

# Buckle Up for Life: Toyota and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center Increase Child Passenger Safety across the Country and Expand Program

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New York, N.Y., Sept. 10, 2014 – What if there were a way to prevent a leading cause of childhood death, but three out of four of us were doing it wrong? The startling truth is that a car seat can dramatically reduce childhood death and injury from motor vehicle crashes, but 75 percent are installed incorrectly.[\[1\]](#)

With Child Passenger Safety Week upon us, the good news is that community-based programs are making a difference. *Buckle Up for Life* is a national education program, created in 2004 by [Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center](#) and [Toyota](#), to save children's lives. Over the last ten years, it has grown to include a network of more than a dozen of the nation's leading children's hospitals and has educated more than 17,000 people about the proper use of car seats and seat belts. Toyota's sponsorship has provided funding for over 40,000 car seats for families in need.

This year, *Buckle Up for Life* will expand to three new cities through partnerships with Boston Children's Hospital (Boston, Massachusetts), Lucile Packard Children's Hospital (Stanford, California) and Maynard Children's Hospital at Vidant Medical Center (Greenville, North Carolina.)

On average, community organizations that have offered *Buckle Up for Life* have observed a marked improvement in members' auto safety behaviors, including:

- The rate of children unrestrained in cars decreased from one in four to less than one in ten;
- The rate of children in car seats increased from almost one in three to one in two; and
- A 15 percent increase in use of seat belts for adults, from 71 percent to 86 percent.

"When we launched *Buckle Up for Life* with Toyota ten years ago, we believed that convening families, leading children's hospitals and trusted community organizations could have a powerful effect on improving children's safety," said Dr. Victor Garcia, founding director of trauma services, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. "We are humbled by our impact, but know we have much farther to go. We want every family to have the education and resources necessary to keep their children safe."

To further raise awareness of the importance of child passenger safety, *Buckle Up for Life* released a television Public Service Advertisement (PSA) today that takes a humorous and empathetic look at how frustrating installing a car seat can be. You can view it [here](#). Additionally, *Buckle Up for Life* new radio PSAs and web banners were also unveiled. Many of the materials are available in Spanish, and will air in time that is entirely donated by the media.

"While our new PSA takes a decidedly humorous look at installing a car seat, I think many parents would say we aren't too far off from reality," said Latondra Newton, chief corporate social responsibility officer, Toyota North America. "I don't know anyone who has not struggled with a car seat or watched a friend or family member do the same. But the truth is that a properly installed car seat can mean the difference between life and death in a

crash. That's why Toyota is so committed to our work with Cincinnati Children's on *Buckle Up for Life*."

### ***Buckle Up for Life Convenes Panel of Child Passenger Safety Experts for Google+ Hangout***

As part of its mission to educate and empower parents and caregivers nationwide, ***Buckle Up for Life*** will host a **live Google+ Hangout today at 12:00 pm, ET** to discuss child passenger safety. Moderated by Stephanie Ruhle, managing editor and "Market Makers" anchor, *Bloomberg Television*, this social event features a range of child safety experts, including [Rep. Grace Meng](#) (D-NY), founder and Co-Chair of the Kids' Safety Caucus, the first bipartisan coalition in the House that promotes child-safety issues. You may tune-in to the live panel discussion through Google+ today: <http://bit.ly/1nuMYUO>.

"As a parent and Member of Congress, nothing is more important than protecting our nation's children," said Rep. Meng. "That's why I co-founded the Kids' Safety Caucus and am proud to partner with organizations, like Buckle Up for Life, that are making a difference in improving children's safety in my community and many others."

Other experts featured in the Google+ Hangout include:

- Dr. Rebeccah L. Brown, Pediatric Surgeon, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center;
- Jennifer Pelky, Vehicle Safety Engineer at Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing North America and Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician.

The Google+ Hangout is part of *Buckle Up for Life*'s strategy to offer digital resources that provide parents with easy and accessible safety tips. [BuckleUpforLife.org](http://BuckleUpforLife.org) features tools, videos and other content in English and Spanish and is optimized for mobile so you can access information on the go on your smart phone or tablet.

[1] Durbin, D. R. (2011). [Technical report—Child passenger safety](#) . Pediatrics, 127(4). Advance online publication. doi:10.1542/peds.2011-0215; NHTSA January 2004 report "Misuse of Child Restraints"