalties for an initial violation of the State's OP laws are exceptionally low: \$25 for a violation of the child passenger safety (CPS) law and \$25 for a violation of the seat belt law.
- Vermont's seat belt law includes seven exceptions to the adult seat belt requirement including persons making frequent stops provided the speed of the motor vehicle does not exceed 15 miles per hour, emergency personnel, and occupants of taxis and busses.

- Vermont’s child passenger safety (CPS) law has several components that diminish the law’s ability to best protect children traveling on the State’s roadways, as follows:
 - The law does not require children under the age of 13 to sit in the rear seat when rear seat positions are available.
 - The law provides an exemption for vehicles regularly used to transport passengers for hire.
- Vermont’s learner’s permit and Junior license law has several components that diminish the law’s ability to best protect teens driving on Vermont’s roadways, as follows:
 - The learner’s permit may be issued at 15 years as opposed to the more standard age of 16 years.
 - Just 40 hours of supervised driving is required as opposed to model legislation’s requirement of 70 hours of supervised driving.
 - The Junior license can be issued at 16 years and passenger restrictions are lifted after holding a Junior license for six months.
 - There are no restrictions on nighttime driving. Model legislation calls for nighttime driving restrictions to begin at 10 P.M.
- The collective feeling among OP partners throughout the State is that there is little political will to address the secondary component of the seat belt law legislatively at this time.
- Violation of the State’s seat belt law will not result in the recall of a learner’s permit or Junior license.
- Of Vermont’s three neighboring states, only one (New York) benefits from a primary enforceable seat belt law. Massachusetts has a secondary law and New Hampshire is the only state in the nation with no adult seat belt law.
- There are no restrictions in Vermont for transporting passengers of any age in the open cargo bed of a pick-up truck.

2C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Upgrade Vermont’s adult seat belt law to allow primary enforcement, consistent with the child restraint law. Alternatively, remove the requirement to issue a citation for the violation that prompted the traffic stop.**
- Enhance the Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Law to include mandated appropriate child restraint systems for children. A well-crafted CPS law should include the following elements:
 - Children should be correctly restrained in a child restraint system appropriate for their age, weight, and height until age 13.

- Children should remain in rear-facing child restraints, used according to manufacturer instructions, for as long as possible and to the uppermost weight and height limit of the child restraint but to a minimum of age two.
 - Children should remain in child restraint systems with a harness and used according to manufacturer instructions, for as long as possible.
 - Children should remain in a booster seat or child restraint system until they are tall enough to fit into vehicle seat belt systems according to vehicle manufacturer instructions.
 - Children should be correctly restrained in appropriate child restraint systems in the rear seat of vehicles until age 13 if possible.
 - The number of child passengers should be limited to the number of seating positions with available seat belts.
 - Children should be prohibited from riding in the cargo area of pickup trucks.
 - No exemption for trucks or vans that exceed 6,500 pounds gross vehicle weight.
 - No exemptions for vehicles owned by childcare providers, school systems, churches, and private busses.
 - No exemptions for rideshare vehicles, including taxis and all other passenger vehicles for hire.
- Continue to emphasize how seat belts save lives and money when educating the public, community partners, stakeholders, and legislators about the importance of a primary seat belt law. Include information regarding the economic costs of crashes to the citizens of the State, the number of lives that could be saved and serious injuries that could be prevented, and the impact on family and community.
 - Enhance Vermont’s learner’s permit and Junior license law by enacting the following:
 - Increase supervised driving time to a minimum of 70 hours.
 - Increase the age when a learner’s permit is issued to 16 years of age.
 - Implement nighttime driving restrictions for the Junior license program.

3. LAW ENFORCEMENT

GUIDELINE:

Each State should conduct frequent, high-visibility law enforcement efforts, coupled with communication strategies, to increase seat belt and child safety seat use. Essential components of a law enforcement program should include:

- *Written, enforced seat belt use policies for law enforcement agencies with sanctions for noncompliance to protect law enforcement officers from harm and for officers to serve as role models for the motoring public;*
- *Vigorous enforcement of seat belt and child safety seat laws, including citations and warnings;*
- *Accurate reporting of occupant protection system information on police crash report forms, including seat belt and child safety seat use or non-use, restraint type, and airbag presence and deployment;*
- *Communication campaigns to inform the public about occupant protection laws and related enforcement activities;*
- *Routine monitoring of citation rates for non-use of seat belts and child safety seats;*
- *Use of National Child Passenger Safety Certification (basic and in-service) for law enforcement officers;*
- *Utilization of Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs), for activities such as promotion of national and local mobilizations and increasing law enforcement participation in such mobilizations and collaboration with local chapters of police groups and associations that represent diverse groups (e.g., NOBLE, HAPCOA) to gain support for enforcement efforts.*

3A. STRENGTHS

- Vermont has a primary enforcement seat belt and child passenger safety (CPS) law for all vehicle occupants up to age 18.
- The Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO) engages with all but a few of the smaller law enforcement agencies as grantees for traffic safety grants, including occupant protection (OP).
- Four regional Traffic Safety Coordinators (TSC) have been established to coordinate multiple sub-grantees for the VSHSO for OP and other traffic safety priorities. This structure is extremely efficient and is a good use of VSHSO resources.
- The VSHSO has developed the Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System (GEARS) for tracking grantee activity and uses that tool to evaluate performance. In addition, they conduct regular site visits to review progress with all primary grantees. The TSCs are responsible for monitoring their sub-grantees' activity and performance.

- OP enforcement is encouraged by the VSHSO throughout the year, not just during *Click It or Ticket* (CIOT) mobilizations. Multi-agency, cooperative enforcement is the norm in Vermont, not the exception.
- Vermont law enforcement agencies partner with New York and New Hampshire law enforcement agencies on an annual Border to Border OP enforcement initiative during CIOT that includes targeted media and press conference efforts.
- Vermont is currently using two separate electronic (E)-citation systems, Spillman and Valcour, that have been integrated into approximately 80 percent of all Vermont law enforcement agencies. In the future, Vermont intends to transition to the Valcour system for a single, statewide, E-citation program. Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) capability is planned to be part of this transition.
- A statewide citation database for both citations and convictions is available via the Vermont Judicial Bureau. Reports are provided quarterly to the VSHSO or upon request.
- Vermont has a uniform crash report that is completed by law enforcement and the public in both paper and electronic versions. This report does include seat belt and child restraint use or non-use (including proper/improper use), restraint type, and airbag presence and deployment.
- The VSHSO provides CIOT messaging to grantees for their use. Media outreach efforts are reviewed by the VSHSO as part of their regular site visits. A formal press conference is hosted by the VSHSO prior to each CIOT mobilization period.
- Innovative efforts to engage the media by grantees is encouraged by the VSHSO. Examples of these efforts include CIOT messaging on semi-truck trailers and selecting unique locations for press conferences (a ferry between New York and Vermont, church graveyards, etc.)
- The VSHSO recently hosted social media training for 60 law enforcement agencies put on by the U.S. Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Institute.
- Law enforcement agencies track OP enforcement as part of their ongoing performance appraisal reviews for their road patrol officers.
- Vermont has approximately 50 law enforcement officers trained as CPS technicians distributed at the state, county, and local levels. There are 15 fitting stations located at law enforcement agencies.
- Vermont Sheriff Departments are heavily represented in all aspects of CPS and driver education training in the state and are law enforcement leaders on these issues.

