

Make-It-Click Newsletter

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Important Car Safety Facts for Tweens

- Over 1200 tweens are injured *daily* in motor vehicle crashes in the U.S.
- Annually in Virginia, 50% of tweens involved in crashes are *completely unrestrained*.
- Safety belts *reduce the risk* of moderate to fatal injury by 50%.
- The safest place in a car for a child under 13 is the back seat; however, 73% of tweens sit in the front seat.

Want to get involved?

Let us know!

Kelli Will, Ph.D.

willke@evms.edu

(757) 668.6449

Krystall Dunaway, M.S.

dunawake@evms.edu

(757) 668.6451

Edward Lorek, M.S.

lorekej@evms.edu

(757) 668.6434

Diane A. Kokorelis, B.S.

kokoreda@evms.edu

(757) 668.6452

What is Make-It-Click?

The Make-it-Click program aims to increase seatbelt and backseat use among 8-12 year-old children, or tweens, in the Portsmouth Public School System.

This safety program teaches motor vehicle safety through a peer-led student program, parent flyers, buckle-up contests, safety-themed classroom assignments, and other educational activities.

Make-it-Click is the first and only seat belt program in VA that specifically targets tweens. Tweens are at an ideal age for intervention because they are just starting to make their own decisions and are starting to develop safety habits.

Make-it-Click is a partnership between Ports-

mouth Public Schools and Eastern Virginia Medical School. It is funded by a grant from the US Department of Transportation and Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.



Why is Make-It-Click Important for Douglass Park Students?

To understand the safety knowledge and practices of Douglass Park students, we surveyed 177 tweens and conducted 57 parking lot observations at Douglass Park in Fall 2008. The results were troublesome.

In response to the surveys, nearly half

(46%) of the tweens responded that they do not wear their seatbelt every time they ride in a car, and 44% responded that they usually sit in the front seat.

Also, we observed that **60% of Douglass Park tweens were not wearing their seatbelt and 54%**

were sitting in the front seat when dropped off for school.

These results demonstrate an unfortunate trend among tweens across the state and further underscore the need for the Make-it-Click program at Douglass Park.

Current Make-It-Click Initiatives

Make-it-Click program staff are working with teachers in Douglass Park and the Boys & Girls Club on a number of initiatives planned for 2008-2009 school year. Special thanks to Mr. Brown, Mr. Burdick, Mr. Bond, and Mrs. Waring-Sorrell for their help planning and rolling out this year's initiatives!

Some interventions planned for this winter include the Make-it-Click Creativity Contest, where students are encouraged to submit posters or musical works supporting the theme, "How do you stay safe in the car?"

Second, all teachers will soon receive copies of an SOL-compliant homework assign-

ment that encourages tweens to "Be the Buckle Boss" by observing and teaching car safety practices in the family car. Another homework assignment will send tweens on a Safety Scavenger Hunt.



Make-It-Click Initiatives are SOL Compliant!

Not only is Make-it-Click a great program to teach tweens about safety belt and backseat use, but many of the initiatives we plan to roll out this year are SOL compliant!

Specifically, the "Be the Buckle Boss" homework assignment, the "Belted in the Back Challenge", and the Safety Scavenger Hunt support many Math SOL requirements. These include telling time to the nearest minute, collecting and organizing data using observations and sur-

veys, constructing and interpreting graphs, predicting the likelihood of outcomes, finding the mean, median, mode, and range of a set of data, and describing and comparing two sets of data using ratios.

The Buckie Buckle play and Public Service Announcements support many English SOL requirements, such as reading and demonstrating compre-

hension of fiction, writing narratives and explanations, and making oral presentations.

The "Belted in the Back Challenge" also supports some Science SOL requirements, including conducting investigations in which predictions and observa-

tions are made and developing questions to formulate hypotheses.

"Many of the initiatives we plan to introduce this year are SOL compliant!"

Upcoming Make-It-Click Initiatives

Some interventions planned for this spring include a "Belted in the Back Challenge," where classes or grades will compete to achieve the highest rate of students buckled in



the back (during parking lot observations).

We are also working with the Boys & Girls Club to implement a number of safety-themed activities after school, which will include

hosting a Make-it-Click Student Club, staging a Buckie Buckle play, and having students write and direct their own Public Service Announcements. Finally, we will continue distributing various parent education flyers in order to help parents persuade tweens to sit buckled in the backseat.