



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

DOT HS 808 274

March 1995

Final Report

Program Strategies for Increasing Car Seat Usage in Rural Areas

This publication is distributed by the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in the interest of information exchange. The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the Department of Transportation or the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The United States Government assumes no liability for its contents or use thereof. If trade or manufacturers' name or products are mentioned, it is because they are considered essential to the object of the publication and should not be construed as an endorsement. The United States Government does not endorse products or manufacturers.

1. Report No. DOT HS 808 274		2. Government Accession No.		3. Recipient's Catalog No.	
4. Title and Subtitle Program Strategies for Increasing Car Seat Usage in Rural Areas				5. Report Date March 1995	
				6. Performing Organization Code	
				8. Performing Organization Report No.	
7. Author(s) Steven L. Bradbard, Ph.D. Elizabeth Lisboa-Farrow					
9. Performing Organization Name and Address Lisboa Associates, Inc. 1317 F Street, N.W., Suite 400 Washington, D.C. 20004				10. Work Unit No. (TRAIIS)	
				11. Contract or Grant No. DTNH-22-93-D-05287	
				13. Type of Report and Period Covered	
12. Sponsoring Agency Name and Address United States Department of Transportation 400 Seventh Street, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20590					
				14. Sponsoring Agency Code	
15. Supplementary Notes					
16. Abstract Data from the Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) operated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reveal nonuse of safety restraints to be associated with most young child crash fatalities. Rural areas of the United States are substantially over-represented in these fatalities. The objective of this study was to identify effective strategies for increasing car seat usage in rural areas. Focus groups were conducted with young rural female respondents in their teens and 20s who have children under the age of four years. Two waves of focus groups (four groups per wave) were held with white females in Tennessee, and two waves were held with black females in Georgia. Results were obtained concerning appropriate messages, activities, and channels of delivery. This study report is intended to provide a guide for safety professionals for developing and implementing programs designed to increase car seat usage.					
17. Key Words child safety seats car seats focus groups child crash fatalities rural populations			18. Distribution Statement Document is available through the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, VA 22161		
19. Security Classif. (of this report)		20. Security Classif. (of this page)		21. No. of Pages	22. Price

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. GENERAL GUIDELINES TO INCREASE CAR SEAT USE	4
III. INFORMATIONAL NEEDS OF THE TARGET AUDIENCE	11
IV. CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY	15
V. CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	19
VI. MOTIVATIONAL THEMES, VISUAL FORMATS, AND SPOKESPERSONS	23
VII. GROUP DIFFERENCES AFFECTING PROGRAMMATIC DECISIONS	35
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX A. - DEMOGRAPHICS FOR STUDY SITES	39
APPENDIX B. - MODERATOR GUIDE I	41
APPENDIX C. - MODERATOR GUIDE II	47
APPENDIX D. - RESPONDENT SCREENER	53

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1. - Two-Panel Black-and White Artwork	25
Figure 2. - Stick Figure Artwork	28
Figure 3. - Cartoon Artwork	29
Figure 4. - Additional Artwork	30
Figure 5. - Audio PSA Messages	32
Figure 6. - Group Differences	36

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

All 50 States and the District of Columbia have recognized the importance of safety restraint usage by infants and toddlers when traveling in motor vehicles through their passage of child safety seat (CSS) laws. Yet data from the Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) operated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) show nonuse of car seats to be a continuing problem; with nonuse of restraints associated with most child crash fatalities.

NHTSA previously imported FARS data into a geodemographic database to examine the CSS nonuse problem. The subsequent analysis showed rural areas in the United States substantially over-represented in young child crash fatalities. This finding points to the importance of directing programmatic activity at rural populations. For such activity to be effective, it is necessary to determine the types of communications to which rural populations would be most responsive, and how best to reach rural populations with those communications. Also, it is important to determine differences between rural population subgroups that would affect how programs should be designed.

Objective

This report provides a guide to safety professionals for developing and implementing programs to increase car seat usage in rural areas. It is based on research conducted for NHTSA in rural areas of the South, a region of the country over-represented in child crash fatalities, according to FARS data. While some of the findings may be specific to this area, most of the study recommendations should generalize to other rural areas inside and outside the South.

Targets

Primary program targets are females in their teens or 20s who have infants or young children. The research focused on two specific subgroups; young black females and young white females. Strong similarities were found between the two groups, resulting in many programmatic recommendations that are applicable to both. Where differences do emerge that have programmatic implications, those differences are specified in the report.

Method

Fentress County, Tennessee and Jefferson County, Georgia were selected as study sites based on data analysis plus discussions with NHTSA staff and other key persons involved in child car seat issues and programs. Young white females were targeted in Tennessee and young black females in Georgia.

Jefferson County is one of the poorest economic areas in Georgia, with approximately 30% of the population falling below the poverty level. Despite public information and education efforts by SafeKids and the county health department, health/safety educators in that area report very low car seat usage rates.

Fentress County is a poor economic area within the Central Tennessee Health region. According to the most recent annual state car seat usage survey, car seat use in the region decreased by 11% from the previous year. There are no organized programs in the area designed to promote increased usage.

The Contractor developed preliminary profiles of the target groups from a socio-demographic literature review, discussions with persons having relevant expertise, analyses of U.S. Census Bureau data, analyses of geodemographic data, and examinations of programs successful in modifying the behavior of persons in rural areas (Appendix A).

The profiles were used to develop areas of inquiry for a first wave of focus groups with the target populations. Four focus groups were conducted at each site using the Moderator Guide shown in Appendix B. One-half of the groups were composed of teenage mothers and the other half composed of mothers in their 20s. As indicated above, the Tennessee groups were formed entirely with white participants, and the Georgia groups were formed entirely with black participants.

The first wave of focus groups provided information about rural lifestyle characteristics and media preferences. A second wave of groups was then conducted to concept test program materials that were designed on the basis of findings from the first wave (Appendix C). Again, four groups were conducted at each site, with exclusively black respondents in Jefferson County and white participants in Fentress County (Appendix D). One group at each site consisted of "veterans" from the first wave.

Organization of Report

The report begins with a chapter of general guidelines for developing child passenger safety programs, targeted at young mothers, considered applicable to multiple geographic regions. This is followed by chapters providing more detailed information on aspects of program development and implementation:

- Information Needs of the Target Audience;
- Channels for Delivery;
- Program Activities; and
- Communication Themes and Formats;

The body of the report concludes with a discussion of group differences affecting programmatic decisions.

II. GENERAL GUIDELINES TO INCREASE CAR SEAT USE

- **Child safety seat programs should have strong ties to the local health services infrastructure.**

The health infrastructure is the only community institution, outside of the family, with whom young rural mothers interact on a regular basis. Most have a private physician whom they can see, but this contact tends to be infrequent. Instead, the county health department is the important service provider for rural, low-income young women and their children. Professionals at the health department are involved in providing them direct prenatal and postnatal services. Also, many women typically take their children to the health department for well-child visits and immunizations. The health department is often the site for WIC, a federal supplementary nutritional program. Many women remarked that they have established close relationships with health department professionals, whom they view as caring, courteous, and responsive.

- **Emphasize that using car seats is a life-or-death matter.**

Comments obtained during the initial focus groups suggested life-or-death messages would be particularly effective. Based on this information, two-panel ads were designed and concept tested during the second wave of focus groups. Respondents reacted very favorably to these ads. Most agreed that the ads were attention-getting, highly-believable, and poignant. Furthermore, they indicated they would likely act on the basis of the message conveyed by these ads.

- **Include appeals to family values in program materials and, if possible, have multi-generation appeal.**

Respondents remarked that many of their daily activities are focused around their children, siblings, parents, and grandparents. Multi-generational influencers are important standard-setters in the lives of many respondents. Many respondents, when commenting on the print materials, emphasized that they prefer to view materials and hear messages that are focused on the importance of family. For example, respondents preferred artwork showing multiple family members correctly restrained over other artwork showing only a child in a car seat. They often said they preferred the artwork that depicts a family practicing occupant safety.

- **Publicize the state car seat law and the fine for violating the law.**

Respondents agreed that the threat of a large fine and associated court costs would improve the rate of car seat usage. They frequently mentioned that this type of campaign message would be the only one that would impact on their husbands or boyfriends, and other young men.

- **Publicize that the misuse of car seats is a major problem.**

Almost all respondents who used car seats believed they were using them correctly. They were very surprised when told that studies indicate between 70-90% of car seats are misused. Most respondents agreed that given this information, they would be interested in having a knowledgeable person look at their car seat to ensure it is installed and being used correctly.

- **Set up opportunities for car seat check-ups for the public, accompanied by appropriate publicity.**

Respondents said they would take the time to attend a car seat "check-up" if one was provided in their area. They suggested that such an event could be scheduled on a Saturday in the parking lot of the high school or at a large store. This event could be publicized with flyers and posters placed in stores they frequently visit. Also, the local weekly newspaper and popular radio stations could include information about the scheduled event.

- **Avoid "light" or "cute" messages**

Respondents remarked during the groups that because car seat usage is a very serious matter, advertising intended to encourage car seat usage should convey the serious consequences associated with non-usage. Further indications from the focus groups suggested that program practitioners need to make sure they are designing messages that are impossible for the audience to misinterpret.

