Israel

**Background**

The Buckle Up program was based on a multifaceted approach, using multiple strategies for injury prevention. Most of the strategies (see below) commenced in 2002.

1. **Capacity building:** Training of professionals including child passenger safety instructor and technician training courses based on the National Highway Transportation System Administration (NHTSA) programme in the US; training of 80% of all maternity wards and public health nurses in Israel; training of thousands of teachers, kindergarten teachers, and daycare professionals.

2. **Public education:** Instruction of thousands of parents in maternity wards and well-baby clinics, and the development of educational programmes targeted at children 4-9 years old. An information hotline regarding child passenger safety for parents and car seat ‘check up’ events.

3. **Social Marketing:** Promotion of booster seats as appropriate restraint for older children, increasing availability of booster seats in toy stores, drugstores and hardware stores, and redesigning booster seat fabric to be more appealing for older children. Annual national media campaigns directed at parents and economic incentives through 30% discount offerings on child safety seats and booster seats by local dealers during the annual campaign period.

4. **Legislation:** Changes in the mandatory transportation regulations concerning child passenger safety incorporated into national legislation in November 2004 including specifying the safest ways to drive with children.

5. **Enforcement:** Police trained in child passenger safety and implementation of police led highly visible enforcement campaigns that including positive messaging and issuing citations.

6. **Evaluation:** Development of a monitoring survey system.

**Policy Background/ Driving Force**

Motor vehicle crashes are one of the leading causes of death and injury to children in Israel. In 2001 in Israel, the overall paediatric injury rate for children 0-14 years of age traveling as passengers in cars was 160 per 100,000 population.

Child-restraint systems (CRS) have been proven to be life-saving measures in reducing death and injury to children in motor vehicle crashes.

Baseline measures of public knowledge regarding child passenger safety (CPS) in Israel established that knowledge levels were low and led to the inception of a multifaceted series of interventions to increase safe behaviour.
Partners
• National Road Safety Authority
• Ministry of Transport and Road Safety
• Ministry of Health
• Ministry of Education
• Businesses
• Communications Media
• Parliamentary Committee on the Rights of the Child
• Non-governmental organisations
• National and Local Police
• Local Authorities
• Hospitals and family health centres

Aims & Objectives
• To reduce injuries and injury severity in road crashes among children in Israel
• To increase child passenger safety and use of restraints among children age 0-15 years

Evaluation
Specific, uncontrolled observational behavioural studies have been conducted annually since 2002. The evaluation has also included telephone surveys regarding knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour.

Observational data show a significant decrease in the percentage of children 0-15 years riding unrestrained from 21% in 2002 to 10% in 2005 (p<0.0001), as well as a slight increase in the percentage of children 0-15 years riding appropriately restrained during the same time period (39% to 43%, p<0.05). A closer examination of the appropriately restrained children by age shows a significant increase in appropriately restrained infants less than one year (40% to 59%, p<0.001). Other significant changes include an increased from 17% to 23% for 5-9 year olds (p<0.05) and an increase from 50% to 59% for 10-15 year olds (p<0.01). No significant change was noted for 1-4 year olds.

Data also revealed a large decrease from 16% to 7.6% (p<0.0001) in the percentage of children riding in the front seat. The age groups most affected were 5-9 year olds (8% to 3.4%, p<0.0001) and 10-15 year olds (39% to 11.4%, p<0.0001). Again no significant change was noted for 1-4 year olds.

The telephone surveys of knowledge, attitudes and behaviours found a significant improvement in parents’ knowledge concerning child passenger safety. Parents’ knowledge of the proper CRS for children aged <1, 4-5 and 6-8 years significantly increased from 2002-2005 (57% to 71%; 62% to 72% and 16% to 35%, respectively; p<0.01). Parents’ knowledge concerning child positioning in the car (front or back seat) also significantly increased for children aged <1 and 1-3 years during the study period 2002-2005 (49% to 63%, and 83% to 91%, respectively; p<0.01).

Initially designed and promoted by Beterem, the observational survey is now conducted annually by the National Road Safety Authority.

Key Steps
• Legislation and Enforcement: changes in legislation and regulations, and enforcement by the police in special campaigns increased public awareness of the topic, as well as the demand for further information on the subject.
• Training professionals from various fields to facilitate capacity building within different sectors. Modelling of training activities on existing standardised programme (NHTSA programme from the US).
• Media Campaigns to increase public awareness of the importance of the use of correct CRS. Booster seats, previously unfamiliar to the public, received publicity and became common place.
• Cooperation with private companies to modify CRS products to make them more acceptable to target audience, promote safety equipment sales and provide funding for the production of informational materials to raise awareness.
• Research and evaluation to examine the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of parents and children regarding CPS. Engagement of partners in local communities regarding proposed local activities, timeframes, etc.

Lessons Learned
Barriers:
• As child passenger restraint is not one of law enforcement’s top priorities (speeding and driving under the influence are), enlisting their interest and cooperation as part of the program and more specifically their special operations to enforce the law including issuing citations to adults when children are not restrained properly, was challenging and required specific and ongoing efforts.
Positioning booster seats as accepted CRS for older children among parents and children age of 5-9 years and as a desired safety product in the car was challenging and required changing the public’s concept of booster seats (that they are only for toddlers) as well as convincing CRS producers to change the look of the boosters.

The effect of legislation can take time, mainly due to the lag in law enforcement implementation and the period needed for the public to assimilate the behavior into everyday use.

**Facilitators:**

- Scientific evidence concerning CRS as a life-saving measure in motor vehicle crashes, greatly facilitated the recruitment of partners for the initiative.
- The cooperation of both the government sector as well as the business sector, were a key facilitator to success as they provided complementary components in the programme. While the government had the law passed, enforced and had extensive campaigns, the importers of CRS had to have in their stocks enough boosters and encourage retail stores other than baby products stores to sell them.
- Coordinating work of all relevant bodies (government, business and media) had a great effect on the success of the program by making the effect synchronized. For example, having the television and radio campaign synchronized with education at schools and reduced costs of CRS by retailers, communicated the booster seat message via multiple channels and enabled people to understand that booster seats are necessary.

**Advice to Countries/ Transferability**

- Consider conducting an initial survey to capture the current situation and problems of child passenger safety before starting the programme. This step is crucial in order to identify the most appropriate interventions to address local problems.
- The use of several coordinated and complimentary strategies is crucial, and it also allows synchronization over time between education and capacity building, media campaign, sales promotion and enforcement.
- The work undertaken should be systematic and include a long term commitment in order to see positive results.
- Although legislation is important, creating social norms is the foundation of the whole process. The police can be a partner for creating a new social norm, even before the law comes into effect, through positive reinforcement activities.
- Monitoring and evaluation demands a substantial amount of resources and effort, but of key to success in partnership building in design and ongoing improvement of the intervention and in demonstrating impact. Scientific findings also serve as a media hook and the basis for the creation of social norms.

**References, Additional Information**


**Contact**

Name: Michal Klein
Address: Beterem – The National Center for Children’s Safety & Health
P.O.B. 7050, Hasivim 1, Kiryat Matalon Petah-Tikva, 49170 Israel
Tel: ++972-3-9263108
E-mail: michalk@beterem.org