



Michigan's Primary Enforcement Seat Belt Law

CSTE/ASTHO Webinar

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Overview of Process in Michigan

- Current primary enforcement law
- Timeframe and Process
- Who Was Involved
- Role of State Health Department
- Challenges and Lessons Learned
- Impact of the Law

Current Law

- Passengers 8-15 to buckle up in all seating positions
- Drivers and front seat passengers to be buckled up
- Children younger than age 4 to ride in a car seat in the rear seat if the vehicle has a rear seat
- Children younger than age 8 or shorter than 4'9" must be properly buckled in a car seat or booster seat.

Timeframe and Process

- Data Collection
 - Direct seat belt observation study
 - Phone survey of registered voters
- Statewide, multidisciplinary coalition
- Consistent message
- Role of health department

Challenges/Solutions

- Challenges:
 - Racial profiling
 - Police Harassment
- Solutions:
 - Three sections added to law
 - 3-year study to investigate whether changing Michigan's safety belt law from secondary to primary (standard) enforcement resulted in police harassment

Impact of the Law

- Seat belt use rose from 70% in 1999 to 83.5% in 2000 to 97.9% in 2009
- Motor vehicle fatalities decreased from 1,386 in 1999 to 871 in 2009 (37% decrease)
- Non-fatal motor vehicle injuries decreased from 124,601 in 1999 to 70,931 in 2009 (43% decrease)