- A two and a half hour CPS familiarization block was added to the basic police training curriculum for each new cohort at the Vermont Police Academy in 2016. “Below 100” training is also received at each basic training academy.
- The VSHSO has established contracts for two Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs). These LELs are experienced, committed, and highly respected retired law enforcement professionals that are integral to the overall success of every traffic safety program administered by the VSHSO. They are constantly engaged with all grantees and coordinate both enforcement and media campaigns for CIOT mobilizations. They regularly meet and confer with the Vermont Association of Chiefs of Police and Vermont Sheriffs’ Association to further advance VSHSO traffic safety objectives.

3B. CHALLENGES

- The Vermont adult OP law is a secondary enforcement law. Perhaps unique in the United States, this law mandates that an officer cite for the primary violation that resulted in the traffic stop before being permitted to cite for the secondary OP violation. This significantly impacts the likelihood that officers will add an OP violation to the original violation cited, primarily due to the additional cost to the motorist that is perceived as an unreasonable burden.
- The Vermont adult OP law carves out many exceptions for mandatory seat belt use, including if “emergency personnel of an emergency motor vehicle...finds it necessary to be unrestrained in order to perform his or her duties.” This has resulted in individual seat belt use policies at the state, county and local levels for law enforcement agencies that do not mandate seat belt use at all times while operating law enforcement vehicles.
- A review of the VSHSO CIOT enforcement data revealed, overall, a large number of traffic stops were made by law enforcement officers with relatively few traffic citations issued, including for OP violations.
- An ongoing shortage of law enforcement officers in Vermont directly impacts the enforcement of OP and other traffic safety priorities.
- While nighttime seat belt enforcement (NTSBE) is noted as an objective in the Vermont Highway Safety Plan, there is little evidence that NTSBE is encouraged or tracked by the VSHSO as part of grantee performance monitoring.

- While a comprehensive E-citation system appears to be largely in place for Vermont, the Judicial Bureau advised that less than 25 percent of citations they receive are in an electronic format. Most are still received in paper format which requires extensive data entry by their staff. There is a disconnect between the reported use of the current E-citation enforcement system(s) and what is ultimately sent to the Judicial Bureau for data entry into their system.
- There is no standardized CPS in-service training for Vermont law enforcement officers. This includes CPS informational materials provided to law enforcement on CPS issues they face on the road.
- There is a shortage of CPS technicians in some regions of the State.
- The VSHSO LELs are bi-annually allocated contracted positions within State government. There are two additional one-year options to renew them, for a total of four years max. There is no certainty that these contracts will be extended beyond that time.
- The two LELs are not certified as CPS Technicians.
- Vermont does not engage in Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS) training for their law enforcement agencies.

3C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Revise law enforcement agency seat belt use policies to reflect mandatory use of occupant restraint systems at all times without exceptions for exigent circumstances with administrative sanctions for noncompliance.**
- Track nighttime seat belt enforcement efforts by grantees to better align with the stated objective in the Highway Safety Plan.
- **Address the apparent disconnect between the availability of electronic citation capability throughout the State and the large number of paper citations being delivered to the Judicial Bureau for entry into the statewide database.**
- Develop and distribute standardized in-service training and educational materials on child passenger safety for law enforcement officers.
- Establish a process to proactively renew the Law Enforcement Liaison contracts for the Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO) on a regular basis. This will ensure continuity of law enforcement programs that provide significant benefit to the VSHSO and their highway safety partners.

- Consider training the Law Enforcement Liaisons as child passenger safety (CPS) technicians to better inform them on issues associated with CPS.
- Explore the implementation of Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS) training for law enforcement agencies.

4. COMMUNICATION

GUIDELINE:

As part of each State's communication program, the State should enlist the support of a variety of media, including mass media, to improve public awareness and knowledge and to support enforcement efforts to about seat belts, air bags, and child safety seats. To sustain or increase rates of seat belt and child safety seat use, a well-organized effectively managed communication program should:

- *Identify specific audiences (e.g., low belt use, high-risk motorists) and develop messages appropriate for these audiences;*
- *Address the enforcement of the State's seat belt and child passenger safety laws; the safety benefits of regular, correct seat belt (both manual and automatic) and child safety seat use; and the additional protection provided by air bags;*
- *Continue programs and activities to increase the use of booster seats by children who have outgrown their toddler seats but who are still too small to safely use the adult seat belts;*
- *Capitalize on special events, such as nationally recognized safety and injury prevention weeks and local enforcement campaigns;*
- *Provide materials and media campaigns in more than one language as necessary;*
- *Use national themes and materials;*
- *Participate in national programs to increase seat belt and child safety seat use and use law enforcement as the State's contribution to obtaining national public awareness through concentrated, simultaneous activity;*
- *Utilize paid media, as appropriate;*
- *Publicize seat belt use surveys and other relevant statistics;*
- *Encourage news media to report seat belt use and non-use in motor vehicle crashes;*
- *Involve media representatives in planning and disseminating communication campaigns;*
- *Encourage private sector groups to incorporate seat belt use messages into their media campaigns;*
- *Utilize and involve all media outlets: television, radio, print, signs, billboards, theaters, sports events, health fairs;*
- *Evaluate all communication campaign efforts.*

4A. STRENGTHS

- State data has been used to identify the target audience for its occupant protection (OP) media as 18-35 year-old males and, specifically, pickup truck operators.
- The Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO) follows the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) annual calendar of events when planning its communications campaigns, including those targeting OP and child passenger safety. The VSHSO uses NHTSA's Traffic Safety Marketing webpages for campaign materials to support its OP programs.

- Even though Vermont is a secondary law State, it does employ the national *Click It or Ticket* (CIOT) tag line during the national CIOT high visibility enforcement (HVE) mobilization.
- There is a collaborative working relationship between VSHSO staff and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Public Outreach Manager in planning and implementing OP communications programs.
- VTrans includes OP as one of its critical emphasis areas in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan and, through the Vermont Highway Safety Alliance (VHSA), engages a number of organizations having an interest in traffic safety to support the State’s OP goals. It routinely employs social media to inform stakeholders and partners on a variety of topics.
- The VSHSO periodically conducts a *Governor’s Highway Safety Program Study*, designed to survey a sample of Vermont’s driving population on their awareness and attitudes toward a number of the State’s traffic safety programs, including OP. The most recent survey was conducted in 2018.
- The VSHSO CIOT Task Force leaders and Law Enforcement Liaisons participate in a number of media events related to the HVE mobilizations, using earned media (press events, social media postings, local interviews, etc.) to augment the enforcement taking place.
- While the VSHSO does not require that law enforcement sub-grantees conduct any earned media before, during, or after a CIOT HVE mobilization, it does recommend the use of earned media and provides materials to its sub-grantees for their use. There is evidence that sub-grantees include examples of earned media in their progress reports.
- Law enforcement agencies routinely report seat belt use/non-use to the media, when known, in serious or fatal motor vehicle collisions.
- The Vermont Department of Health CPS webpage www.beseatsmart.org is attractive, provides a wealth of information, and is easy to navigate. Included are materials in six languages other than English to reach the State’s non-English speaking residents.
- A new communications strategy/tag line was unveiled in January 2021, “Drive Well Vermont,” which is intended to serve as the overarching umbrella to recognize and encourage good driving behaviors through positive messaging.
- The VSHSO recently hosted social media training for 60 law enforcement agencies put on by the U.S. Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Institute.