The respondents did not respond favorably to "lighter" or "cute" messages designed to encourage car seat usage. For example, the message "Click and Kiss in Fentress (Jefferson)" was described by respondents as confusing and possibly even connoting "something dirty." Respondents preferred messages that were direct, non-ambiguous, and forceful.

- **Do not emphasize child disfigurement in a car seat campaign.**

The topic of physical disfigurement was discussed with the respondents during the first wave of groups. Most remarked that if their child was disfigured, they would love their child even more because the child would need them more and require more love. They did not respond in a manner which suggested that a

theme of child disfigurement would have great impact toward increasing car seat usage.

- **Develop program materials and messages that are individualized and relevant to the needs and lifestyle characteristics of the county/area being targeted.**

Respondents stressed the importance of personalizing campaign materials. For example, "Fentress (Jefferson) Kids- Buckled for Love" was preferred by respondents over the more generic "Buckled for Love" slogan. Respondents suggested that instead of using nationally-known personalities as spokespersons to promote car seat usage, a campaign would be more effective if it featured local persons who have a relevant story to tell others (e.g., a child saved, badly injured, or killed because a car seat was used or not used).

- **Consider important cultural and other group differences when developing program materials and messages.**

The study found important differences in the appeal of certain messages and artwork between the Georgia and Tennessee respondents. These differences often revolved around the harshness and severity with which the focus group participants perceived and interacted with their environment, suggesting that this is a critical dimension for program practitioners to assess in designing their programs.

In general, a sterner approach to the world appeared among the black subjects in Georgia than among the white subjects in Tennessee, although it is uncertain if race was the critical element in the divergent responses. White respondents, even in ads emphasizing that car seat usage is a life-or-death matter, preferred copy written in a gentle and nurturant tone. They voiced a strong objection to copy that delivered messages in a harsh, mean, or sarcastic manner. In contrast, many black respondents emphasized that in order for a life-or-death message to be effective, it must be strong, even if it means using a more harsh and accusatory tone.

White respondents expressed a strong dislike for artwork showing the baby character from a well-known television cartoon seated in a car seat. They commented that this cartoon displays poor family values and added that they believe using the baby as part of the campaign logo would be ineffective, if not counter-effective. Black respondents, in contrast, said this artwork would appeal to them, their children, and even older adults in their community. They offered that they view this cartoon as funny, popular, and relevant to them. They did not express concern about this cartoon portraying dysfunction and poor values; in fact, they said that everyone likes and can relate to the characters in the program.

Important differences were also found in radio entertainment preferences for the black and white respondents. Black women said they prefer listening to contemporary black jazz and rock musicians on radio stations with a more "urban" format, while white women indicated a preference for the music of country artists broadcast on a "local" radio station.

- **Use a media mix consisting primarily of print materials, but also including a light use of radio and television public service announcements (PSAs).**

This mix appears to address the media preferences stated by the target groups. Respondents said that they would prefer to receive information about car seat usage via posters and pamphlets. They could not recall seeing information about car seat usage in their local newspaper. Tennessee respondents indicated that they would likely read newspaper articles about car seat usage, but Georgia respondents, for the most part, said they are only interested in the crime stories that appear in their weekly newspaper.

Respondents provided equivocal information about the usefulness of radio PSAs. While some indicated that a well-written radio PSA could be effective, others remarked that they listen to the radio to hear music, and will change stations if they hear someone speaking. Similar concerns were voiced about the potential usefulness of television PSAs, with respondents indicating that they simply tune-out the commercial messages on TV. A light use of radio and television PSAs is recommended, however, based on information obtained from the first wave of groups indicating that these are the two most popular forms of at-home entertainment for the respondents.

- **Distribute program materials (e.g., posters, brochures, flyers) at the county health department, physicians' offices, and at stores and restaurants frequently patronized by young women and their children.**

Respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia said they often pick up child health and safety materials at the health department, either when they bring their child for immunizations or when they make their monthly visit for WIC re-certification. Also, they rely on their private physicians to provide them with medical and safety information and updates. The respondents also suggested that points-of-distribution include supermarkets, department stores, and fast-food restaurants. They said that materials targeted toward their parents or grandparents could be distributed at church.

- **Use local community members and notables as speakers and spokespersons, rather than nationally-known personalities.**

During both waves of focus groups, respondents emphasized their feeling that the most salient and believable spokespersons for a car seat usage campaign would be persons from their own community. They said that effective spokespersons could include local or regional political figures, law enforcement officials, local personalities (e.g., a disc jockey, a popular regional weatherman), or people who have an important, relevant story to share about car seats.

While the respondents acknowledged that they prefer the entertainment provided by nationally-known entertainers, they said that they do not view such persons as the best possible spokespersons, adding that very few of these personalities could possibly relate to their day-to-day life circumstances and problems.

- **Testimonials from a parent who lost a child because of car seat non-use, or had a child saved due to car seat use, could be very effective.**

During both waves of groups, respondents (without prompting) suggested that an audio or video PSA featuring a local parent who had lost a child because of car seat non-use, or had a child saved because of car seat use, could be very effective. Many spontaneously volunteered that they were familiar with families in their community who "fit" within one of the two aforementioned categories. They suggested that it would not be difficult to recruit a spokesperson from one of these families.

- **A car seat loaner or give-away program is advisable in a low-income, rural area. Educational support is also important, both to people who obtain their seats from a loaner program and to those who are utilizing car seats obtained elsewhere.**

Many respondents do not use a car seat because they cannot afford to purchase one. Few have new car seats; instead, those who have a car seat often purchase it at a yard sale or acquire a hand-me-down from friends or family. Most respondents said they would use and care for a car seat if they were given one via a loaner program.

For rural communities lacking such a program, a car seat loaner program managed by a trained professional would likely result in a large increase in car seat usage rates. This person could provide important information not only to program participants, but also to those persons who acquired a car seat from a source other than the program, but may not be using the seat correctly.

It is important to note that some county health departments may be reluctant to become involved in car seat loaner programs, even if the seats are provided by an outside funding source. These programs can be both time- and personnel-intensive, often requiring an investment of resources that small health departments do not have available.

- **A "kick-off" event publicizing car seat usage (and possibly other health and safety issues) would be well-attended and serve as an effective way to draw attention to the importance of car seat usage.**

During the initial wave of focus groups, respondents complained that there are very few activities and events in their area. When asked how county residents would respond to a sponsored event designed to make people aware of the importance of always using a car seat, respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia said that such an event would likely be very well-attended.

They suggested scheduling such an event at the county fairgrounds or high school; promoting it via word-of-mouth and local media; and ensuring good attendance by having free food, other give-aways, entertainment for various age groups, and booths where information about car seats is available to attendees.

- **Follow-up activities must be scheduled to reinforce the importance of car seat usage as an important community activity.**

In addition to a well-planned and appealing kick-off event, it is important to schedule follow-up activities to ensure that information about the importance of car seat usage is highly visible throughout the year. These activities should be designed to appeal not only to the target audience, but also to persons who influence them (e.g., other family members).

A well-conceived year-long print media campaign would be one such activity. A series of "take-one" pamphlets could be available at various points-of-distribution that are frequently visited or patronized by the target audience. A number of posters related to car seat usage could also be displayed at these sites over the year. Newspaper articles and inserts that discuss the importance of car seat usage, provide important car seat updates, and recognize those persons who have been actively involved in promoting car seat usage, could appear in the weekly county newspaper. In addition, creative print advertising messages could also appear in/on:

coloring and activity books
balloons
T-shirts
child growth charts
bumper stickers

mugs and cups
stickers
car trash bags
trick-or-treat bags
shopping bags

key chains
hats
windshield sunscreens
food tray liners and placemats
book marks
high school sports programs

cash register receipts
refrigerator magnets
jar grippers
prescription pads
pay envelopes

Several short PSAs designed to emphasize the importance of car seat usage could be produced and aired throughout the year on local radio and cable television stations. Local persons could serve as PSA spokespersons, sharing relevant stories with an audience that will recognize them and likely be receptive to their messages.

A number of community events could provide opportunities to inform the public about car seat usage. For example, sporting events, festivals, health fairs, and the county agricultural fair could all serve as important venues to promote car seat usage. Program activities at these events could include:

car seat information booths
safety clowns
puppet shows
car seat give-aways
car seat demonstrations

car seat safety checks
car seat discount coupons
car seat videos
pledge cards

- **Establish a local task force to supply energy and direction to the car seat program.**

A task force consisting, for example, of county health department officials, other interested health and safety professionals, law enforcement personnel, prominent county officials, area business representatives, and local personalities could meet regularly to develop strategies for the continued promotion of car seat usage and to assess the effectiveness of the loaner program (if one is in place). This group could ensure that current print materials are available for the target audience, encourage local business support of car seat usage, and recognize persons in the community who have, in some way, been actively involved in the promotion of car seat usage.

III. INFORMATIONAL NEEDS OF THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Reasons for Car Seat Nonuse

Respondents in Tennessee and Georgia offered similar reasons for non-use of car seats. While many of the Tennessee respondents had car seats, most of the Georgia respondents could only speculate about these reasons, given the fact that they did not own or have access to a car seat.

