Make the connection.

Of those who die in vehicle crashes in Montana each year, 7 out of 10 are not buckled up.

Mortality Check:

The impact in a 30 mph crash is like falling from a 3rd story window.

A crash can happen any time—so be buckled all the time.

MONTANA MDT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BUCKLE UP MONTANA

www.buckleup.mt.gov

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What Will Your Story Be?

The Reality

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and injury among 15- to 20-year-olds in Montana and the U.S.

2 of every 5 deaths among 15- to 19-year-olds in Montana were occupants in a motor vehicle crash.

(Montana Office of Vital Statistics 2001-2010)

Teen drivers die at 4 times the rate for adult drivers 25 to 69.

Drivers under 21 have the highest rate of fatal crashes. Mile for mile, teenagers are involved in 3 times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers.

The death rate from motor vehicle crashes in Montana for 14- to 18-year-olds is 50% higher than the national rate.

(Importance of promoting seat belt use among teens, Montana DPHHS & EMS Trauma Systems, March 2010)

In what world does it make sense that the age group most likely to be in a crash also has the lowest seat belt use?

The Myths

I know someone who died wearing a seat belt. Some crashes are so severe that there is no way to survive, but that is no reason not to increase your odds.

Seat belts are too uncomfortable. Without your seat belt, you will smash into the steering column or the dashboard or crash through the windshield. Injuries to your face, head and chest are uncomfortable, too.

I want to be thrown clear of the crash. Your chances of being killed are 4 times greater if you are thrown out of the vehicle. You are more likely to be killed by the trip through the windshield, by collision with the ground 150 feet later, or by the vehicle rolling over you, than by the initial collision.

Seriously?

I'm only going a few blocks. The risk of getting into a serious crash is just as great on short trips as longer trips. Three out of 4 serious crashes occur within 25 miles of home and 8 out of 10 occur in cars going less than 40 miles an hour.

I could be trapped in the vehicle to burn or drown. Don't be guided by what you see in movies. Less than one-half of one percent of crashes involve fire or submersion.

Someone was decapitated by their seat belt. When a shoulder belt is used alone—without a lap belt—neck injuries and, rarely, decapitation can occur. It is important to position your seat belt correctly for the best protection. The shoulder belt should cross the center of your chest, with no more than one inch of slack. Do NOT place the strap under your arm. Adjust the strap so it goes over the collarbone, not against the neck or face. The lap belt goes low across the hips—never across the stomach.

Ignore the seat belt laws of the State of Montana and get a ticket.

It's the law.

Law enforcers know seat belts are a matter of life and death, and will ticket those not wearing one.

The driver can be fined for every person in the vehicle who is not properly restrained.

Take responsibility.

As the driver, you are responsible for the safety of your passengers. You set the rules. Insist that everyone buckles up. Then drive like your lives depend on it.

Be a friend.

Show your friends and family you care by driving smart and knowing the risks. Be a leader in your use of the single most effective tool for saving lives and preventing permanent injury: your safety belt.

www.ridelikeafriend.org

The laws of physics have a harsher penalty.

Ridin' in a pickup?

Pickup and SUV occupants are more likely to be ejected and fatally injured in a crash. A high center of gravity makes pickups and SUVs more likely to roll.

In Montana, most crash deaths occur when a vehicle rolls and occupants are ejected.

Without a seat belt, you are 25 times more likely to be ejected. Your safety belt keeps you in the vehicle, where the safety cage is engineered to protect your body.

The most likely way for a teen to die in Montana is when a pickup (most often driven by a young male) leaves a rural roadway and rolls. Still think you don't need to buckle up when riding around with the guys?

Ridin' in the back seat?

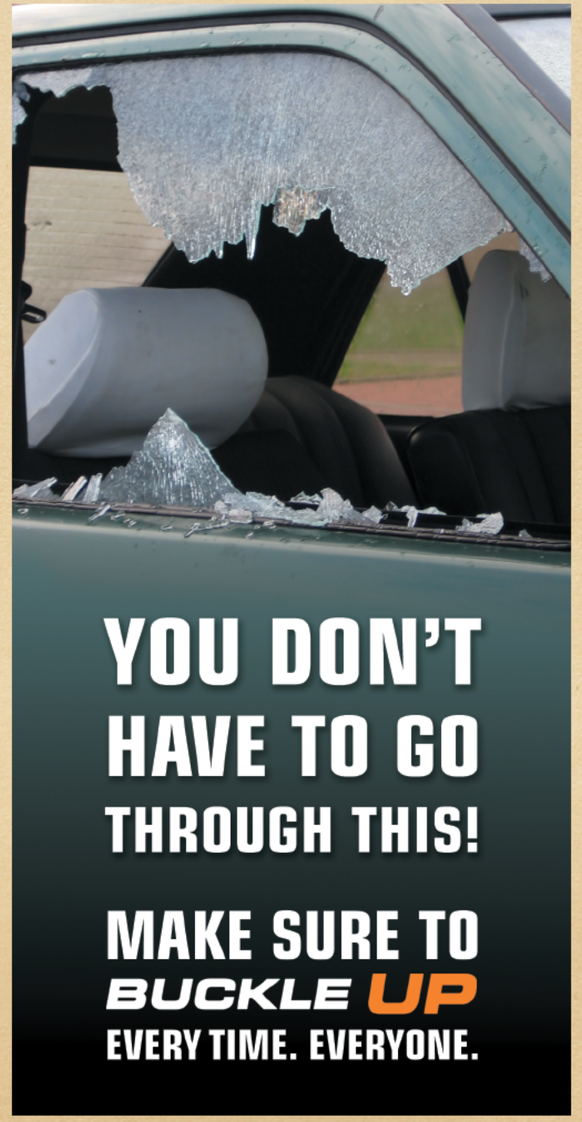
The likelihood of ejection increases at higher speeds and in rear seats of the vehicle.

If you aren't belted, you pose a serious threat to front seat passengers in the event of a crash.

A back seat bullet

The chances of injury to a belted occupant increase 90% when there is an unbelted occupant in the vehicle during a crash.

In a collision at only 30 mph, an unbelted adult of 150 lbs. will strike an object, a surface or a person—with 4,500 pounds of force.



What about air bags?

- Air bags are designed to work with seat belts.
- If you are in a crash, a seat belt will increase your chances of survival by at least 50 to 62%.
- The estimated fatality reduction from use of air bags alone is only 11% in all crashes and 19% in frontal crashes.
- Side curtain air bags do not currently prevent ejection through a side door or window.

Seat belts and air bags only work properly when used together.