

Start Safe Travel:

A Safe Travel Program for Families of Preschoolers



Background

For over a decade, Safe Kids USA has been involved with Head Start centers across the country but in 2008 the relationship expanded with the development of a pedestrian and passenger safety program for children ages 3-5. Safe Kids USA trained educators at Head Start centers in Los Angeles who then educated the caregivers of their students about safe travel. In order to insure effectiveness, Safe Kids USA measured the change in knowledge of the participants through pre and post-tests. In 2010, Safe Kids USA worked with Safe Kids coalitions in four metropolitan cities to conduct a broader pilot.

Methodology of 2010 Pilot

Head Start centers collected Parent Knowledge Pre-Surveys, testing caregivers' knowledge, from caregivers of Head Start students in the pilot cities. Based on the results of 359 pre-surveys, Safe Kids USA modified the existing educational materials and provided updated materials to the Safe Kids coalitions to train the Head Start center instructors. After the Head Start center instructors trained the caregivers of the students, the Head Start centers submitted evaluations and the Parent Knowledge Post-Surveys to Safe Kids USA to measure the change in participant knowledge.

Pilot Results

The pre- and post-surveys consisted of eight identical questions. Pre-survey results had an average score of 59.1% correct. Post-surveys were collected from 186 participants in three of the pilot cities and had an average score of 72.71% correct. In one city, parent's knowledge on the safest seating position in a vehicle, showed correct scores dropped from 51.08% to 10.29%. Also important to note is that parent's knowledge on the correct way to look before crossing the street overall rose from 71.3% to 90.86%. Evaluations consisting of open-ended questions were completed by the participating educators and caregivers, a total of 16 were collected from the four cities.

Conclusions

Results from the collected evaluations indicated both groups were receptive to the program.

Lessons learned from the process included:

- Due to the technical skills and training involved in the child passenger safety component, there was a need for a car seat check-up event as part of the program.
- Spanish language materials were needed.
- Administering the pre- and post-survey the same day to ensure the same parents are taking the surveys.
- Stressing the importance of educators not deviating from the script to ensure consistent messaging.

Creation of Start Safe Travel: A Safe Travel Program for Families of Preschoolers

In 2011 Safe Kids USA utilized the pilot results to create the Start Safe Travel program. The program is being implemented across the county by 100 Safe Kids coalitions. Participating coalitions received updated materials and a \$1,000 grant to train Head Start instructors and host a car seat check-up event for the families of the Head Start center students. Prior to the launch of the program, Safe Kids USA and the National Head Start Association (NHSA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding creating a national partnership.

A similar methodology will be used as in the pilot.

A newly added element of the program is having the Safe Kids USA coalition host a car seat check-up event for the participating Head Start center after the educational session for the caregivers.

Results are expected in early 2012.

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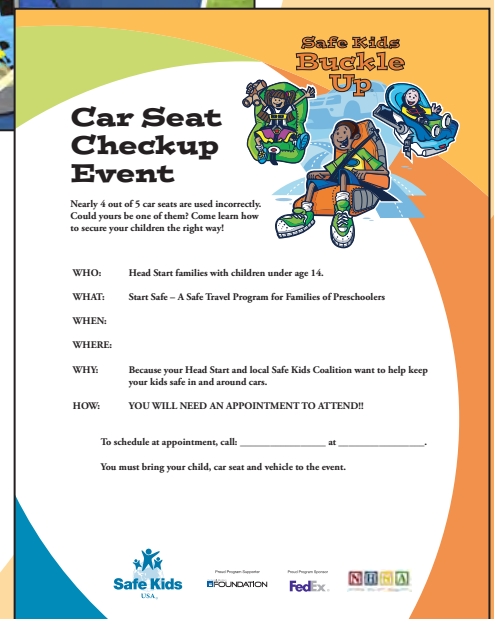


Safe Kids coalitions received the following materials:

- Tip sheets for caregivers
- Posters for Head Start Centers
- Educational PowerPoint presentation
- Teaching script to be used with the PowerPoint presentation
- Evaluations for Head Start instructors
- Pre- and post-surveys for parents
- Letter of support from the NHSA
- Flyer for the car seat check-up event
- An appointment scheduling tool
- Data collection tool
- CD of all the materials

The following materials were provided in Spanish to the coalitions:

- Tip sheets for the caregivers
- Posters for Head Start centers
- Educational PowerPoint presentation
- Teaching script to be used with the PowerPoint presentation
- Pre- and post-surveys for parents



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