Some respondents said their vehicle does not have enough room to use a seat (or in some cases, multiple seats). Those who had seats in their car said that they will remove the child at times if he or she is crying, is physically demonstrative about getting out, has learned to "escape" from the seat, or needs to be fed. Also, many respondents remarked they will not use a car seat if the route to be traveled is familiar and/or short, if the child is physically sick, or if someone in the vehicle (most often a parent or grandparent) asks or insists to hold the child. It was interesting to find that respondents often described important influencers, such as their parents, as either car seat "zealots" or "sabotagers." Many said that they have difficulty dealing assertively with influencers who interfere with their efforts to use car seats.

While the respondents frequently acknowledged being aware that removing the child from the seat is dangerous, they at times offered a defense, stating that they have heard about situations where it might have been better for a child involved in a crash to have been out of the seat, rather than secured.

"I don't usually use it for short distances; you know, when you're just going up the road a little." (TN)

"We don't have enough car seats for our cars, and we don't like switching them around." (TN)

"If your baby is sick and throwing up, you can't leave him in a car seat." (TN)

"Sometimes I just feel better holding him in my arms. The car seat can't save everything - like if your car is stopped on a train track and you're unable to move, it's better that the baby isn't in it so you can leave fast." (GA)

"Even though I know it's wrong, I'll take her out for short distances; and when we're going long distances, I take her out to feed her. If you breast feed you have no choice." (GA)

"I don't really believe the car seats protect a child so much. Some kids have gotten hurt in seats. What if there's a fire? I just believe if it's your time to go, it's your time to go." (GA)

"The strap might get stuck and then you can't get your child out." (GA)

"You could be in a situation in a bad wreck where you can't get to the child. Or suppose you're hurt and the child can't get out of the seat to get help?" (GA)

Some mothers remarked that car seats look "uncomfortable" and added that they understand why their children object to riding in one. They said that if car seats could be designed to be more comfortable, perhaps their children would not protest so much about being restrained.

Other mothers spoke about car seat availability as a major problem. Buying a new car seat was simply too expensive for many of these women. Many were using hand-me-down seats, and indicated that if they could obtain one of the newer, better-designed models, they might use it regularly. They said that their county does not have a car seat loaner program. Many remarked they would participate in such a program if given the opportunity.

Reasons for Lower Car Seat Use Rates with Toddlers

While the respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia generally agreed that it is equally important to have an infant or a toddler secured in a car seat, most acknowledged that they are less likely to insist their toddler be in a car seat. They speculated that one reason for this is that mothers of newborns and infants tend to be more protective of their children than are mothers of toddlers. They said that while this is not necessarily "right," it is "natural" for this to occur. Some reported that mothers tend to view newborns as helpless, adding that a newborn cannot "brace" him or herself when a car brakes hard or is involved in a minor crash. In contrast, many mothers tend to view their toddlers as physically competent individuals who can, if necessary, protect themselves in similar situations. Many of the respondents also remarked that toddlers can, both verbally and physically, demonstrate their displeasure about being restrained in a car seat. For some of the mothers, it is just too much trouble to withstand this abuse. While toddlers will cry in order to "escape" from the car seat, infants, according to the respondents, cry because something is "wrong" (e.g., they are hungry, need to have a diaper changed, etc.). Mothers of infants do not tend to interpret their child's crying as an attempt to "escape" from the seat; therefore,

they are more likely to keep their infant in the car seat or return the child to the seat after taking care of the "need" expressed by the infant.

Where Car Seat Information is Obtained

Respondents indicated they obtain information about car seats from the health department, clinics, law enforcement officials, home health agencies, physicians, nurses and hospitals. Some of the respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia said they viewed a videotape and attended classes before leaving the hospital with their newborn and found the information presented about the importance of car seat usage to be beneficial. Other respondents, however, expressed surprise that during their stay at the same hospital, they had not viewed the video, attended classes, or received any print materials.

Information People Would Like to Have About Car Seats

Interestingly, almost all respondents who owned car seats said they believed they were using their car seats correctly. When it was pointed out that observation studies show car seat misuse is often between 70-90%, the respondents expressed surprise. When asked about the types of information they would like to have, they said it is important that they know how to use a car seat correctly, and that they know they are not using a seat that has been proven to be unsafe.

The moderator asked the respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia if they would attend a "car seat checkup," held at a convenient place to ensure they were using their car seat correctly. Almost all respondents said they would be very interested in attending such an event, particularly after hearing the 70-90% misuse figure. They suggested that it would be best to schedule this either on a Saturday morning or afternoon and publicize the event in the weekly newspaper, on the radio, with posters in frequently visited stores, and at the WIC clinic.

Preferred Ways to Receive Information

Respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia said they would like to receive information from a variety of sources including physicians, the health department, the WIC office, and brochures, pamphlets, and posters placed in areas they frequently visit such as the supermarket, post office, Wal-Mart, drug stores, video stores, and fast-food restaurants.

Respondents were somewhat ambivalent when asked about radio as a point-of-distribution for information. While some indicated they would listen to messages about car seats, others stressed they listen to the radio to hear music and will switch stations if someone is speaking about a topic. Similar concerns were

expressed about television PSAs, with respondents indicating they do not attend to commercial and public service messages when they watch TV.

While most Tennessee respondents agreed the local newspaper would be an effective point-of-distribution, none could recall ever seeing any information about car seat usage. In Georgia, most respondents said they rarely look at the weekly newspaper, except for the crime section. They said that unless information about car seat usage was contained on the same page as the crime report, they would likely never see this information.

IV. CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

Personal Interaction with the Community and its Institutions

Most of the respondents remarked that the only ways in which they "fit" into their communities are as young mothers and as members of their own nuclear and extended families. They participate in very few activities outside of the home and find most of their time is spent caring for children and homemaking.

The health infrastructure is the only community institution, outside of the family, with whom they regularly interact. Whereas respondents take their young children to pediatricians or general practice physicians for treatment of childhood illnesses, they also indicated they use the county health department for their childrens' well-child checkups and immunizations. Emergency medical care for the respondents and their children is obtained at the emergency rooms in their respective county hospitals.

The majority of respondents receive assistance through WIC, which is based at the county health department. Each month, they visit the health department for WIC re-certification.

Respondents agreed that services are provided at the health department in a friendly, efficient, and effective manner. Most women seemed to be very comfortable with the service providers, noting that they felt the providers treated them in a personal and caring manner. None of the respondents indicated that service providers were passive, inaccessible, or in any other way difficult.

Important Influencers

Many respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia emphasized the important roles that their parents and/or grandparents have played in their lives. Often, respondents remarked that they learned the values that guide their day-to-day life activities from these important influencers. Further, many said they try to raise their own children in a manner similar to the way in which they were raised by their primary caretakers.

"My mama always encouraged me to strive for the best. She taught me how to be responsible and care for my kids. She taught me to respect my elders. I always listen to what mama has to say, even if I don't like it." (GA)

When your parents tell you to do something you do it. They did a good job raising us, so it must be good advice." (TN)

Respondents noted that many of their daily and weekend social activities involve contact with family members. The opinions of these significant others have a major impact both on the decisions they make about their own activities and the way in which they raise their children. It is interesting that some respondents said their parents and grandparents often insist on holding their child(ren) when they are traveling in a vehicle. As such, these influencers provide both verbal and nonverbal messages about car seats being unimportant and unnecessary.

Places Frequently Visited/Patronized

Most of the respondents in Tennessee said they take their child(ren) shopping with them several times a week. Typical shopping trips include visits to the supermarket and to a large discount department store. Most respondents remarked they are in Wal-Mart a minimum of several times each week; a few said they shop for items at Wal-Mart every day. Respondents indicated they sometimes take their young children to fast-food restaurants. During the Spring and Summer, respondents said they often take their children to visit state and local parks.

All respondents in Tennessee remarked they spend a lot of time with their children visiting relatives. Some see their families every day or several times a week, while others visit family on weekends. None of the respondents reported physical isolation from family. The largest number grew up in the area and visit often with their parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and siblings.

While many respondents in Georgia said they take their children with them to grocery shop, others remarked that they try to leave their children with friends of family whenever they go shopping. Most said they shop at Wal-Mart in either Sandersville or Augusta. For these respondents, the frequency of shopping trips, ranging from weekly to monthly, was dictated by available money at any given time. A small number of respondents indicated they take their children to fast food restaurants during the week. Several said they travel to Augusta to shop at the malls, where there is a better selection of merchandise. During the summer, they often take their children to local parks

Similar to the information reported in Tennessee, the respondents in Georgia said they frequently visit family during both the week and on weekends. Most said that multiple generations of their family were raised and still reside in Jefferson County.

It was interesting to find that in both Tennessee and Georgia, most respondents described themselves as infrequent church attendees. In contrast, they said that

their parents and grandparents often attend church on a regular basis and are involved in numerous church-related functions, activities, and organizations. They suggested that church could be an effective point-of-distribution for car seat information to important influencers.

Learning About Information in the Community

In Tennessee, respondents remarked that they learn about activities in their community by word-of-mouth, reading the weekly newspaper, and listening to the local radio station. Also, they learn about events in their community by looking at flyers and posters that are placed on bulletin boards in town. Church bulletins and other church-related communication devices do not seem to serve as a major informational source for these young women.