4B. CHALLENGES

- As evidenced in the *Governor's Highway Safety Program Study*, there has been a substantial decrease in the percentage of those “hearing, reading, or seeing messages about seat belt enforcement” from 2017 (76.6 %) to 2018 (69.0 %), suggesting that the messages are not being delivered with sufficient frequency to reach the intended audience. Further, the study does not separate program areas (impaired driving, OP, speed, etc.) in questions regarding “Sources of Information” (e.g., television, signs, radio, social media). In so doing, an accurate evaluation of the success of any one program’s media campaigns is not possible.
- The VSHSO reduced its Federal Fiscal Year 2020 paid media budget by 80 percent, which made it difficult to reach its target audience with sufficient frequency to change behavior.
- There are limited sample earned media materials available (e.g., letters to the editor, social media postings) for stakeholders to use to support the VSHSO’s OP programs at the local level. While the VSHSO provides links to NHTSA’s Traffic Safety Marketing website, non-traffic safety-oriented individuals may not consider exploring that link.
- The VSHSO website, while easy to navigate, contains dated information.
- It may be difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the State’s new “Drive Well Vermont” communications strategy in increasing occupant restraint use due to the combined messaging approach and in light of limited media funding.

4C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to update the Vermont State Highway Safety Office website, consistent with State website policy.
- Evaluate the survey questions on the upcoming *Governor's Highway Safety Program Study* with a view toward revising or adding questions to assess the success of the “Drive Well Vermont” communications strategy in reaching its target audience. Include, for example, questions regarding increased occupant restraint use based on the messaging seen/heard.
- **Develop and make available a series of standardized earned media materials (talking points, social media templates, letters to the editor, etc.) for use by stakeholders and partners to support the State’s occupant protection programs at the local level. Tie these materials to the “Drive Well Vermont” tagline to enhance Vermont’s strategy to promote positive messaging to change behavior.**

- **Ensure specific occupant protection messaging is included as part of the “Drive Well Vermont” communications strategy, to better evaluate the effectiveness of the occupant protection portion of that strategy.**

5. OCCUPANT PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN

GUIDELINE:

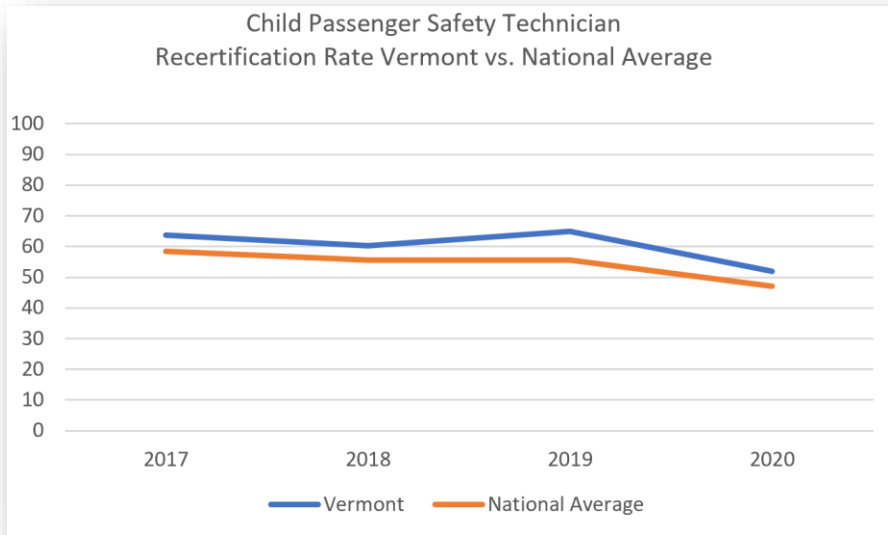
Each State should enact occupant protection laws that require the correct restraint of all children, in all seating positions and in every vehicle. Regulations and policies should exist that provide clear guidance to the motoring public concerning occupant protection for children. Each State should require that children birth to 16 years old (or the State's driving age) be properly restrained in the appropriate child restraint system or seat belt. Gaps in State child passenger safety and seat belt laws should be closed to ensure that all children are covered in all seating positions, with requirements for age-appropriate child restraint use. Key provisions of the law should include: driver responsibility for ensuring that children are properly restrained; proper restraint of children under 13 years of age in the rear seat (unless all available rear seats are occupied by younger children); a ban of passengers from the cargo areas of light trucks; and a limit on the number of passengers based on the number of available seat belts in the vehicle. To achieve these objectives, State occupant protection programs for children should:

- *Collect and analyze key data elements in order to evaluate the program progress;*
- *Assure that adequate and accurate training is provided to the professionals who deliver and enforce the occupant protection programs for parents and caregivers;*
- *Assure that the capability exists to train and retain nationally certified child passenger safety technicians to address attrition of trainers or changing public demographics;*
- *Promote the use of child restraints and assure that a plan has been developed to provide an adequate number of inspection stations and clinics, which meet minimum quality criteria;*
- *Maintain a strong law enforcement program that includes vigorous enforcement of the child occupant protection laws;*
- *Enlist the support of the media to increase public awareness about child occupant protection laws and the use of child restraints. Strong efforts should be made to reach underserved populations;*
- *Assure that the child occupant protection programs at the local level are periodically assessed and that programs are designed to meet the unique demographic needs of the community;*
- *Establish the infrastructure to systematically coordinate the array of child occupant protection program components;*
- *Encourage law enforcement participation in the National Child Passenger Safety Certification (basic and in-service) training for law enforcement officers.*

5A. STRENGTHS

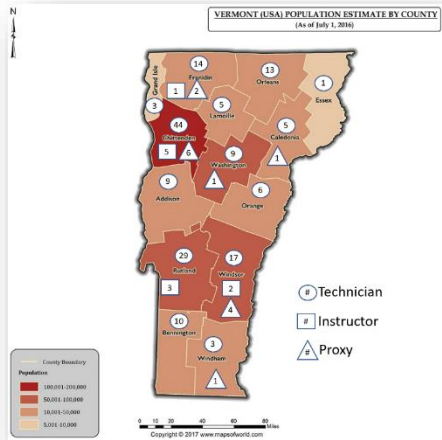
- Vermont has a Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Law (Title 23 Motor Vehicles Chapter 13 Operation of Vehicles § Child restraint systems; persons under age 18) that is a primary offense. The provisions of the law require children up to age 17 to be correctly restrained in a federally approved child restraint system or seat belt according to manufacturer instructions that conform to U.S. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard Requirements.

- There is strong support for the CPS Program by the Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO) which is housed in the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans).
- The State CPS Program, known as “Be Seat Smart”, has an interactive informational website that includes relevant and accurate information, correct use videos, printable materials regarding correct child restraint use according to best practice recommendations, calendar of events, information for visitors to Vermont, links to credible agencies and groups, answers to frequently asked questions, and program contact information.
- The CPS Program Coordinator is a full-time employee of the Vermont Department of Health (VDH). The program funding is provided by an annual grant by the VSHSO.
- Vermont has an extraordinarily collaborative network of CPS Technicians and Instructors working in diverse settings throughout the State.
- There are currently 62 inspection stations, many of which have remained operational during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns. The inspection stations and their operational status can easily be located on the program’s website www.beseatsmart.org.
- The 62 inspection stations are located throughout the state and are accessible within each of the 14 counties.
- All of the inspection stations are supported by the State by providing them with necessary equipment, printed materials, and child restraints.
- All of the inspection stations use the National Digital Car Seat Check Form in lieu of printed forms, which allows for more consistent data collection and reporting. Be Seat Smart was awarded a special recognition award by the National Safety Council (NSC) and Automobile Association of America Northern California, Nevada, and Utah for being the first state to switch completely to electronic reporting.
- The collected inspection station data are analyzed and reported to VSHSO. The data are also routinely shared with all CPS Technicians and Instructors for an accurate snapshot of the state of CPS in Vermont via electronic communications.
- The average number of child restraints inspected in Vermont is 2,500 to 3,000 annually.
- The reported misuse of child restraints is below the published national misuse rate.
- There is a lower-than-average attrition rate of certified CPS Technicians and Instructors. The number of courses offered each year counters the attrition leaving the state with a relatively consistent number of currently certified CPS Technicians. For those whose certifications have lapsed, the program offers Certification Renewal Courses on an as-needed basis.



