

Cincinnati Children's and Toyota Expand National Safety Program to Address Significant Disparity in Motor Vehicle Deaths Among Minority Children

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July 9, 2012 – NEW YORK, NY – Responding to disproportionate rates of African American and Hispanic children dying in motor vehicle-related crashes, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and Toyota today announced that they are doubling the reach of their groundbreaking safety education program *Buckle Up for Life*. *Buckle Up for Life* – or *Abróchate la Vida in Spanish* – is the only national program of its kind. To view a video about the program, please click [here](#).

Research analyzed by Cincinnati Children's – a national leader in pediatric and adolescent medicine – shows that African American and Hispanic children are more likely than other children to die in motor vehicle crashes. Research also shows that, due to multiple factors, African American and Hispanic children are significantly less likely than non-African American and non-Hispanic children to be buckled up in seat belts or car seats.

Key Facts

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children in the U.S. between the ages of 1 and 12.[i]
- Three out of every 4 car seats are not used or installed correctly[ii] and almost 50% of fatally injured children were unrestrained at the time of a crash.[iii]
- In crashes involving fatalities in children under 14, seat belt use is lower among African Americans than among all other race or ethnic groups.[iv]
- Hispanic children are significantly less likely to be buckled up than Non-Hispanic children across all age groups.[v]
- The number of children buckled up nearly tripled among the families who participated in one of *Buckle Up for Life*'s pilot cities.[vi]

Expansion Doubles the Reach of *Buckle Up for Life*

The new locations for *Buckle Up for Life* include Houston, Las Vegas, Philadelphia and Orange County, Calif. They join programs already in place with local hospital partners in Chicago, Cincinnati, Los Angeles and San Antonio. The program's expansion to Las Vegas is being conducted in conjunction with Children's Hospital of Nevada at UMC. Hospital partners in Houston, Philadelphia and Orange County will be announced soon.

"Years ago, a mother who was involved in a car crash in which her child died said something to me that to this day haunts me but also inspires me, 'If I only knew,'" said Dr. Victor Garcia, founding director of Trauma Services at Cincinnati Children's, professor of pediatric surgery and a co-founder of *Buckle Up for Life*. "The number of African American and Hispanic children dying unnecessarily in motor vehicle-related crashes is alarming, something I see first hand in my work as a trauma surgeon. This is a public health emergency that can be avoided and needs to be addressed. We know that safety education and access to car seats can make a major difference, and working with Toyota, we are glad to have the opportunity to help."

"At Toyota, we are strongly committed to the belief that everyone deserves to be safe," said Patricia Salas Pineda, group vice president of National Philanthropy and the Toyota USA Foundation at Toyota Motor North

America. “Through our educational outreach, Collaborative Safety Research Center and numerous partnerships with leading hospitals, nonprofits and research universities nationwide, Toyota is engaged extensively in programs that help ensure that drivers and passengers are safe at every stage of life. *Buckle Up for Life* is a vital commitment for Toyota, and we are proud to be working with the visionary medical staff at Cincinnati Children’s and with local hospital partners across the country to expand its reach.” Toyota’s support for *Buckle Up for Life* is part of the company’s ongoing commitment to help make local communities safer and stronger. The company has contributed more than half-a-billion dollars to nonprofits throughout the U.S. over the past 20 years. Today’s announcement was made at the National Council of La Raza annual conference in Las Vegas.

About Buckle Up for Life/Abróchate a la Vida

Buckle Up for Life, or Abróchate a la Vida, is a national, community-based injury prevention initiative supporting the African American and Hispanic communities. Working with local hospitals and churches, *Buckle Up for Life* addresses the economic, cultural and, where appropriate, language barriers to motor vehicle safety. Over a six-week period, the program’s medical experts and trained specialists work closely with participants of all ages to deliver vital safety information in an engaging, culturally sensitive and memorable way. Participants are eligible to receive free car seats, and they are matched with certified child passenger safety technicians to help install these car seats and ensure that children are properly restrained. *Buckle Up for Life*, which began in 2004, was developed jointly by trauma specialists at Cincinnati Children’s and vehicle safety experts at Toyota. National expansion of the program has been sponsored by Toyota. Additional information is available at www.buckleupforlife.org.

[i] <http://www.safercar.gov/parents/CarSeats.htm#>

[ii] <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/LATCH/>

[iii]

[http://www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety/Research+&+Evaluation/Motor+Vehicle+Occupant+Protection+Facts+\(revised+2008\)](http://www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety/Research+&+Evaluation/Motor+Vehicle+Occupant+Protection+Facts+(revised+2008))

[iv] NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts (2008 Data) — Research Note

[v] NHTSA 2009 National Survey of the Use of Booster Seats, Sept. 2010

[vi] Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Buckle Up for Life Results