In Georgia, respondents consistently emphasized that word-of-mouth is the major way in which people learn about events in their area. Some participants indicated they read the area's weekly paper, while other respondents did not. Flyers and notices posted in stores, public areas, and on telephone poles also served as a means for communicating important information. Respondents in Georgia did not tend to listen to the local radio station, which they said has a country music format. Instead, they listened to an Augusta station with a more "urban" black music format. This station does not, however, provide them with any information about their particular living area.

"People are talking and word will always get around. Also, I read the News and Farmer and the front page pretty much tells you what's going on. Then I go to the Crime Section, Want Ads, and Rent-to-Own." (GA)

"How do you spread information? Just go tell somebody. They'll volunteer it all over." (GA)

Media Use and Preferences

Respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia most often spoke about radio and television as their two favorite sources of media entertainment. In Tennessee, respondents indicated that they most often prefer country music stations. Those in Georgia indicated they do not listen to country music and seemed to express a preference for some of the radio stations playing music targeted toward a black audience.

Respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia said that they tend to watch talk shows (e.g. Oprah, Yolanda, Geraldo, Sally), the "stories" (soap operas), and children's shows on PBS (Barney, Sesame Street). Few respondents expressed a preference for newspapers and magazines. Respondents in both areas remarked they have little interest in televised sports, despite their interest in

attending local sports events (e.g., high school football and basketball games). Shows generally viewed as providing "family entertainment" (e.g. sitcoms) were described as favorites.

V. CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

General Lack of Activities/Opportunities

Respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia complained that life in their communities is often "boring," with few outside activities available. For example, respondents in both locations said they must travel at least 30 miles to find a movie theater. Also, it was mentioned that there are few good job opportunities available and that, for the most part, wages are low.

In Tennessee, many respondents complained that people tend to be intrusive and nosy, adding that gossip is one of the main ways that information is communicated. Interestingly, in Georgia, respondents also spoke about gossip as a principle way to learn about events in the area; however, these respondents were less likely to describe such gossip as a drawback to living in their area. They instead seemed to view it as an important and useful way of communicating information.

Few respondents in either area described much involvement in social activities, clubs or organizations, athletic events, or night life. They again emphasized that they live in areas where life is quiet and often boring, and added that most of their activities center around their own homes or homes of friends and extended family members. The idea of belonging to a club or organization was often met with amusement, with respondents mentioning that there really are no clubs or organizations they could join. Some said that clubs and organizations are found only in high schools. Movie theaters and other sources of entertainment tended to be a considerable distance away, and a combination of factors including limited financial resources, no available child care, and traveling time, discouraged persons from pursuing entertainment outside their area.

Despite their complaints focused around too few available entertainment activities, respondents in both areas were quite positive when describing the benefits of living in their respective areas. Frequently, they said that they enjoy the close knit nature of their communities, the friendliness of their neighbors, the ready access to extended family, the lack of violent crime, and a feeling of security associated with living in a familiar place. Many respondents have lived their entire lives in their community. Some left briefly to pursue other opportunities, however, they said they returned home because of the drawbacks they perceived about living elsewhere.

Few respondents in either Tennessee or Georgia were very "involved" in their communities. Most found themselves quite busy with the responsibilities involved in caring for their children and maintaining a home. Only a few described recreational activities outside of the home (e.g., going to high school football games, going to softball games), and even fewer described involvement in volunteer work or community efforts.

"The most important thing to me is being a mother. It's time for me to raise my children." (TN)

"I take care of my mother and children, help my sisters, and go to church. There really isn't time for much else." (TN)

"I just stay at home where I watch my kids, work around the house and the yard. For fun I call someone to talk." (GA)

"I watch TV, cartoons usually, and see about the kids. I play with them sometimes. I look over their school work, cook, and prepare for the next day." (GA)

"I watch the stories, look at TV some, and clean up (the house). I don't have time for recreation." (GA)

Recommended Activities

- **Kick-Off Event - County Car Seat Festival**

Most respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia agreed that a large community event, scheduled on a Saturday, would be well-attended by people of all ages and could be very effective for promoting increased use of car seats. They indicated that the event should be held at the county fairgrounds or high school, and include activities that would appeal to all age groups. They suggested that the event include not only information about car seats, but also information about passenger safety for the entire family. Some indicated the event should be expanded to include other health and safety themes.

Most respondents said that if the event included free food, entertainment, games, and give-aways, it would be well-attended by the entire county. The event could be promoted by both the local newspaper and radio, although word-of-mouth would probably be the most widely used way to inform people. Live music (country, rock, and gospel), a live radio broadcast, children's games and rides, clowns, face painting, a shooting contest, bingo, and information booths could be included in the day's events. If possible, a personality could be recruited to provide entertainment. Tennessee respondents suggested a

performance by a country music star such as Alan Jackson or Garth Brooks, while Georgia respondents suggested an autograph-signing appearance by a sports star from one of the Atlanta professional teams.

- **Follow-Up Events and Activities**

Respondents commented on the importance of scheduling follow-up activities to ensure that information about the importance of car seat usage is highly visible throughout the year. These activities should be designed to appeal not only to the target audience, but also to their influencers.

A well-conceived year-long print media campaign would be one such activity. A series of "take-one" pamphlets could be available at various points-of-distribution frequently visited or patronized by the target audience. A number of posters related to car seat usage could also be displayed at these sites over the year. Articles and inserts that discuss the importance of car seat usage, provide important car seat updates, and recognize those persons who have been actively involved in promoting increased car seat usage, could appear in the weekly county newspaper.

Creative print advertising messages could also appear in/on:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| coloring and activity books | mugs and cups |
| balloons | stickers |
| T-shirts | car trash bags |
| child growth charts | trick-or-treat bags |
| bumper stickers | shopping bags |
| key chains | cash register receipts |
| hats | refrigerator magnets |
| windshield sunscreens | jar grippers |
| food tray liners and placemats | prescription pads |
| book marks | pay envelopes |
| high school sports programs | |

Several short PSAs designed to emphasize the importance of car seat usage could be produced and aired throughout the year on local radio and cable television stations. Local persons could serve as PSA spokespersons, sharing relevant stories with an audience that will recognize them and likely be receptive to their messages.

A number of community events could provide the opportunity to inform the public about car seat usage. For example, sporting events, festivals, health fairs, and the county agricultural fair could all serve as important opportunities to promote car seat usage. Program activities at these events could include:

car seat information booths
safety clowns
puppet shows
car seat give-aways
car seat demonstrations

car seat safety checks
car seat discount coupons
car seat videos
pledge cards

Respondents noted that a car seat give-away or loaner program in their county could provide seats for the large number of persons who cannot afford to purchase a seat. They believed this would lead to a dramatic increase in the use of car seats in their county.

VI. MOTIVATIONAL THEMES, VISUAL FORMATS, AND SPOKESPERSONS

Intrapsychic and Interpersonal Findings

In Tennessee, many respondents emphasized, without prompting, that their role as a "young mother" is the primary way in which they "fit" into their community. They frequently remarked that being a good mother and responsible parent are major factors in feeling good about themselves. They also talked about how their children's accomplishments (even reaching "normal" developmental milestones) reinforce their feeling good about themselves. While some Tennessee respondents did not need to be prompted to talk about the way in which other personal accomplishments contribute to their feeling good about themselves, many had to be directed away from focusing attention exclusively on the way in which their children contribute to their feelings of self-esteem.

In Georgia, many respondents spoke first about their own accomplishments as the stimuli for feeling good about themselves. For example, respondents spoke about completing their GED training, owning their own home, having a job, paying their bills, and not being dependent on other people as the types of things that make them feel good about themselves. Some of the Georgia respondents had to be prompted before they would discuss the way in which their role as a parent contributes to their self-esteem.

Slogan Testing

A number of slogans were devised and tested during the first wave of focus groups. These included:

- Fentress/Jefferson Kids - Buckled for Love
- Fentress/Jefferson Kids - Saved by the Belt
- Fentress/Jefferson Kids - Safest in Tennessee/Georgia
- Click and Kiss in Fentress/Jefferson
- Fentress/Jefferson Kids are Clicked to Go

There was remarkable consistency noted in the reactions offered by the respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia. The "Buckled for Love" slogan was the most favorably-received in both locations, with respondents emphasizing that the message of using a car seat as an expression of love is appealing to them. In Georgia, it was suggested by some respondents that the slogan be altered to "Buckled Up for Love."

Respondents in both locations were divided about a second choice, with many preferring "Safest in ..." and others indicating that "Saved by the Belt" is the better second choice. For the former, respondents said they liked the appeal to regional pride and the message suggesting that their area is the best; for the latter, respondents emphasized they liked the cute play-on-words involved.

Most respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia disliked "Clicked to Go" and "Kiss and Click." Many complained that the slogans were confusing and difficult to picture, even when the moderator reminded them that these slogans would not stand alone. Some objected to "Click and Kiss" on the grounds that it "sounds dirty" and may carry a sexual connotation. Upon further inquiry, respondents mentioned that some people might think clicking has something to do with sexual intercourse.

Respondents in Tennessee seemed to be very supportive of a campaign built around the "Buckled for Love" slogan. While respondents in Georgia also preferred the "Buckled for Love" slogan to the others presented, some remarked that a more effective message might emphasize the life-or-death choice a parent is making by not using a car seat. One respondent suggested the slogan, "It's a do-or-die situation." Other group participants agreed they preferred this to "Buckled for Love," applauding the very direct, no-nonsense aspect of the newly-suggested slogan.

