

# **MRCHS**



**MICHIGAN RESOURCE CENTER FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY, INC**

*Formerly Known as the Traffic Safety Association of Michigan*

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**MICHIGAN RESOURCE CENTER FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY (MRCHS)  
APPLAUDS RECOGNITION OF SAFETY BELT USE CAMPAIGN**

Buckle Up Detroit/Neighborhood City Halls Campaign Featured in Traffic Safety Digest

The City of Detroit became the site of a comprehensive program to increase safety belt use during the summer of 2004 which resulted in a **13.3 percent** increase in belt use. Safety belt use rose from 68.2 percent to 77.3 percent.

The Detroit Office of MRCHS was the recipient of federal funding from the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) to coordinate the project with several community partners that targeted low-use groups including African-American, Arab-American, and Hispanic communities. The program recently received National recognition from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration when the successful project was featured in their "Traffic Safety Digest."

The multi-level "Buckle Up Detroit" campaign included partners from AAA Michigan, City of Detroit Neighborhood City Halls (NCH), faith community, Detroit Medical Center, law enforcement, OHSP, Safe Community Coalitions, State Farm Insurance and the Detroit Office of MRCHS.

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Each of 10 NCH offices, Detroit area churches and committee members spread the message to buckle up. Billboards reminded residents that “Heaven Can Wait, Buckle Up.” Public service announcements and interviews aired on local radio.

Recent research demonstrates that minorities are over-represented in motor vehicle crashes. These populations are less likely to wear seat belts and to place children in child safety seats. In the African American community, seat belt use remains lower than the population as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2000 Census data). Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for Hispanics from 1-44 years of age, and are the third leading cause of death for Hispanics of all ages (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 1998).

“Because safety belt use in Detroit/Wayne County has traditionally lagged behind the rest of the state, the campaign was a significant step by OHSP to raise the state level of usage,” said Mr. Mark Churella, MRCHS Board Chair. University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) reported in 2003 that comparing results over survey years indicates that much of the overall progress in increasing safety belt use has been made by increasing use among segments of Michigan’s population that have traditionally been the least likely to wear safety belts.

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