

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Crash Highlights Dangers to Children Riding with Impaired Drivers

Highland, CA (January 31, 2018) – Three Highland children, ages 1, 2, and 7, were transported to the hospital after their mother, who was allegedly driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, crashed into a parked car.

The crash highlights the dangers faced by child passengers when an impaired parent or other adult gets behind the wheel. “Kids can’t refuse to get into a vehicle with an impaired driver,” said Stephanie Tombrello, Executive Director of SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. “They don’t have a voice or a choice in these situations – they can’t say ‘no.’” There was another adult in the vehicle being driven by the mother. However, it is unknown if that other adult also was impaired.

Two hundred children 13 and under were killed in DUI crashes during 2013. One-hundred-twenty-two of those children were riding with an impaired driver. Many of these children also were riding unrestrained.

“There is hope, but there is also much more work to be done. Unrestrained child passenger deaths have declined from 34 to 20 percent over a ten-year period,” says Tombrello. “However, most people have no idea that many impaired drivers think nothing of taking children along for the ride.”

Tombrello continued, “Of convicted impaired drivers, 50-75% keep driving on suspended licenses, so DUI laws need to be strengthened; enforcement and prosecution need to be pursued more effectively; and both professionals and the public need to be made more aware of this ongoing problem. Children need an adult to intervene because they cannot say, ‘I won’t go.’”

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