"You need to stress that the car seat can save your child's life. The message is life vs. death." (GA)

"If the death message is emphasized, people will use car seats. The death message tells you you're not looking out for your child's safety. Dying is much more powerful than disfigurement." (GA)

Copy Testing

Artwork and associated copy were developed based on the information provided by respondents during the first wave of focus groups. These materials were then evaluated during the second wave of groups.

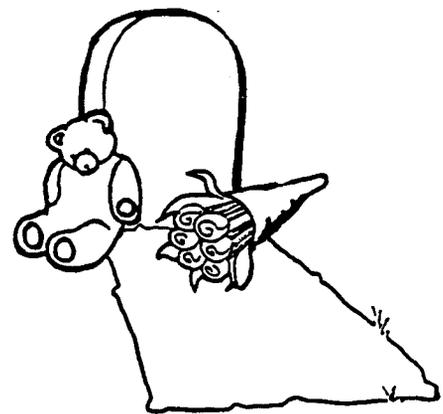
The respondents were initially shown numerous treatments (rough, and not fully-developed) of two-panel black-and-white artwork (Figure 1) showing a woman

Figure 1 - Two-Panel Black-and-White Artwork

“WE’RE JUST GOING
UP THE ROAD A LITTLE”



... NOW HE’S A LONG WAY
FROM HOME



holding a child in her lap while traveling in a car (first panel) and a child's grave (second panel). The "life-or-death" theme for these treatments stemmed from information obtained during the first wave of focus groups which suggested that rural audiences would be highly-responsive to this type of message.

In both Tennessee and Georgia, the response to the concept was very positive, with most respondents stating that the ad is attention-getting, emotionally impactful, highly believable and relevant, and easy to understand. Most said the ad should remain in a black-and-white color scheme, using real people and a photograph of an actual gravesite.

The appeal of the message accompanying the two-panel artwork was found to vary between the Tennessee and Georgia respondents. Respondents in Tennessee responded most positively to the following three treatments:

"WE'RE JUST GOING UP THE ROAD A LITTLE" ... NOW HE'S
A LONG WAY FROM HOME.

"I JUST WANT TO HOLD HIM FOR A MINUTE" ... A MINUTE
CAN CHANGE THE REST OF YOUR LIVES

"BUT HE ALWAYS CRIES IN HIS CAR SEAT" ... HE'S NOT
CRYING ANYMORE

When asked why they preferred these treatments, the Tennessee respondents commented that the messages are relevant, straight-forward, true, and descriptive of some of the reasons they at times remove their child from a car seat.

These women in Tennessee responded negatively to the remaining treatments.

"SOMETIMES I FEEL BETTER HOLDING HIM IN MY ARMS"
... DO YOU FEEL BETTER NOW?

"HE JUST HATES HIS CAR SEAT" ... PROBLEM SOLVED?

"I CAN'T FEED HIM WHEN HE'S IN THAT CAR SEAT" ...
PROBLEM SOLVED?

"I DON'T BELIEVE CAR SEATS PROTECT A CHILD SO
MUCH" ... GUESS AGAIN!

The Tennessee respondents said that these treatments seem harsh, hateful, accusatory, and mean. They remarked that while the messages are attention-getting and the statement in the first panel accurately describes some of the reasons they remove their child from the car seat, the sarcastic tone of the statement in the second panel makes these treatments unappealing.

Respondents in Georgia reacted favorably to the three treatments preferred in Tennessee, but also liked two additional treatments:

"SOMETIMES I FEEL BETTER HOLDING HIM IN MY ARMS"
... DO YOU FEEL BETTER NOW?

"HE JUST HATES HIS CAR SEAT" ... PROBLEM SOLVED?

Some Georgia respondents, in fact, indicated they preferred the latter treatments because the tone is harsh and accusatory. They said that because the message is extremely important to convey, a harsher tone would be more effective than a less-threatening tone. Message believability was also cited as an important factor in determining preferred treatments. The Georgia respondents felt that many of their contemporaries would not really believe the following messages:

"I CAN'T FEED HIM WHEN HE'S IN THAT CAR SEAT" ...
PROBLEM SOLVED?

"I DON'T BELIEVE CAR SEATS PROTECT A CHILD SO
MUCH" ... GUESS AGAIN!

Most of the Georgia respondents indicated that they did not believe many mothers would remove a child from a car seat for feeding. They said it would make far more sense to simply feed the child before leaving home. Almost all indicated that it would be hard to imagine there is any parent who would actually believe that "car seats do not protect a child so much."

Artwork Testing

Respondents were then shown several pieces of artwork designed to accompany the "Buckled for Love" campaign slogan. Again, important similarities and differences were noted across regions.

The respondents in Tennessee preferred the artwork depicting three stick-figure characters (Figure 2). They remarked that this artwork is cute, simple, and would likely appeal to both children and adults. They further said that they liked the portrayal of a family scene, using multiple characters safely secured in a car, and believed their young children would react positively to both the teddy bear and the older child being properly restrained. The next preferred artwork showed infant and toddler cartoon characters in car seats (Figure 3). The Tennessee respondents described the characters as eye-catching and humorous. Some suggested that this artwork should use multiple characters, similar to that found in the stick-figure artwork.

The Tennessee respondents did not like the other artwork (Figure 4), complaining that it was for the most part boring. It was interesting that most of the respondents expressed dislike for the picture of the baby character from a

