



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Teen seatbelt enforcement for SAFE Program***

*Local law enforcement on the lookout for teens without seatbelts*

Law enforcement agencies across Kansas will participate in an aggressive campaign in and around schools to both educate and enforce seatbelt laws, February 27 - March 12. This is part of a program called SAFE (Seatbelts Are For Everyone), which is designed to promote and reward seatbelt use among teens, while encouraging officers to strictly enforce the seatbelt law.

In 2009, nearly 24,000 teens were involved in car crashes in Kansas. Forty-five teens died as a result of those crashes, and of those, 34 (75%) were not wearing seatbelts. In an effort to change this trend, students from more than 100 high schools in 30 counties across Kansas are now participating in SAFE.

Two years ago, the first SAFE program was implemented in Crawford County. The results have been outstanding, with Crawford County now seeing one of the highest seatbelt usage rates among its teens. Even more importantly, the county had 10 rollover crashes involving teens last year, and in 9 of those crashes all occupants were buckled up, resulting in minor or no injuries.

Seatbelts have been proven to save lives and prevent serious injuries. Drivers should make sure everyone in the vehicle is buckled before starting the engine. Law enforcement officers are reminding everyone to buckle up, every trip, every time. In Kansas, it's the law.

To learn more about SAFE and see which counties are participating in 2011, go to [www.ktsro.org](http://www.ktsro.org) and click on SAFE.