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■ Safety zone

Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office program targets teens: Traffic crashes are the No. 1 cause of death for America's teenagers, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that while teen drivers account for only 7 percent of the driving population, they account for 14 percent of traffic fatalities and 20 percent of all traffic crashes. To address this problem, the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office, Kansas Highway Patrol Technical Trooper Tim McCool, and John Drees of Lawrence Memorial Hospital's Community Relations Department have developed a presentation that can be used in any community.

The PowerPoint program, entitled "Ride Like a Friend," takes a multifaceted approach to helping teens address the dangers of drinking, as well as understanding state regulations on alcohol and seat belt use and the importance of driving safely. "Ride Like a Friend" is a tool safety advocates, medical professionals and law enforcement officials can use together to combat underage drinking, reckless driving and impaired driving in their own communities. It stresses the importance of teen passengers taking responsibility for limiting their distracting behaviors, as well.

The program begins by focusing on the medical consequences (including financial cost) of alcohol use. Teens are invited into "a night in the emergency room" to experience the lives of four real-life individuals negatively affected in various ways by the use of alcohol. Secondly, teens are reminded of Kansas laws regarding underage alcohol use and impaired driving. Lastly, the program addresses teen behaviors such as reckless driving that contribute to their disproportionate traffic crash and fatality rates.

KTSRO encourages you to use the "Ride Like a Friend" program in your own community. The program is free to all and can be requested by contacting Traffic Safety Specialist Kathryn Brown at 800-416-2522 or kathryn.brown@dcca.org.

Ticket toll

Stimulus money to fund highway projects: The Kansas Department of Transportation recently announced new transportation projects designed to help create jobs, improve safety and encourage economic growth in Kansas.

Lieutenant Governor Mark Parkinson said the state will receive about \$380 million from the stimulus bill targeted for transportation projects. Based on estimates from the Federal Highway Administration, Kansas could gain more than 10,000 jobs from the various proposed projects.

To find out more, visit the [news release section](#) of the [KDOT Web site](#).

From the road

The Kansas Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Safety and Technology Web site provides important information regarding child passenger safety, occupant protection, impaired driving and more. The site also offers the information you need to keep up with current traffic safety events and news. Visit the site [here](#), and don't forget to bookmark it.

Keep up with the latest news in the world of transportation with *The Fast Lane*. Former U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Mary Peters launched the Internet blog to promote discussion of important transportation issues. To subscribe to *The Fast Lane*, [click here](#).

And in Kansas, [visit K-TOC](#), the Kansas Transportation Online Community, to keep up on the latest discussions and blogs by transportation officials.

The Regional Prevention Center of East Central Kansas is reaching out to encourage Kansans to lead healthy and productive lives. The RPC is now offering tips on the Web on a variety of topics for teens and adults - from substance abuse to successful methods to bring health and safety initiatives to your own community. Check out the blog [here](#).

Roadmap

Time to travel: Plan ahead for your journey by checking out up-to-date driving conditions, construction areas, closed roads and the weather forecast. For a detailed look at road conditions statewide, including photos of highways, visit the Kansas Department of Transportation's [511 Web site](#).

Last chance notice: Annual safety conference coming to Wichita: "Kansas Roadways: Meeting the Safety Challenge," is the theme for the Kansas Department of Transportation's 2009 Transportation Safety Conference, which is being held April 7-8 at the Hyatt Wichita.

The conference is designed to share and update information from different areas of the transportation safety community with a focus on injury control, law enforcement, youth issues and roadway safety.

For more information and registration, visit KU's Continuing Education [Web site](#).

Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians can register for an annual CPS update to be held April 6, also at the Hyatt Wichita. CPS technicians can earn six continuing education credits for the day's session. If you have not received a registration form through email, please contact the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office at 800-416-2552 or email ktsro@dcca.org for more information.

Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office project to be honored at Lifesaver's: The work of the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office will be on display during the 2009 Lifesaver's Conference on highway safety priorities in Nashville.

KTSRO's Brenda Courtois helped develop a series of posters to assist local communities across the state with their own SafeRide programs. SafeRide programs offer free rides to college students and others in different areas across Kansas, including the University of Kansas, Kansas State University, Wichita State University, Washburn University and others. The programs have been an integral tool in combating impaired driving, especially in these college communities.

For more information on SafeRide programs, contact KTSTO at 800-416-2522 or ktsro@dcca.org. To learn more about Lifesaver's, visit the [Web site](#).

Kansas Senate approves seat belt law: The Kansas Senate has given its approval to a bill that would beef up the current law regarding seat belt use in the state. If passed by the House, the bill would require all motor vehicle occupants to wear seat belts or face the risk of being pulled over and fined for the violation.

To find out more, visit the Kansas Legislature [Web site](#) or to read the full text of the bill, [click here](#).

NHTSA to review standards: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration acknowledges that the use of child safety seats is crucial to the safety of infants and children traveling on U.S. highways.

NHTSA and other safety advocates hold that correctly placing children in the proper safety restraints in the rear seat of vehicles is the best protection against injuries and fatalities caused by traffic crashes.

Every child seat sold on the market today meets safety standards set forth by NHTSA, and the agency uses thorough crash testing to replicate the forces of real-life crashes. Still, NHTSA is beginning a complete review of current child safety seat standards.

For additional information on child safety seats, visit NHTSA's [Web site](#) and click on "Child Safety Seats."



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