Figure 2 - Stick Figure Artwork

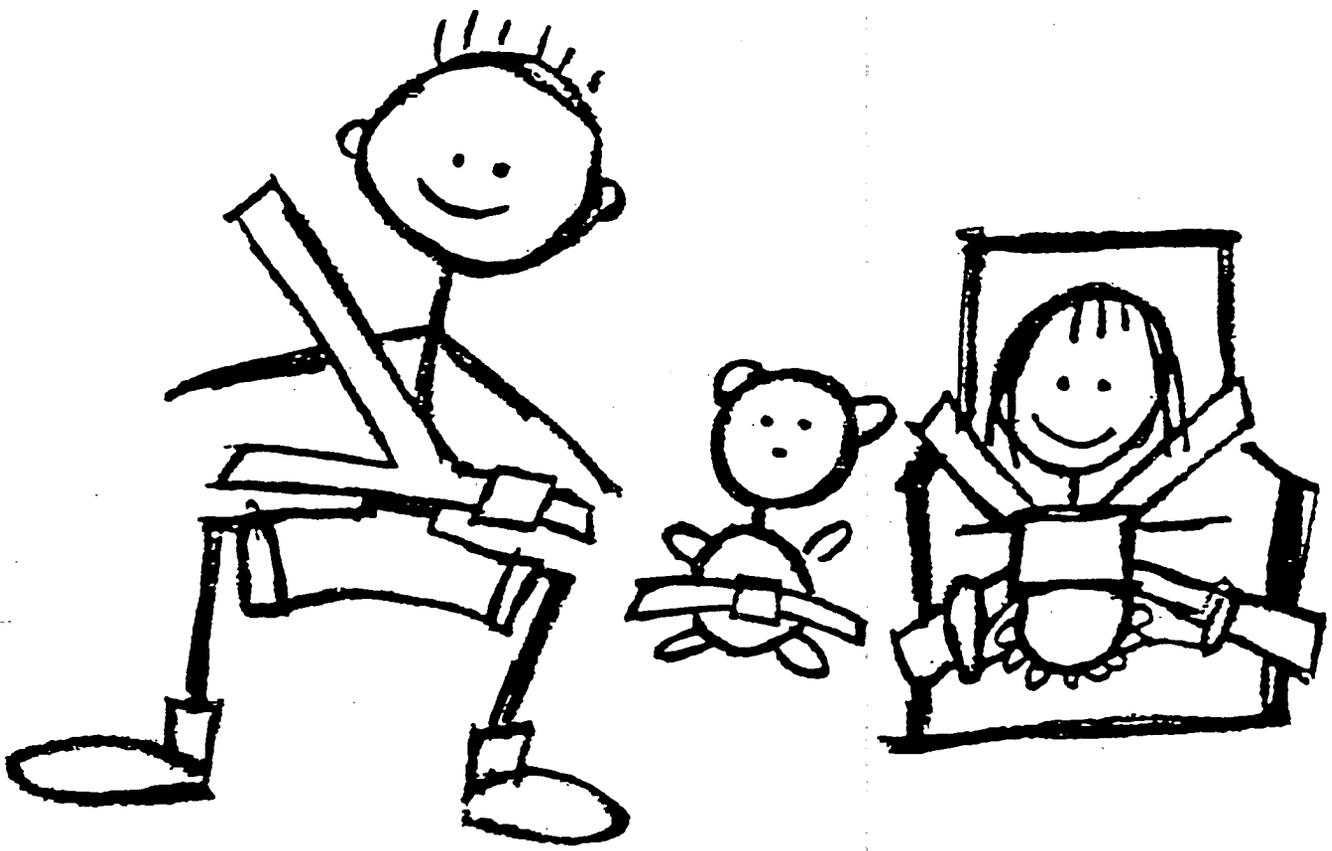


Figure 3 - Cartoon Artwork

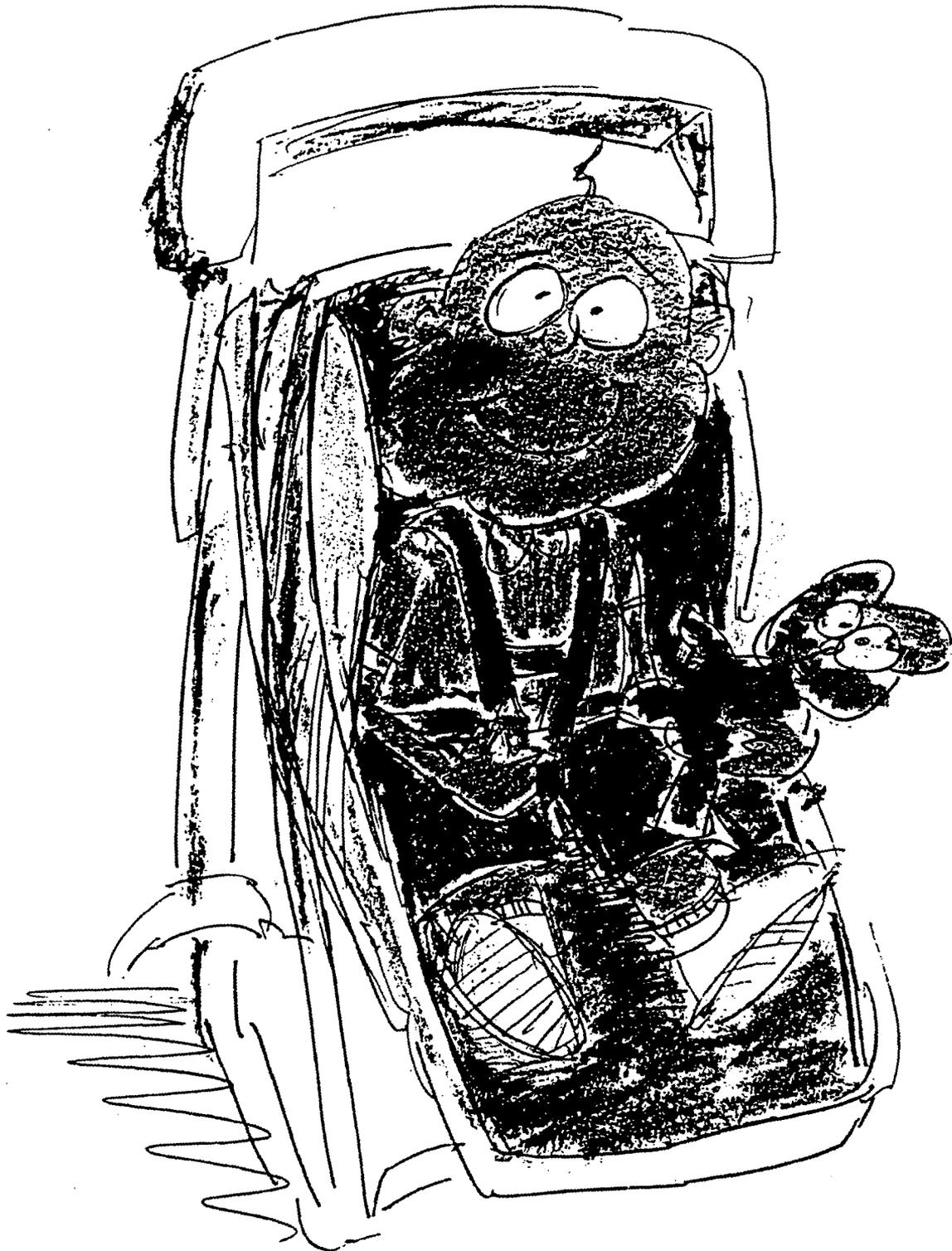
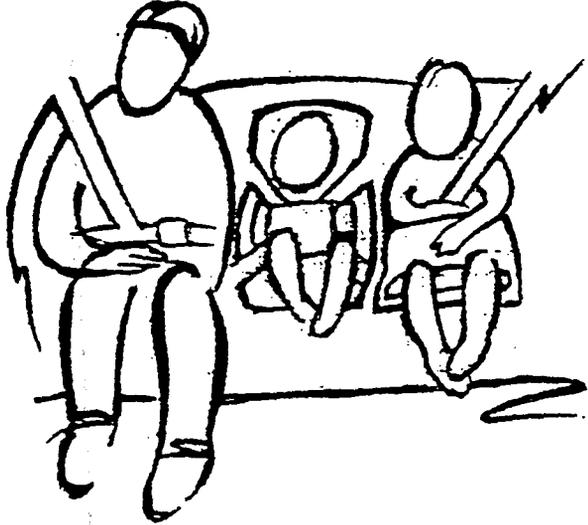


Figure 4 - Additional Artwork



television cartoon series (not pictured). They commented that the family portrayed in the cartoon does not display positive family values and, for this reason, is not popular with the Fentress County audience. While some said their young children might notice and recognize the baby character, others said that using this character in the logo would not attract their attention and would be ineffective for promoting increased car seat usage.

Georgia respondents also liked the artwork depicting the three stick-figure characters, remarking that the concept was cute, attention-getting, appeals to various age groups, and includes an important emphasis on passenger safety as a family activity.

In contrast to the Tennessee respondents, most in Georgia were very positive and enthusiastic about using the baby character from the cartoon series. They remarked that everyone likes and can relate to that television program. Some suggested that it might be even more effective to show the entire cartoon family safely buckled in a car. These respondents, for the most part, did not convey that the cartoon family portrays family dysfunction and poor family values; instead, the characters were perceived as popular and funny. One Georgia respondent suggested that if a car seat check-up or other event was scheduled, it might even be good to have people dressed up as characters from the series.

The Georgia respondents did not find the other cartoon characters to be appealing, nor did they indicate a preference for the other artwork, which they described as boring and uninteresting.

Audio Message Testing

Twelve audio PSA messages were developed and tested during the second wave of focus groups (Figure 5).

The respondents in Tennessee responded most favorably to the two mother messages intended to relate to self-esteem enhancement and life-or-death themes. While they were not overly-negative about the remaining mother messages, they did point out certain problems in syntax and semantics that lessened the overall effectiveness of these latter messages. For example, in the message with the "tradition" theme, many respondents pointed out that as children, they were not placed in car seats, suggesting that their mothers may not have done all they could to keep them safe. Some respondents also commented that the message with the "future" theme was confusing because it suggested you only should buckle your child in a car seat "today" rather than always.

Figure 5 - Audio PSA Messages

Speaker: Mother

Theme: Mother as **protector** of helpless child

"My child isn't going to buckle herself in her carseat. She depends on me to keep her safe, so I always buckle her."

Theme: Caring for child enhances **self-esteem**

"As a parent, there are many things I do for my child that make me feel good about myself. Buckling my child in a carseat is one of those things."

Theme: Looking ahead to a happy **future**

"I have a lot of dreams for my child's future. That's why I buckle him in his carseat today - so he'll have that future."

Theme: **Tradition** and family values in child care

"When I was a child, my mother took care of me and did all that she could to keep me safe. Now that I have a child, it's my turn. That's why I always buckle him in a carseat"

Theme: It's a **life-or-death** matter

"When your child is not in a carseat, even a minor accident can be fatal. Life or death - it's your choice. Buckle your child safely in a carseat."

Theme: Parental care and **nurturance**

"There are many different ways you can show you love your child. One special way is to make sure that whenever you travel, you buckle him in his carseat."

Speaker: External Authority Figure (e.g. law enforcement official)

Theme: Personal **responsibility**

"As a parent, it's your responsibility to do everything possible to keep your child safe from harm. If you want your young child to stay healthy, there is something you must do now - buckle her in a carseat."

Theme: It's the **law**

"In the State of Georgia/Tennessee, every child under the age of four must be placed in a carseat when traveling. Buckle up your child, or pay a fine. It's the law."

Speaker: Child

Theme: Child provides validation - **safety**

"I could get hurt if the car crashes and I'm not in my carseat. Thank you mommy for keeping me safe by buckling me."

Theme: Child provides validation - **nurturance**

"Even when she's in a hurry, mommy always takes the time to put me in my carseat. I know my mommy loves me because she buckles me."

Theme: Child makes request - **nurturance**

"Mommy, I can't buckle myself in my carseat. If you love me please buckle me."

Theme: Child makes request - **safety**

"Mommy, I don't want to get hurt if we have an accident. Please keep me safe. Buckle me in my carseat."

Most Tennessee respondents reacted positively to the authority figure message intended to emphasize obeying the law. Some remarked that this message should contain information about the actual amount of money involved in paying both the fine and court costs. A number said they believed this message would have impact not only on their behavior, but also on the behavior of influencers. A few of the respondents expressed a preference for the authority figure message intended to promote parental responsibility, although these respondents typically acknowledged the potential effectiveness of the other authority figure message.

The Tennessee respondents least preferred the child messages. While some mentioned that they liked hearing a child's voice, most criticized the sophisticated language used and the believability of a child actually requesting to be buckled in a car seat or thanking the mother for using the car seat.