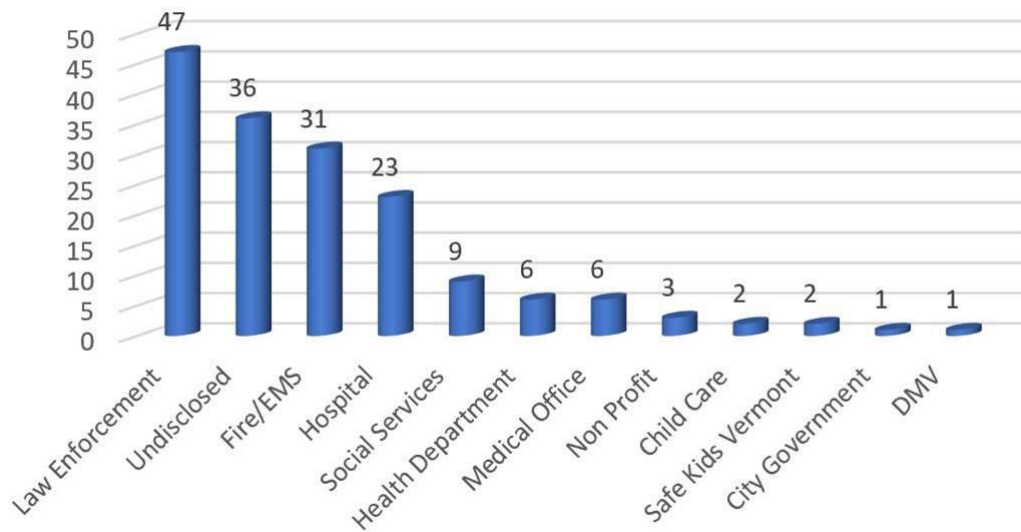
Annual Certification Courses				
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of Courses	4	4	3	3
Number of New Technicians	43	41	40	23

- There are currently 167 certified CPS Technicians, including 11 Instructors and 1 Instructor Candidate located throughout the state. Newly trained technicians have strong support by more experienced ones in the area. There appears to be an extraordinarily collaborative culture among the teams.



- Eight of the 11 Instructors are approved by Safe Kids Worldwide to be Lead Instructors, giving them the latitude to set up their own Technician certification classes.
- Twenty-one of the 167 Certified Technicians have also completed specialized technical training in *Safe Travel for All Children: Transporting Children with Special Healthcare Needs*. An additional two CPS Technicians have completed training that specializes in pupil transportation in school buses.
- Non-certification CPS Workshops and Trainings are available throughout the state and are taught by local Technicians and Instructors. The trainings are focused for law enforcement recruits, parents/caregivers, registered nurses in hospitals, parent-educators, etc. Additional booster seat education is given by school nurses to elementary school age children.
- Certified CPS Technicians (CPSTs) span many professions.

Number of CPSTs within Agencies



- Population diversity is addressed by multilingual publications and special programs implemented specifically for the refugees that are recent immigrants to Vermont. By working cooperatively with the New Americans Program, the CPS Program is able to educate and place well over 300 child restraint systems annually with the new residents.

5B. CHALLENGES

- The CPS law does not reflect some of the most current best practice recommendations by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the American

Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in transitioning children to the next step in the mode and type of child restraint system. There are exemptions for children being transported in vehicles for hire and vehicles owned and operated by childcare facilities.

- The low fine does not reflect the importance of this statute.
- Although written warnings and citations for failure to restrain a child age 17 and younger can be accessed, law enforcement officers rarely take the extra step to be able to determine the extent of the noncompliant behavior of individuals so repeat offenders are rarely identified.
- An absence of a primary adult seat belt law lessens the importance of correct use of seat belts as children get older. Many studies have shown a direct correlation between lack of parent or caregiver seat belt use to lack of seat belt use by young teens into adulthood.
- It is unclear how quality assurance is conducted for technicians and inspection stations.
- There are no opportunities for data-sharing at a roundtable of state agencies. The CPS Program would benefit from better understanding the OP Program's priorities regarding children and exploring joint data metrics to include injuries, fatalities, and restraint use data.
- With COVID-19 shutdowns, some areas of the state do not have accessible inspection stations. It is unclear if technicians are taught how to conduct virtual appointments until all of the stations can reopen.
- Very minimal CPS education is provided to law enforcement. Police Academy recruits are offered a two and a half hour awareness session; however, at the time of this assessment, no further opportunities are offered within the departments to enhance the understanding of why the law is important or how to enforce the law more efficiently. Many departments do not have sufficient staffing available for multiple officers to attend technician trainings.
- The number of CPS law citations is low in part due to lack of understanding of the State statute and the consistent and correct use of child restraints. No printed reference cards are readily available to law enforcement officers that provide an easy explanation of the law.
- Public Information Officers are not trained in CPS issues and oftentimes miss opportunities for educational addendums during comments to the media.
- A statewide observational child restraint use survey has not been done in the past several years. Although misuse number reflect a higher-than-average incidence of correct use of child restraints, there is no clear picture of incorrect restraint type selection and non-use.

Typically, inspection stations encounter more expectant parents needing initial education and installation guidance which is not counted as a misuse. No local surveys or observational studies are conducted to assess the needs of individual communities for enhanced education and enforcement.

- The attitudinal study that was conducted in 2018 shows low understanding of CPS issues by the public participants.
- The CPS Program contract has limited or no resources available for an additional staff member to assist the coordinator with increasing administrative responsibilities and enhancing tasks involved with implementing new programs and processes.

5C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Enhance the Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Law to include mandated appropriate child restraint systems for children. A well-crafted CPS law should include the following elements:**
 - **Children should be correctly restrained in a child restraint system appropriate for their age, weight, and height until age 13.**
 - **Children should remain in rear-facing child restraints, used according to manufacturer instructions, for as long as possible and to the uppermost weight and height limit of the child restraint but to a minimum of age two.**
 - **Children should remain in child restraint systems with a harness and used according to manufacturer instructions, for as long as possible.**
 - **Children should remain in a booster seat or child restraint system until they are tall enough to fit into vehicle seat belt systems according to vehicle manufacturer instructions.**
 - **Children should be correctly restrained in appropriate child restraint systems in the rear seat of vehicles until age 13 if possible.**
 - **The number of child passengers should be limited to the number of seating positions with available seat belts.**
 - **Children should be prohibited from riding in the cargo area of pickup trucks.**
 - **No exemption for trucks or vans that exceed 6,500 pounds gross vehicle weight.**
 - **No exemptions for vehicles owned by childcare providers, school systems, churches, and private busses.**
 - **No exemptions for rideshare vehicles, including taxis and all other passenger vehicles for hire.**
- Consider an annual or semiannual networking opportunity for all state agencies involved with occupant protection programs to be able to share and discuss available data and enhance program direction by discussing priorities.

