



SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.

For immediate release

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Big Win for Pasadena Kids: Facebook competition brings \$25,000 to prevention program at local schools

New Program to be Announced at Media Event

WHAT: News Conference and booster seat demonstration event.

WHY: Traffic crashes are the #1 cause of death and serious injury to children. Booster seats halve injury rates among elementary students, but most do not use them.

WHERE: Longfellow Elementary School, 1065 E Washington Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91104

WHEN: Tuesday, July 31, 10:00 a.m.

WHO: Eddie Martinez, State Farm Media Relations; Bryan Erckenbrack, State Farm Agency Field Executive; Stephanie Tombrello, Executive Director, SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.; Vice Mayor of Pasadena Margaret McAustin; Vice-President, Pasadena School Board Ed Honowitz; Pasadena Police Department; Huntington Hospital Injury Prevention Program; Dr. Diane Cullinane, Pasadena Child Development Associates; Erica Ingber, Principal, Longfellow Elementary School; members of the Longfellow Elementary School community.

TOPICS: Booster seat safety program for Pasadena kids; traffic safety.

(Pasadena, Calif. July 20, 2012) — A recent Facebook campaign has brought a big win to Pasadena kids.

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The State Farm 'Cause An Effect' campaign invited Facebook users to vote for 100 projects, short-listed from 3000 applications from across the US, to choose the Top 40 to receive \$25,000. The Altadena-based non-profit SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. project, "Boosters Are For Big Kids", was voted one of the forty winners.

"Boosters Are For Big Kids" aims to get elementary school children buckled up safely by teaching whole school communities about the importance of boosters for children until age 10 – 12.

"It is very simple to learn if a child fits a safety belt properly, but the consequences of *not knowing* can be devastating," said SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. Executive Director, Stephanie Tombrello. "Children suffer devastating injuries if the belt doesn't fit properly, particularly if the lap belt crosses the stomach. Booster seats lift the child so the belt is positioned properly on the strong bones, to take the force of a crash on the pelvis and shoulder, not the soft abdominal area. We'll be teaching children and families the 5-Step Test so the children know how to protect themselves."

Safety experts agree that booster seats are very important for proper crash protection, reducing by half the risk of injury to a child. SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A has shown in many settings that most children do not fit in belts properly before age 10–12 — much longer than most parents realize. Booster seats need to be used after children have outgrown safety seats with harness straps until the child fits the vehicle safety belt correctly.

A booster seat demonstration also will take place at the school during the event. Trained technicians will be on hand from 10 am – 11 am to conduct the 5-Step Test for Boosters and distribute booster seats to pre-qualified families.

Traffic crashes are the number one cause of death and serious injury to children, killing five children every day and seriously injuring over 500. Nine out of ten children are not properly protected when riding in the car.

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. is the national non-profit organization dedicated to child passenger safety and was founded in 1980 by fifteen Los Angeles-area safety advocates. The organization is nationally recognized for technical expertise and program excellence. For more information, go to www.carseat.org or call the Safe Ride Helpline: (310) 222-6860 or (800) 745-SAFE. For Spanish: (310) 222-6862 or (800) 747-SANO.

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SIDEBAR

Most kids need to ride in a booster seat from about age 4 until age 10-12.

If your child isn't using a booster, try the simple test below the next time you ride together in the car. You may find that your child is not yet ready to use a safety belt without a booster.

The 5-Step Test

1. Does the child sit all the way back against the auto seat?
2. Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat?
3. Does the belt cross the shoulder between the neck and arm?
4. Is the lap belt as low as possible, touching the thighs?
5. Can the child stay seated like this for the whole trip?