Respondents from Georgia preferred the mother messages emphasizing self-esteem, tradition, and life-or-death. Many also liked the message emphasizing the future, although they suggested the word "today" be replaced by the word "always." As in Tennessee, respondents in Georgia interpreted the word "today" in a very literal manner, asking "what about tomorrow?"

Similar to the Tennessee respondents, those in Georgia preferred the authority figure message emphasizing the importance of obeying the law or being punished. They believed this message would impact not only on their actions, but also on those of their influencers.

The Georgia respondents liked the child message in which the child provides validation for the mother's nurturance. They did not complain about the language skills of the child being too sophisticated. Most of the Georgia respondents said that a child's voice will always get their attention, adding they will listen to what a child has to say to them.

Several respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia suggested they would probably attend to an audio message delivered by a parent whose child had survived a potentially fatal crash because of the correct use of a car seat. They also remarked that this type of message could be delivered by a law enforcement official. A number of respondents in Tennessee said that a briefer, simply-worded message delivered by a child who had survived a crash could also be effective. One respondent in the first Georgia group suggested an audio PSA be developed which involves a conversation between a young child and a caretaker (either a parent or pre-school teacher). The conversation could open with the child asking why another child is no longer in pre-school. The adult would reply that the child will not be back. The young child innocently presses the issue with a simple "why" question, and the adult replies that the child died in a car accident. When the child again asks "why," the adult will reply that the

child was not buckled in a car seat. The moderator asked the subsequent three focus groups about this audio PSA format, and most respondents remarked that this would be very attention-getting and effective for promoting car seat usage.

Preferences for Spokespersons

Respondents in both Tennessee and Georgia indicated that nationally-known personalities would not serve as the most effective spokespersons for a campaign designed to increase the use of car seats. While group participants in Tennessee identified certain country music stars to do PSAs, these suggestions were provided only with prompting, after they offered information about other types of messages that would have greater personal relevance.

Respondents believed that the most effective spokespersons would be individuals who have ties to the community. Many respondents said that hearing from a parent who had lost a child because of failing to use a car seat; or hearing from one whose child had been saved because of a car seat, could be very effective. Many respondents provided personal anecdotes about knowing or hearing about someone in their area whose child had been killed (saved) because of not using (using) a car seat. They suggested that some of these local persons could possibly be contacted and encouraged to tell their relevant story to others in an effort to promote using safety seats all the time. Respondents also said ambulance drivers, rescue squad personnel, EMTs, emergency room doctors, and law enforcement officials who have relevant experience would be credible spokespersons.

Respondents suggested that if other personalities are to be used to convey the message, these should be persons known to have influence within the community. For example, in Georgia, it was suggested that the woman who owns the local funeral home and serves on the county council would be an excellent choice, given that she is respected in the community and known to be influential in other matters. Also, respondents in Georgia suggested that a popular regional TV weatherman could be effective because "he talks to everyone."

VII. GROUP DIFFERENCES AFFECTING PROGRAMMATIC DECISIONS

The study found important differences in media use, message preferences, and visual preferences between the Georgia and Tennessee respondents (Table 6). Although the two sites differed in the racial composition of focus groups, the study design does not permit determination as to whether race was the controlling factor in the divergent responses. It is possible that white subjects selected from other locations would respond similarly to the black participants in this study, and black subjects from other locations would respond similarly to the white participants.

In general, the disparity in responses seemed to revolve around the harshness and severity with which subjects perceived, and experienced, their environment. Study results suggest that this is a critical dimension for program practitioners to assess in designing their programs. Rural target populations that tend to view their world with a harsher edge would likely best be served by the message and communication strategies suggested by findings from the Georgia subjects. A lesser edge would suggest strategies gleaned from the Tennessee subjects.

Black respondents in Georgia spoke in an uninhibited way about their day-to-day life as being characterized by struggles, both personal and familial, that threaten their ability to maintain their homes, livelihoods, and families. For this group of respondents, there seemed to be little embarrassment or loss of self-esteem associated with admitting there are problems at home. In fact, discussion in the groups suggested that for many of these black respondents, daily conversations with friends are often dominated with the theme of family problems. There was also, for this group, an associated fascination with media stories that emphasize a "victim-victimizer" theme. This theme is consistent with their underlying perception that life is difficult, that one often does not have control over negative events, and that there is no point in pretending otherwise.

Self-esteem, for many of these women, is not contingent upon their parenting skills. Parenting was often described as a difficult and largely unrewarding task, with these mothers indicating they lack sufficient personal, financial, and emotional support in their effort to raise their children.

Messages about problem-free, harmonious lifestyles, for this rural black audience, only create cognitive dissonance and confusion, and are frankly not believable. As such, messages of this sort will have little impact and not facilitate behavior change. Messages that are harsher, even to the point of

Figure 6 - Differences in Media Use, Message Preferences, and Visual Preferences

	Georgia	Tennessee
Media Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read only the front page and crime section of the weekly county paper • do not read daily newspapers • enjoy radio stations with an urban, gospel and contemporary black music format • enjoy TV programs with black actors and talk shows that discuss provocative personal and family problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read the entire weekly county newspaper • do not read daily newspapers except for Sunday • enjoy local radio stations with a country music format • enjoy family-oriented TV programs with white actors; avoid TV programs that disparage family values
Message Preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prefer audio messages that are strong and highly-direct, even to the point of being accusatory • message harshness does not appear to be aversive, and may even be beneficial if subject matter is perceived as very serious • emphasize the importance of personal accomplishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prefer audio messages that are warm, nurturing, and non-conflictual • express a strong dislike for messages perceived as harsh or sarcastic • emphasize the importance of self-esteem and family values in messages
Visual Preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prefer visual images that accurately reflect the harshness and severity of their life situation • emphasize the importance of using strong, even overwhelming visual images to illustrate the importance of a theme or event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prefer visual images that are non-severe and inoffensive • emphasize they do not need to be overwhelmed by a visual image in order to understand message saliency

being accusatory, seem to reach this group and are not perceived as threatening or inappropriate. Print, audio, and video car seat messages that are loud, hard-hitting, and graphically portray the consequences associated with not using car seats may best effect an increase in car seat usage with this audience.

The white rural respondents from Tennessee, in contrast, seemed to stress the importance of always conveying to the outside world that their family lives are normal, healthy, and functional. Emotional control, even to the point of overcontrol, is held paramount by this group. A loss of external emotional control is associated with guilt, shame, and a strong sense of personal failure. For many of these mothers, self-esteem is tied to their parenting role. If they do not perform well as a parent, not only do they feel little in the way of self-worth, but they also perceive they have little worth in the eyes of others in the community.

Media that portrays families as dysfunctional, for these women, is viewed both as threatening and repugnant. These families should simply do a better job of either "fixing" their family problems, or keeping the dysfunction behind closed doors. Suffering in silence, for this group, is far preferable to any behavior suggesting personal weakness or inadequacy. These women prefer that print, audio, and video messages be gently persuasive, even if such messages are about a life-or-death topic such as car seat usage. For this audience, messages that are more forceful and accusatory will simply be considered in "poor taste" and have little impact on their actions. Messages delivered with a "kind tone" are the types of messages they value, not only for themselves, but also for their children. A caring message is consistent with their role as a caregiver; a harsher message, in contrast, is directed toward other, less caring mothers.

VIII. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. - DEMOGRAPHICS FOR TARGET AUDIENCES

	JEFFERSON COUNTY, GA		FENTRESS COUNTY, TN	
characteristic	number	percentage	number	percentage
population	17466		14785	
rural residents	17466	100*	14785	100*
males	8080	46.3	7260	49.1
females	9386	53.7	7525	50.9
males under 6	889	5.1	591	4.0
females under 6	839	4.8	538	3.6
females 18-24	937	5.4	710	4.8
females 25-34	1216	7.0	1005	6.8
white	7647	43.8	14754	99.8
black	9788	56.0	2	0.1
income < \$15K	2444	39.3	2700	47.6
income \$15-25K	1283	20.6	1392	24.5
med HH income	19670		15804	
% below poverty		31.3*		27.3*
HH size 3-4	1999	32.1	2126	37.4
HH size 5+	904	14.5	500	8.8
blue collar	3220	47.3	2984	52.1
% unemployed		9.2*		8.7*
educ 0-8	2835	27.2	3566	37.5
educ 9-11	2427	23.3	1660	17.5
HS graduate	4517	43.3	3660	38.5
college graduate	646	6.2	618	6.5
aver resid. yrs	13		12	
HHs with 0 vehic	1126	18.1	630	11.1
HHs with 1 vehic	2102	33.8	1803	31.8
HHs with 2+ veh	2991	48.1	3245	57.1

* information taken from 1990 U.S. Census and PRIZM by Claritas, Corp.

APPENDIX B. - MODERATOR GUIDE FOR PHASE 1 FOCUS GROUPS

I. INTRODUCTION [10 minutes]

Hello, my name is () and I would like to thank you for coming today/tonight. During the next two hours, we're going to discuss a number of topics related to yourselves, your children, your families, life in Fentress/Jefferson County, and child passenger safety. You will all have the opportunity to share your thoughts, ideas, and feelings about these different topics.