- **Support and prioritize the implementation of child passenger safety-focused outreach for law enforcement officers to include continuing education and reference cards that provide an easy explanation of the child passenger safety law and best practice recommendations.**
- Design and implement a specialized child passenger safety-focused training for Public Information Officers.
- Enhance the forthcoming attitudinal studies to reflect more information about child restraint systems. Additionally, Vermont residents should be given the opportunity to support or oppose a primary adult seat belt law in the survey.
- Conduct a statewide observational child restraint survey. Analyze and share the available misuse data to estimate a surrogate state usage rate.

6. OUTREACH PROGRAM

GUIDELINE:

Each state should encourage extensive statewide and community involvement in occupant protection education by involving individuals and organizations outside the traditional highway safety community. Representation from health, business, education, and diverse cultures of the community are encouraged, among others. Community involvement broadens public support for the state's programs and can increase a state's ability to deliver highway safety education programs. To encourage statewide and community involvement, States should:

- *Establish a coalition or task force of individuals and organizations to actively promote use of occupant protection systems;*
- *Create an effective communications network among coalition members to keep members informed about issues;*
- *Provide culturally relevant materials and resources necessary to conduct occupant protection education programs, especially directed toward young people, in local settings;*
- *Provide materials and resources necessary to conduct occupant protection education programs, especially directed toward specific cultural or otherwise diverse populations represented in the State and in its political subdivisions.*

States should undertake a variety of outreach programs to achieve statewide and community involvement in occupant protection education, as described below. Programs should include outreach to diverse populations, health and medical communities, schools and employers.

a. Diverse Populations

Each State should work closely with individuals and organizations that represent the various ethnic and cultural populations reflected in State demographics. Individuals from these groups might not be reached through traditional communication markets. Community leaders and representatives from the various ethnic and cultural groups and organizations will help States to increase the use of child safety seats and seat belts. The State should:

- *Evaluate the need for, and provide, if necessary, materials and resources in multiple languages;*
- *Collect and analyze data on fatalities and injuries in diverse communities;*
- *Ensure representation of diverse groups on State occupant protection coalitions and other work groups;*
- *Provide guidance to grantees on conducting outreach in diverse communities;*
- *Utilize leaders from diverse communities as spokespeople to promote seat belt use and child safety seat;*
- *Conduct outreach efforts to diverse organizations and populations during law enforcement mobilization periods.*

b. Health and Medical Communities

Each State should integrate occupant protection into health programs. The failure of drivers and passengers to use occupant protection systems is a major public health problem that must be recognized by the medical and health care communities. The SHSO, the State Health Department and other State or local medical organizations should collaborate in developing programs that:

- Integrate occupant protection into professional health training curricula and comprehensive public health planning;*
- Promote occupant protection systems as a health promotion/injury prevention measure;*
- Require public health and medical personnel to use available motor vehicle occupant protection systems during work hours;*
- Provide technical assistance and education about the importance of motor vehicle occupant protection to primary caregivers (e.g., doctors, nurses, clinic staff);*
- Include questions about seat belt use in health risk appraisals;*
- Utilize health care providers as visible public spokespeople for seat belt and child safety seat use;*
- Provide information about the availability of child safety seats at, and integrate child safety seat inspections into, maternity hospitals and other prenatal and natal care centers;*
- Collect, analyze and publicize data on additional injuries and medical expenses resulting from non-use of occupant protection devices.*

c. Schools

Each State should encourage local school boards and educators to incorporate occupant protection education into school curricula. The SHSO in cooperation with the State Department of Education should:

- Ensure that highway safety and traffic-related injury control, in general, and occupant protection, in particular, are included in the State-approved K-12 health and safety education curricula and textbooks;*
- Establish and enforce written policies requiring that school employees use seat belts when operating a motor vehicle on the job; and*
- Encourage active promotion of regular seat belt use through classroom and extracurricular activities as well as in school-based health clinics; and*
- Work with School Resource Officers (SROs) to promote seat belt use among high school students;*
- Establish and enforce written school policies that require students driving to and from school to wear seat belts. Violation of these policies should result in revocation of parking or other campus privileges for a stated period of time.*

d. Employers

Each State and local subdivision should encourage all employers to require seat belt use on the job as a condition of employment. Private sector employers should follow the lead of Federal and State government employers and comply with Executive Order 13043, “Increasing Seat Belt Use in the United States” as well as all applicable Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Regulations or Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations requiring private business employees to use seat belts on the job. All employers should:

- *Establish and enforce a seat belt use policy with sanctions for non-use;*
- *Conduct occupant protection education programs for employees on their seat belt use policies and the safety benefits of motor vehicle occupant protection devices.*

6A. STRENGTHS

- The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) funds the Vermont Highway Safety Alliance (VHSA), a broad network of diverse public and private organizations that work together to develop the State’s highway safety strategies that integrate engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency response initiatives to improve roadway safety in the State. Member organizations not only provide advice to VTrans in program planning, but use the State’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan as a roadmap to implement specific actions throughout Vermont to improve highway safety. The VHSA maintains an active social media presence on Facebook, providing data, program information, and more to its thousands of followers, many of whom share the information on their social media accounts.
- The Vermont Department of Health’s child passenger safety (CPS) program uses a variety of avenues to reach all segments of the State’s population in relation to child restraints. Working with Head Start and WIC programs, the Department of Children and Families, hospitals, schools, etc., has ensured that Vermonters have access to information, materials, and assistance in proper child restraint use. Further, collaborating with the New Americans Program has resulted in the adaptation of CPS materials into six languages for those who do not understand English.
- An “Enhanced Teen Driver Safety Program” has been developed and is presented to driver’s education classes in several counties, with one lesson focusing specifically on safety equipment, including seat belts and airbags. During COVID-19, an opportunity presented itself for this class to be conducted in another area of the State via Zoom, opening the door to the possibility of further program expansion. It was noted that this program is evaluated through pre- and post-testing of the participants, with subject matter knowledge generally increasing by 40 to 50 percentage points.

- The Project RoadSafe program, managed by the Associated General Contractors of Vermont, provides training on all aspects of traffic safety for both seasoned commercial drivers and new drivers in career centers. Included in this program are mandatory safe driver policies, including seat belt use. While it was noted that no formal evaluation had been conducted, anecdotal evidence of a company’s highway safety ratings increasing as a result of the program was identified as a measure of its success.
- There are several law enforcement education and outreach programs underway that include occupant protection (OP) to reach children in school settings with age-appropriate messaging, and at a variety of community events to reach a broader audience.
- The new “Drive Well Vermont” strategy provides an opportunity for many more organizations and individuals with an interest in traffic safety to become involved in the health and safety benefits of traffic safety and OP, increasing the reach of individual programs and campaigns.

