

# BELT-ABOUTS

RILEY HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN INDIANA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

## WHAT YOU WILL LEARN TODAY

You live in a democracy. In a democracy, you have the right to speak out for something in which you believe or you think will help make people's lives better. Wearing safety belts can help improve people's lives. This lesson will give you some ideas on how to speak out for safety belts.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Almost every state now has a **law** that requires drivers and passengers to buckle up. But it wasn't always that way.

In the 1970's and 1980's, some people were worried that too many children and adults were being injured or killed in crashes because they weren't wearing safety belts. These people, which included parents, doctors, teachers, and **government**

officials, became advocates for safety belts.

These **advocates** believed wearing safety belts would help make people's lives better. They advocated for a safety belt law. They talked to friends and neighbors. They wrote letters to newspapers. They gave speeches. They went to their state governments and didn't give up until safety belt laws were **legislated**.



## KEY WORDS:

**advocate** (*ad' və kāt*) to recommend publicly; favor; urge. Person who speaks in favor of any cause, defender, supporter.

**democracy** (*dī mok' rə se*) a form of government in which the power belongs to the people, who exercise their power through representatives they have elected

**government** (*gūv' ərn ment*) a system of governing, ruling, directing, or managing

**law** (*lô*) a rule or regulation set up by the government to be followed by all people under its authority

**legislate** (*lej' is lat*) the making or enacting of laws

# YOUR TURN

You can be an advocate for safety belts. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Write an editorial or a letter to the editor of your local newspaper on why seatbelts should be used.
2. Talk to younger children in your school about how important it is to buckle-up. Make it fun. You can play the Safety Says game which is with this lesson.

3. You can also borrow a safety mascot to visit other classrooms. For example, in Indiana you can get the Buckle-up Bug from the Automotive Safety for Children Program (1-800-KID-N-CAR). The crash test dummies, Vince and Larry, can be borrowed from your State's Office of Traffic Safety.

## SAFETY SAYS GAME

Objective: This game will help build an awareness of automotive safety precautions while sharpening the students listening skills.

### DIRECTIONS:

1. This game is played to the rules of Simon Says.
2. The game leader gives the commands listed below
3. The children should only follow the commands that begin with "Safety Says"
4. Do not eliminate a player for not properly following commands
5. After all the commands have been given, discuss with everyone why they should or should not follow each command
6. Congratulate all players for learning how to be safe in an automobile

**SAFETY SAYS:** Sit as if you were in a car with two in front and two in back

**SAFETY SAYS:** Get in the car

**SAFETY SAYS:** Shut the door

Start the car

**SAFETY SAYS:** Lock the door

Start the car

**SAFETY SAYS:** Fasten your seat belts

**SAFETY SAYS:** Start the car

**SAFETY SAYS:** Driver make sure everyone has fastened their seat belt

**SAFETY SAYS:** Go for a drive

Front passenger turn the radio up loud

Rear passengers jump up and down

**SAFETY SAYS:** Stop the car and park

**SAFETY SAYS:** Turn off the car

**SAFETY SAYS:** Get out of the car

**SAFETY SAYS:** Lock the doors

Shut the doors

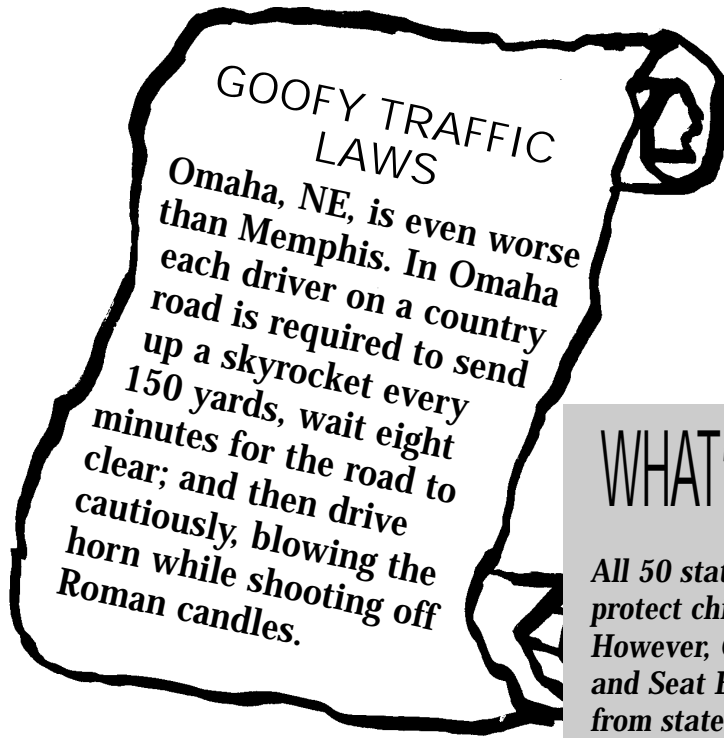
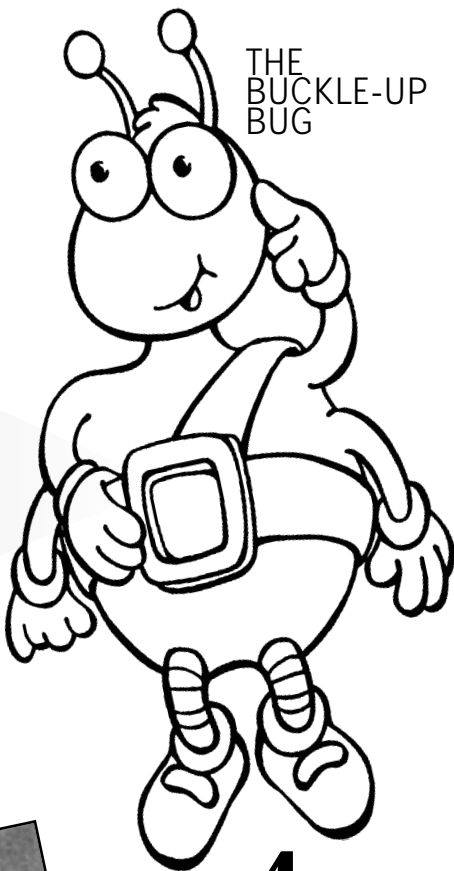
**SAFETY SAYS:** Make sure you have the keys and everything else you need

