

OBJECTIVES:

After this lesson students will be able to:

- Define the 5 vocabulary words
- Explain two ways in which they can advocate for safety belts



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.

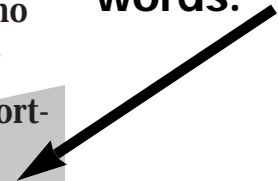
democracy (di mok' rə se) a form of government in which the power belongs to the people, who exercise their power through representatives they have elected

government (guv' 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

1. Read and discuss vocabulary words.



2. Discuss what it means to live in a democracy. Compare it with other forms of governments. Why is it easier to be an advocate in a democracy than in another form of government, such as a dictatorship?

YOUR TURN

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

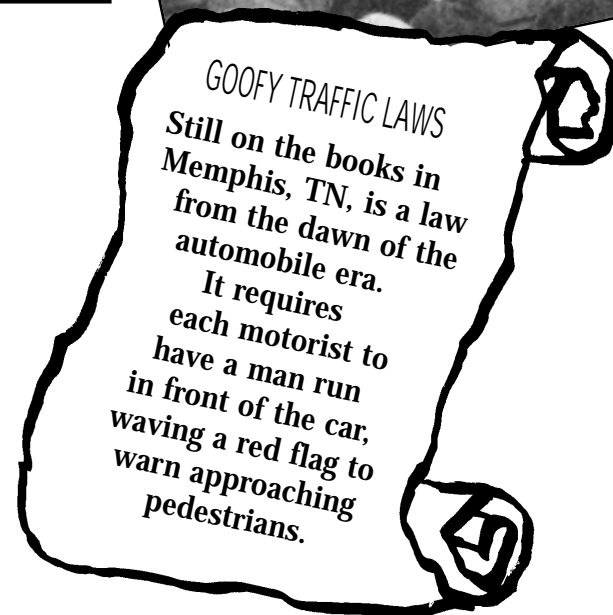
- 1.** Write an editorial or a letter to the editor of your local newspaper on why seatbelts should be used.
- 2.** Talk to younger children in your school about how important it is to buckle-up. Make it fun. You can play the Safety Says game which is with this lesson.

- 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.

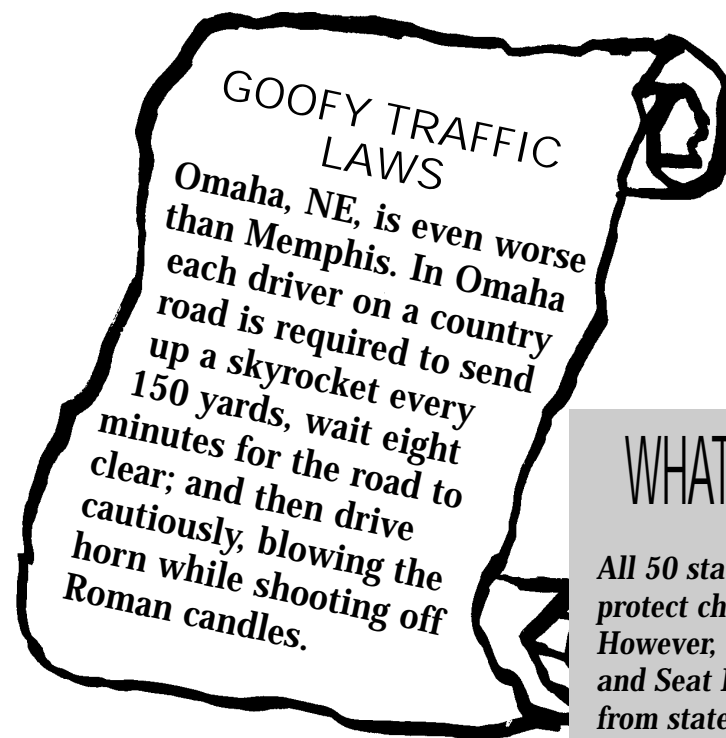
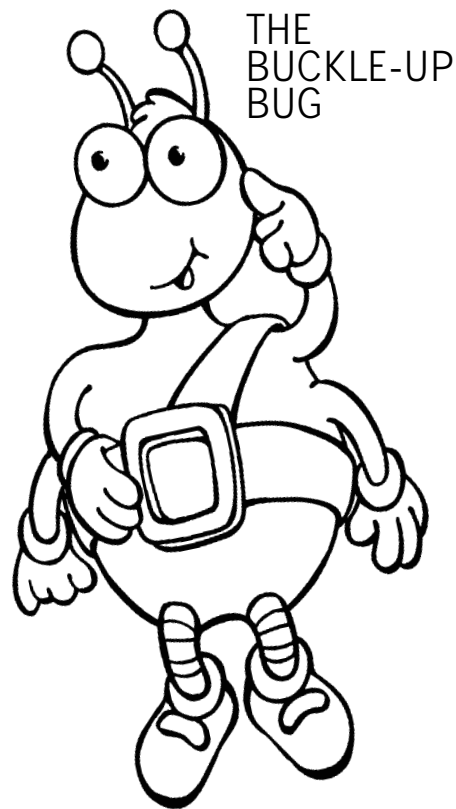
SAFETY SAYS GAME

- DIRECTIONS:**
1. This game is played to the rules of Simon Says.
 2. The game leader gives the commands listed below
 3. Players should only follow the commands that begin with "Safety Says"

- 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



- 3.** Laws vary from state to state. For example, in Indiana the Child Restraint Law states that children from birth until 3 years of age must ride in a child restraint and 3 and 4 year olds must ride in either a child restraint or safety belt anywhere in the vehicle. It is a primary law which means that a police officer can stop a driver who is violating the law. The Indiana Safety Belt Law is a secondary law which means a police officer must first stop the driver for another reason such as speeding. Violation of the seat belt law is a secondary offense. The Safety Belt Law states that occupants 5 years of age and older must be belted in the front seat of the vehicle. Many states are in the process of trying to strengthen their laws so that more comprehensive coverage is achieved.



4. How do the laws your students made compare to the Ideal Law and your state's law?

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 safety belts should be worn

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 items did it have that made it the best?

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

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The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests the following elements of an Ideal Law to protect children in vehicles:

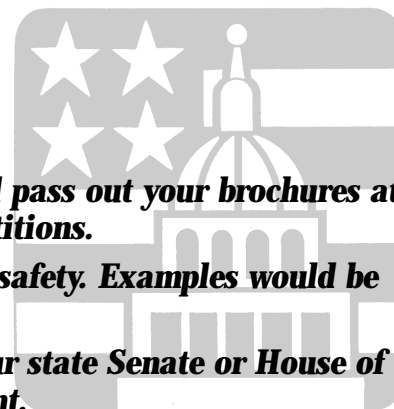
1. Include all children under age 16.
2. Child restraint systems (CRS) required up to age 4 and 40 pounds, with safety belts or CRS allowed over that age.
3. All sitting positions included, and all occupants to be restrained.
4. Primary enforcement measure (understood unless law specifies secondary enforcement).
5. Driver responsible for child passengers under 16.
6. All motor vehicles (in-state or out-of-state) equipped with safety belts included. Ban on passengers in the cargo areas of pickup trucks.
7. A suggested fine of \$50 - 75, the approximate cost of a convertible CRS.
8. Portion of fine earmarked to help support state child passenger safety programs.

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.



resourcelist 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.

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