6B. CHALLENGES

- The COVID-19 pandemic restrictions severely limited many of the outreach events and activities planned for the year.
- There does not appear to be an effort to engage “non-traditional” stakeholders, whose members represent those who may be those most at risk for non-seat belt use, to participate in VSHSO programs. Rather than reaching out to state leaders of these organizations (e.g., 4-H Clubs, Future Farmers of America), program outreach is limited to one-on-one contact with organization members at events such as county fairs, high school programs, etc.
- There are limited materials available, aside from CPS information, for stakeholders at the local level to quickly and easily use to support the VSHSO’s OP programs.
- There are a variety of educational programs being developed and delivered by law enforcement agencies, which may lead to inconsistent messaging and materials being presented.
- It appears that, in many cases, evaluations of OP outreach programs are limited to process (e.g., number of participants/attendees), with few formal outcome evaluations (e.g., change in knowledge and/or behavior).
- While there are a number of programs directed toward school-age children, there is no standardized K-12 health and safety education curricula that would include age-appropriate child restraint devices.

6C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop a relationship with State-level leaders of ‘non-traditional’ stakeholder organizations that represent the State’s target audience (e.g., Future Farmers of America, 4-H clubs, National Organizations for Youth Safety) and enlist their support for programs that affect their membership. Use these leaders as a conduit for local affiliates to become engaged in supporting local traffic safety programs, and their members as informal focus groups to ensure that materials developed will resonate with these target audiences.**
- Standardize the law enforcement educational/outreach programs being offered in schools to ensure that information is age-appropriate and that there is consistency of information being presented across the State.
- Establish a relationship with the appropriate office within the Department of Education, inviting their participation in including occupant protection in their health and safety classes, as part of the “Drive Well Vermont” strategy.
- Develop a series of standardized materials (e.g., talking points, social media templates, letters to the editor) for use by stakeholders and partners at the local level to support the State’s traffic safety programs. Make these materials easily available on the appropriate website(s).
- **Design outreach training subgrant request for proposals to include outcome measures (pre-post testing, observational surveys, etc.) to capture changes in knowledge and behavior of the participants to determine the effectiveness of those programs.**

7. DATA AND EVALUATION

GUIDELINE:

Each State should access and analyze reliable data sources for problem identification and program planning. Each State should conduct several different types of evaluation to effectively measure progress and to plan and implement new program strategies. Program management should:

- *Conduct and publicize at least one statewide observational survey of seat belt and child safety seat use annually, making every effort to ensure that it meets current, applicable Federal guidelines;*
- *Maintain trend data on child safety seat use, seat belt use and air bag deployment in fatal crashes;*
- *Identify high-risk populations through observational usage surveys and crash statistics;*
- *Conduct and publicize statewide surveys of public knowledge and attitudes about occupant protection laws and systems;*
- *Obtain monthly or quarterly data from law enforcement agencies on the number of seat belt and child passenger safety citations and convictions;*
- *Evaluate the use of program resources and the effectiveness of existing general communication as well as special/high-risk population education programs;*
- *Obtain data on morbidity, as well as the estimated cost of crashes, and determine the relation of injury to seat belt use and non-use;*
- *Ensure that evaluation results are an integral part of new program planning and problem identification.*

7A. STRENGTHS

- The Preusser Research Group (PRG) conducts annual observational seat belt surveys at 89 sites across the State. This effort is conducted with funding from the Vermont State Highway Safety Office (VSHSO) housed in the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and has been approved by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The survey was re-designed in 2018 to more equitably capture seat belt use by adjusting weights applied to primary, secondary, and local roads. A report is developed each year with details about the planning, design, conduct, and results of the survey. Each county is provided a seat belt usage rate to assist with planning and evaluation.
- The Vermont Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) analyst works closely with law enforcement partners across the State to capture data from all fatal crashes. Many fatal and serious injury crashes undergo an advanced investigation, or reconstruction, which results in accurate identification of seat belt, child restraint, and air bag usage.

- The VSHSO has several data sources available to identify high-risk populations that do not utilize seat belts or child restraints. Those include crash report and traffic citation/adjudication data systems, observational seat belt survey and attitudinal survey results, and progress reports from grantees. Males ages 18-34 have been identified as a target population, while pickup truck drivers and local road users have also shown lower restraint use.
- The Center for Research and Public Policy, Inc. (CRPP) has conducted statewide attitudinal surveys for the VSHSO from 2010 to 2018. The survey covers all areas of traffic safety, including occupant protection (OP), and is distributed online. All registered drivers in the State are eligible to participate and a random sample of 500 respondents are enrolled. The survey includes many static questions and several that are customized to address acute concerns each year. The State hopes to conduct the next survey in Fiscal Year 2022.
- The Judicial Bureau in the Vermont Judiciary receives all traffic violations issued across the State and is responsible for managing that data system as well as the associated adjudications. Violations that are paid or pled without a hearing are documented and convictions are transferred to the Department of Motor Vehicles for posting to the driver history record. The Judicial Bureau data system underwent an upgrade in 2018 and summary reports are available upon request for program planning. Approximately 80 percent of law enforcement agencies have the ability to issue and transmit citations electronically.
- The VSHSO requires quarterly activity reports and annual evaluation of performance measures from all grantees. All data sources are used for program evaluation as appropriate for enforcement and outreach projects. Several outreach programs have instituted pre- and post-event surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and knowledge retention. Training courses and public outreach efforts utilize impact evaluations and all programs conduct process evaluations to ensure usefulness of the program and delivery. Additionally, OP is a Critical Emphasis Area in the State Strategic Highway Safety Plan and has associated performance measures.
- The Statewide Incident Reporting Network (SIREN) captures patient care reports from emergency medical services providers and is maintained in the Vermont Department of Health. Those data are available and have been used to quantify injuries from traffic crashes as well as national cost estimates. Seating position and restraint use are captured on the patient care report, which may serve as a quality control tool for the crash data.
- Child restraint outreach programs that conduct seat checks or distribution utilize the National Digital Car Seat Check Form (NDCF). Those data have been used to target events and better understand this population. Such information, along with other project-specific surveys or feedback forms, has been used with crash data trends to plan and evaluate the State's OP program.

7B. CHALLENGES

- There is no statewide observational child restraint survey conducted in Vermont.
- The attitudinal survey was last conducted by the CRPP in 2018 and contained few questions related to seat belt and child restraint usage. It also contained no questions related to support for an improved seat belt law or recognition of the branded OP media campaigns. The sample population is restricted to licensed drivers in the state, which excludes the passenger and non-motorist portions of the target population.
- The Judicial Bureau does not have a means for the VSHSO, or its research partners, to obtain an extract of the raw citation or adjudication data. While summary reports are available, it is more challenging to query records submitted since the system modernization in 2018.
- The penalty for non-use of a seat belt is considered an enhanced penalty, meaning that it is not captured as a separate violation code but as an addition to the associated primary violation. In this manner, it is reflected as a ‘Y’ in the primary record on the driver history report and may be overlooked when one queries that report. This affects the likelihood that officers will use increased penalties when encountering a repeat offender.
- Approximately 80 percent of the law enforcement agencies in Vermont have the ability to use electronic citation software; however, less than one-quarter of all traffic citations received at the Judicial Bureau are electronically transmitted.
- The State has used national estimates of costs from crashes in the past but has not calculated those costs specific to Vermont. While morbidity data are available through SIREN and efforts have been planned to integrate crash and medical data systems, such a linkage has not been completed.

7C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Conduct a statewide observational child restraint survey. Analyze and share the available misuse data to estimate a surrogate state usage rate.**
- **Solicit attitudinal survey responses from the entire Vermont population and focus the media campaign recognition questions to each branded program.**
- Develop a process for accessing record-level data from the Judicial Bureau to include data-use agreements as appropriate.
- Utilize a national cost estimate methodology to identify costs incurred in Vermont only and, if possible, incorporate morbidity data to better quantify levels of injury.