**SAFETY SAYS:** Shut the doors

**SAFETY SAYS:** Pat yourself on the back for a safe ride in your automobile



**GOOFY TRAFFIC LAWS**  
Still on the books in Memphis, TN, is a law that conjures up the dawn of the automobile era. It requires each motorist to employ a man to run in front of the car, waving a red flag to warn approaching pedestrians.



**4. Make posters or collages about why it is important to wear safety belts. Put them up in your school.**

**5. Design a brochure about safety belts. Use a copy machine to make copies. Pass them out to classmates, teachers, and other students at your school.**



**6. Ask a guest speaker who knows a lot about safety, like a police officer, fireman, or doctor, to come to your school to talk about the importance of wearing safety belts.**

## WHAT'S LAWFUL?

All 50 states have laws that protect children in vehicles. However, Child Restraint and Seat Belt laws can vary from state to state. Do you know what law governs your safety in a vehicle?

Work in small groups to create a Safety Belt Law. Be sure to include elements such as:

**Who should wear safety belts in a vehicle**

**Where in the vehicle safety belts should be worn**

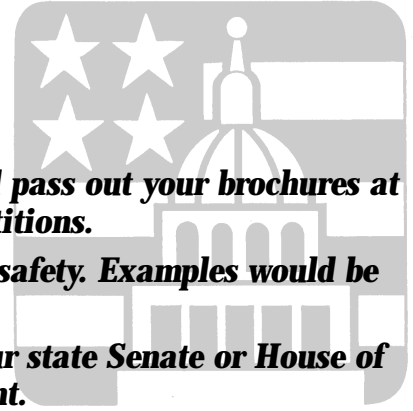
**Types of vehicles in which belts should be worn and exclusions**

**Types of penalties for disobeying the law**

After you have written your law (laws), compare with others in your class. Vote on what law is best. What elements did it have that made it the best?

What is your state's law? Compare your law with your state's law.

# ON YOUR OWN



**You can be an advocate for safety anywhere. Hang your posters and pass out your brochures at after school activities, like scouts, dance lessons, or athletic competitions.**

**Volunteer with a local group which is concerned with children and safety. Examples would be daycares, hospitals, clubs, or groups like SAFE KIDS.**

**Have you ever wanted to experience first-hand what happens in your state Senate or House of Representatives? If so, you could visit your local or state government.**

## resource list

All good advocates need a resource list of important organizations which can provide information or help. This one has been started for you. Complete it with information about health and safety related groups in your area.

If you have access to a computer and the internet, don't forget to search for World Wide Web sites for resources.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>TELEPHONE</b>
<b>AUTOMOTIVE SAFETY FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM</b> Riley Hospital for Children	575 West Drive, Room 004 Indianapolis, IN 46202	TEL: 317.274.2977 (Indiana) 1.800.543.6227
<b>INSURANCE INSTITUTE FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY</b> Communications Department	1005 North Glebe Road Arlington, VA 22201	TEL: 703.247.1500 FAX: 703.214.1678
<b>NATL. HWY. TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION</b> Office of Occupant Protection, NTS-13	400 7th Street, S.W. Washington, DC 20590	FAX: 202.493.2062
<b>NATIONAL SAFE KIDS</b>	111 Michigan Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC 20010	TEL: 202.939.4993

## SAFETY FACTS

Car crashes are one of the leading causes of death and injury to children.

Safety belts save lives.

Safety belts should be worn low and snug across the hips and across the chest.

Children should sit in the rear seat, far away from a passenger side airbag, and be properly restrained.