- Support the data integration project that will link crash and injury data as a means to better identify serious injuries and occupant restraint usage.

AGENDA

Vermont Occupant Protection Assessment

Monday, March 22, 2021

9:30 am – 10:45 am – Interview 1 Program Management

Allison LaFlamme	Administrator, Vermont Highway Safety Office
Jim Baraw	Vermont Highway Safety Office Program Coordinator, Law Enforcement
Susan McAvoy	Vermont Highway Safety Office Program Coordinator, Education
Danielle Record	Vermont Highway Safety Office Grants Management Specialist
Bill Jenkins	Vermont Highway Safety Office Law Enforcement Liaison (Southern Vt)
Paul White	Vermont Highway Safety Office Law Enforcement Liaison (Northern Vt)

10:45 am – 11:05 am - Break

11:05 am – 12:10 pm – Interview 2 Legislation, Regulation, and Policy

Allison LaFlamme	Administrator, Vermont Highway Safety Office
Joshua Schultz	Director, Vermont Agency of Transportation, Office of Highway Safety
Kevin Geno	Lieutenant, Vermont Highway Safety Alliance Board Chair
Anthony Facos	Director, Enforcement and Safety Division
Bill Jenkins	Vermont Highway Safety Office Law Enforcement Liaison (Southern Vt)
Paul White	Vermont Highway Safety Office Law Enforcement Liaison (Northern Vt)
Todd Sears	Deputy Director of Vermont Agency of Transportation's Office of Operations and Safety Bureau

12:10 pm – 1:10 pm – Lunch

1:10 pm – 2:20 pm – Interview 3 Data and Evaluation

Neil Chaudhry	CEO, Preusser Research Group
Jerry Lindsley	CEO, Center for Research & Public Policy
Mandy White	Data Unit Manager, Vermont Agency of Transportation, Office of Highway Safety
Joanne Charbonneau	Clerk of Court, Vermont Judicial Bureau

2:20 pm – 2:35 Interview 4

State Highway Safety Office Debrief/Questions from the day

2:35 pm – 3:00 pm - Break

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm – Assessment Team Debrief

3:30 pm – Until - Independent Writing

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

9:30 am – 10:55 am – Interview 5

Communications

Amy Tatko Vermont Agency of Transportation, Public Outreach Manager
Mandy White Data Unit Manager, Vermont Agency of Transportation

10:55 am – 11:15 am – Break

11:15 am – 12:25 pm – Interview 6

Outreach

Mandy White Data Unit Manager, Vermont Agency of Transportation
Mary Catherine Graziano Local Motion, Bike Programs
Daniel Batsie Director, Vermont Department of Health, Ped Programs
Evelyn McFarlane Strategic Highway Safety Plan Coordinator
Sid Bradley CPS Program Coordinator, Vermont Department of Health

12:25 pm – 1:25 pm – Lunch

1:25 pm – 2:35 pm – Interview 7

Enforcement 1

Bill Jenkins Vermont Highway Safety Office Law Enforcement Liaison (Southern Vt)
Paul White Vermont Highway Safety Office Law Enforcement Liaison (Northern Vt)
Tara Thomas Lieutenant, Vermont State Police

2:35 pm – 2:55 pm – Break

2:55 pm – 4:00 pm - Interview 8

Outreach 2

Pat McManamon Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles, School Bus Safety
Michael Roj Teen Driver Program, Windsor County Sheriff's Department

Chris Lynch Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles, Drivers Education
Richard Wobby Associated General Contractors of Vermont, Employers, Project Road Safe

4:00 pm – 4:15 pm Interview 9
State Highway Safety Office Debrief / Questions from the day

4:15 pm – 4:40 pm - Assessment Team Debrief

4:40 pm – Until - Independent Writing

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

9:30 am – 10:45 am - Interview 10
Child Passenger Safety

Sid Bradley CPS Program Coordinator, Vermont Department of Health
Allan Fortin Lieutenant, Chittenden County Sherriff's Department
Michael Tarbell Deputy Chief, Rutland Regional Ambulance Service
Michael Chiarella Director of Operations, Richmond Rescue

10:45 am – 11:05 am – Break

11:05 am - 12:10 pm – Interview 11
Enforcement 2

Allan Fortin Lieutenant, Chittenden County Sherriff's Department
Anthony Facos Director, Enforcement and Safety Division
George Merkel Chief, Vergennes Police Department
Bill Jenkins Vermont Highway Safety Office Law Enforcement Liaison (Southern Vt)
Paul White Vermont Highway Safety Office Law Enforcement Liaison (Northern Vt)

12:10 pm – 12:30 pm – Break

12:30 pm – 12:45 pm – Interview 12
State Highway Safety Office Debrief/Questions from the day

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm - Assessment Team Debrief

1:45 – until
Independent Writing

Thursday, March 25, 2021

8:30 am – 12:00 pm - Assessment Team will review the draft report line-by-line and reach consensus on report and key recommendations

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm – Lunch

1:00 pm – Until finish - Assessment Team will continue to review the draft report line-by- line and reach consensus on report and key recommendations

Friday, March 26, 2021

8:30 am – 10:00am - Assessment Team report out to State, NHTSA, and others invited by State

ASSESSMENT TEAM CREDENTIALS

CYNTHIA BURCH

CBurch@som.umaryland.edu

Cynthia (Cindy) Burch, MS MPH CAISS RSP2B began her career as a research analyst at the National Study Center for Trauma & EMS (NSC) in 2001 and went on to serve as epidemiologist/traffic records coordinator for the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety in 2004. There she continued working with traffic records and statewide data projects. In late 2005, she returned to the NSC and served as a senior epidemiologist and project manager. In July 2018, Cindy moved to the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, the Baltimore region metropolitan planning organization, to support the development and implementation of Local Strategic Highway Safety Plans in the region's seven jurisdictions.

Cindy worked on the Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES) and the Crash Injury Research and Engineering Network (CIREN) projects funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). At the NSC, she worked closely with the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration's Highway Safety Office (MHSO) on data analyses and traffic records, facilitated the State Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC), served as the data coordinator for the Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan, conducted and analyzed the observational seat belt studies, and answered data requests from state and local agencies as well as the public at large. She continues to work closely with the MHSO now from the BMC to support all local efforts in planning, data analysis, and evaluation. She is also an assessor, module leader, and facilitator for Traffic Records Assessments; team member for impaired driving, occupant protection, and pedestrian/bicycle safety assessments; peer reviewer for the Transportation Research Record and Traffic Injury Prevention journals; and at-large member of the Abbreviated Injury Scale Certification Board for the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine (AAAM).

VERA FULLAWAY
vfullaway@comcast.net

EXPERIENCE

Traffic Safety Education, NA, Denver, CO

Consultant: Program Development and Improvement to Occupant Protection Programs on an organizational through statewide level.

Safe Traffic System, Inc., Chicago, IL

Technical Consultant in Global Regulatory Compliance, Child Passenger Safety Product Development and Improvement, Account and Customer Support, Global Representative

RECARO Child Safety, Auburn Hills, MI

Training Specialist & Consultant for USA, Canada and Mexico

Sky Ridge Medical Center & North Suburban Medical Center Fitting Station Co-Coordinator

Child Passenger Safety Consultant / Co-Owner Child Safety Solutions, LLC / Colorado

Clek, Inc., Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Child Passenger Safety Consultant and CPS Advocate

Combi USA, Charlotte NC

CPS Advocate, New Product Development and Support Team Car Seats & Strollers

Colorado State Patrol: Statewide CPS Program Technical Training Coordinator

State CPS Program Technical Training Coordinator

Columbine Ambulance Service Illness & Injury Prevention Foundation

Director of Education Programs

TerraSciences/ICS, Lakewood, CO

Maintenance Programmer, Computer Information Systems

Denver General Ambulance and various privately owned Emergency Ambulance

Services as Paramedic

EDUCATION

Colorado State University [Physics/Microbiology]

Aimes Community College [Emergency Medical Technician]

St Anthony's Hospital Institute of Pre-Hospital Care [Emergency Paramedic]

Denver Technical College [Computer Information Systems / Programming]

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- National Child Passenger Safety Board Emeritus (NCPSB)
- Recipient of the NHTSA Public Service Award
- NCPSB National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Curriculum Committee
- National Standardized CPS Course Technician Instructor /Trainer /Mentor
- Certified Safe Kids Worldwide CPS Technician Instructor since 1998
- Certification: Transporting Children with Special Healthcare Needs
- Certification: Transporting Children in the Emergency Medical Services Setting
- Colorado Statewide CPS Program Technical Training Coordinator
- Child Passenger Safety Team Colorado State Advisory Board Cochair
- Author / Editor of CPS Tech Update Publications (Colorado CPS Tech Update Monthly Publication, Safe Ride News, CPS Express for Safe Kids Worldwide, Internet Articles, various National, State and Regional CPS Programs)
- Author of numerous state standardized training curricula [professional & community programs]
- Statewide and Community CPS Program Development
- Institutional and Organizational CPS Program Development
- K-12 Injury Prevention Program Development
- Young Driver Program Development
- Child Restraint Manufacturer CPS Advocate
- Child Restraint Manufacturer Regulatory Compliance, Development, and Improvement
- Technical Writing: Instruction Manuals for Child Restraint Systems
- Website Development
- USDOT, NHTSA, Technical Assistance Team, Occupant Protection Program, Team Member, States of Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Ohio, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia.

TIMOTHY J. KERNS, PhD

tkerns.pc@gmail.com

As an epidemiologist with the University of Maryland's National Study Center for Trauma and EMS, Timothy (Tim) Kerns helped to develop and monitor Maryland's occupant protection survey and served as program manager for the development of the State's Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES) and project coordinator for the Crash Injury Research and Engineering Network (CIREN). While in that role, he worked collaboratively with State and Federal partners to maximize the use of traffic records data systems for the development and evaluation of highway safety projects. In 2018, he became Director of Maryland's Highway Safety Office where he oversees a wide variety of highway safety efforts, enforcement and educational programs, and outreach campaigns. He has served on a variety of highway safety program assessments covering areas such as traffic records, occupant protection, impaired driving, and pedestrian/bicycle safety.

During his career, he has gained considerable experience in the analysis and use of large datasets relating to motor vehicle crashes and injury. He has co-authored a number of journal articles on highway safety and has presented results from independent research projects at local and national health and injury conferences.

He has served as a member of the Board of Directors for the Mid-Atlantic Foundation for Safety and Education and the Maryland Division of the American Trauma Society and is past President of the Association of Transportation Safety Information Professionals (ATSIP).

Dr. Kerns received a bachelor's degree in Natural Science from The Johns Hopkins University in 1986, a master's degree in Epidemiology and Emergency Health Services from the University of Maryland in 1988, and a PhD in Epidemiology from the University of Maryland Baltimore in 2017.

ROBERTA C. MAYER

robinmayer1@aol.com

Roberta (Robin) Mayer retired from NHTSA as its Chief of the Office of Consumer Information, where she was responsible for the development and implementation of NHTSA's national media campaigns and consumer information and materials for both behavioral and motor vehicle programs. She managed the *Click It or Ticket* and "Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest." advertising campaigns at the national level and provided technical assistance to States in the development and placement of State-specific ads. She also led the development of NHTSA's Diversity Summit, bringing together 100 participants representing 75 national multicultural organizations, to enlist their support for traffic safety initiatives. During her 20+ year tenure at NHTSA, she also served as the Chief of the Impaired Driving Division, Chief of the National Outreach Division, Policy Advisor, and Program Analyst/Highway Safety Specialist.

Since her retirement, she has participated in more than 25 assessments of State occupant protection and impaired driving programs; has assisted in the development and updating of traffic safety and communications curricula, websites, and guidebooks on a variety of topics for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; and has provided training on social media for state and local governmental and not-for-profit organizations. Mayer is also the Director of Government Relations for *Road Safety USA*, an organization designed to help reduce the number of people being killed or seriously injured on America's roadways. She has served as a contributing writer for several newspapers, and provides services as a copywriter, technical editor, and social media manager. In 2018 Mayer was re-elected to her third three-year term of the Damariscotta, Maine, Board of Selectmen, and is currently serving her fourth year as its Chairman.

Mayer was a Senior Program Analyst with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) prior to joining NHTSA, during which time she was responsible for highway safety programs including Standardized Field Sobriety Test training and related programs, occupant protection communications, police pursuit policies, and assessments of various law enforcement agency programs. She was involved in the development of the initial traffic standards for law enforcement agency accreditation (which came to be known as CLEA standards).

Mayer graduated from Frostburg State University with a degree in English Education and has worked toward a Master of Education at Bowie State University in Maryland.

RICHARD MILLER

rjmiller146@msn.com

Richard Miller experienced a rewarding career with the Michigan Department of State Police rising to the rank of Inspector over his 26-year career. In his final assignment, he served as the Assistant Sixth District Commander; the operations officer over 250 personnel on the western side of lower Michigan. Earlier in his career as Flat Rock Post Commander, Richard planned and managed the transition of that Post from a general service law enforcement operation to a dedicated traffic enforcement worksite, one of the first such changes in departmental history. Over his career he was also assigned to the Traffic Services Division where he oversaw statewide seat belt, impaired driving and speed related selective enforcement projects. Upon retirement, Richard served as Chief of Police at Plymouth, Michigan before joining AAA Michigan/Auto Club Group as Community Safety Services Manager. There he served as a traffic safety spokesman for AAA on a state and national level.

As Project Manager for M. Davis and Company, Inc. (MDAC), Richard completed the NHTSA project "Evaluate Nighttime Seat Belt Enforcement Demonstration Program and Identify Characteristics of Unbelted High Risk Drivers", a Maryland based nighttime seat belt enforcement study measuring changes in driver awareness of the nighttime enforcement effort and also gauging the characteristics of nighttime seat belt violators. Richard served as Principal Investigator for MDAC on two other NHTSA projects, "System Analysis of ASE Implementation", a census of current and recently discontinued ASE programs in the United States and, in Tucson, Arizona, "Demonstration and Evaluation of Speed Management and Automated Enforcement Project" a project focused on the integration of automated speed enforcement with traditional speed enforcement countermeasures.

Richard is an instructor for the National Highway Institute Course Road Safety Audits/Assessments. He is one of only two former police officers certified to co-instruct this course with a traffic engineer. On behalf of the FHWA Office of International Programs he co-instructed this course in Kuwait in 2010.