Before we begin, I would like to give you some ground rules for this group session. Please speak clearly and loudly so that everyone in the group can hear you. Also, because everything you say is important, I ask that you speak one-at-a-time and avoid side conversations. I am taping our meeting because later, I have to write a report describing the important information I learned from the group. None of you will be identified by name in the report.

I would like for each of you to introduce yourselves by giving your first name, the name and age of your child/children, and a brief description of where you would be and what you would be doing if you weren't here right now.

Do any of you have questions before we start?

II. EXERCISES [100 minutes]

A. COMMUNITY TIES AND ACTIVITIES [15 minutes]

1. What feelings do you have about living in Jefferson/Fentress County?
2. How are you involved in your community? - probe for day-to-day activities; volunteer/civic work; recreational activities
3. How would you compare living in Jefferson/Fentress County to living in surrounding counties? What kinds of competitiveness or rivalry do you feel with neighboring counties?
4. You live in a rural area. How do you think living in Jefferson/Fentress County is different from living in a suburb/city? What are the important differences? How are the people different? - probe for opportunities; quality of life; simplicity; privacy; issue of 2nd best
5. It has been said that everyone has a need to somehow "fit" with or "belong" to some type of group in her world. Within your community, where do

you fit? - probe for "special activities;" long-standing reputation (personal or family)

6. How do you learn about events in your community? - probe for local newspapers, local radio and TV; civic and/or church newsletters

7. While you are at home, what is your preferred type of media entertainment? - probe for reading vs. radio vs. television, and the reasons one may be preferred over the others; probe for select preferences within each media form (e.g., certain writers, TV shows, athletes, teams, musicians, other celebrities)

8. Messages targeted toward you by television, radio, and magazines are typically developed elsewhere. What feelings do you have about the way in which these messages are presented? - probe for likes and dislikes; reactions to media messages that are developed primarily in urban areas

9. Away from home, what are your favorite forms of relaxation and/or recreation? - probe for social activities; clubs and organizations; athletic events/activities; night life

B. SELF-ESTEEM [10 minutes]

1. What does it mean when you say a person feels good about herself?"

2. What kinds of things make you feel good about yourself? - probe for both self-statements and outside messages

3. What kinds of things make you feel good about your child?

C. FAMILY TIES [5 minutes]

1. Most people are influenced to some degree by the people closest to them. Often, family members are these people. How do your parents/grandparents affect the choices you make? How do they influence the way in which you raise your child? - probe for importance of multi-generational theme, methods of influence

D. MOTHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP ISSUES [10 minutes]

1. What does it mean to be the "right" kind of mother? - probe for "shoulds" and "musts"

2. How do you know when a mother really loves her child? How can you tell when a child loves his/her mother? - probe for verbal and nonverbal behaviors

3. When you daydream about your child's future, what do you see? Is this different from what you would like to see? - probe for wishes, hopes, fears

E. CONTROL ISSUES [10 minutes]

1. What gives you a feeling of being "in control" of your life? - probe for feelings of independence, self-reliance and self-sufficiency; autonomous decision-making, emotional support from family/others

2. What types of things in life do you feel you now have control over? Which have control over you? - probes include achievements, day-to-day successes; worries and fears

3. What gives you a feeling of control in your child's life? What is outside your control? How do you feel about this?

F. MUTILATION/PHYSICAL HARM ISSUES [10 minutes]

1. Tell me about your child's physical appearance? How do other people see your child? - probe for positive reactions and statements from others about child's physical attractiveness; mother's "value" of her child's attractiveness

2. How do you think your life would be changed if, because of an accident, your child was disfigured? Have you considered this before and is it a concern for you? - probe for thoughts; daydreams; worries; nightmares

G. RELIGIOUS ISSUES [10 minutes]

1. How does religion influence your life? - probe for influence on day-to-day behaviors; attitudes; feelings; values/morality; personal discipline; mortality/eternity issues; beliefs about fate (pre-determinism) vs. personal control; do's and don'ts

2. How are you/your family involved in your church? - probe for church attendance; special events

3. How does your religion/belief in God affect the way in which you raise and care for your child?

H. CHILD SAFETY SEAT USAGE ISSUES [10 minutes]

1. (Moderator displays picture of child safety seat). What do you call this?

2. What do you think of when you hear ... (use terms provided in response to #1)?

3. All of you have indicated that you either do not use a child safety seat or only use one sometimes when you travel. What are some reasons for this? What, if anything, might influence you to change your behavior? - probes include significant others, availability, facts; hands-on-assistance

4. In Georgia/Tennessee, the state law indicates that if a child is not restrained in a safety seat, the parent can be given a ticket and fined (). What do you think about this law? - probe for both emotional reaction and how this law may influence behavior

I. CAMPAIGN SLOGANS [10 minutes]

1. We have developed several campaign slogans that aim to promote the use of child safety seats in rural areas. I am going to present them to you one-at-a-time and ask about your reaction to each. (moderator presents each of the slogans and asks the following questions):

What do you picture or imagine when you hear this slogan?

Does this slogan appeal to you? If so, how?

What problems might be associated with using this slogan?

How would you improve on this slogan?

2. After hearing all of these slogans, which appeals most to you? What makes it most appealing. Which would be your second choice? Why? Which slogan is least appealing? Why?

3. Use your imagination again. What are some other ways to present the message about the importance of using child safety seats that would be appealing to you?

J. SPOKESPERSONS FOR PSAs [10 minutes]

1. (Moderator displays sheet with the letters PSA in large print). Does anyone know what this means? (If no or yes, continue) You have all probably at one time heard or seen a public service announcement (PSA). A PSA is intended to get your attention and provide you with information about an important issue. Typically, a person who is well-known, well-liked, popular and respected by the target audience is chosen to deliver the message in the PSA. If you were to select people to talk about the importance of always using a child

safety seat, whom would you recommend. Remember, the people chosen have to "connect" with the target audience, who in this situation is young white/black mothers under the age of 20/between the ages of 20-29 years.

III. CLOSING [10 minutes]

Thank you again for taking the time to meet with me today. Before closing, do you have any additional comments that you would like to offer about the topics we discussed? (If not, conclude the session; if so, briefly allow further discussion). Let me give you your stipend for participating today/tonight. Again, thank you. (Note: If observers are present, moderator can use a "false close" to confer with observers prior to concluding the session).

APPENDIX C. - MODERATOR GUIDE FOR PHASE II FOCUS GROUPS

I. INTRODUCTION [10 minutes]

Hello, my name is () and I would like to thank you for coming today/tonight. During the next two hours, we're going to discuss a number of topics related to your thoughts and feelings about child safety. You will also be viewing a number of posters the Department of Transportation is considering for the purpose of promoting increased child safety seat usage.

Before we begin, I would like to give you some ground rules for this group session. Please speak clearly and loudly so that everyone in the group can hear you. Also, because everything you say is important, I ask that you speak one-at-a-time and avoid side conversations. I am taping our meeting because later, I have to write a report describing the important information I learned from the group. None of you will be identified by name in the report.

I would like for each of you to introduce yourselves by giving your first name, the name and age of your child/children, and a brief description of where you would be and what you would be doing if you weren't here right now.

Do any of you have questions before we start?

II. EXERCISES [105 minutes]

A. RELATIONSHIP WITH HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE [10 minutes]

1. What types of health care services do you and your children use? How often do you use these services? Who do you see? What other public agencies and organizations do you and your family use? For what purposes?
2. Which agencies and organizations seem to be the most active and helpful in your lives? What are some reasons for this? Which seem more passive or difficult to receive services from?
3. What are some other places in your area where you regularly take your children? - probe for specific stores, restaurants, public/state parks

B. CHILD SAFETY SEAT USAGE ISSUES [15 minutes]

1. (Moderator displays picture of child safety seat). What do you call this?
2. What do you think of when you hear ... (use terms provided in response to #1)?

3. All of you have indicated that you either do not use a child safety seat or only use one sometimes when you travel. What are some reasons for this? What, if anything, might influence you to always use a carseat? - probes include significant others, availability, facts; hands-on-assistance

4 While many people will put an infant in a child safety seat, they will not put a toddler in a seat. What do you think about this? - probes include relative importance of putting an infant vs. toddler in a child safety seat; problems encountered when using carseats with an infant vs. toddler

5. What types of information would you like to have about child safety seat use and misuse? - probe for questions they would like to have answered; important information that should be part of a PI&E campaign

6. How would you like to receive information about child safety seats? What would be the best (most effective) ways to provide you with this information? Which ways would be least effective? - probe for brochures, pamphlets, posters, videotapes, television, radio, newspapers, specific distribution points for materials (posters, brochures, pamphlets)

7. Many of you may have people who strongly influence your lives, such as spouses, parents, or grandparents who at times travel with your child. What are the best ways to get messages to these people about the importance of CSS usage?

C. ADVERTISING CONCEPT TESTING [30 minutes]

1. I am going to show you some artwork and slogans that have been developed for the purpose of increasing awareness of the importance of using child safety seats at all times. The intended target audience for this advertising is young white/black women living in rural areas. The advertising concepts I will show you are in very rough form. I'm not looking for comments about the quality of the artwork; instead, I'd like to hear your reactions to the ideas and issues the ads bring out, what feelings the ads leave you with, and how much they might motivate you to do something as a result of seeing them or hearing them.

[Note: The ads will be shown one-at-a-time. Respondents will be asked to write down brief responses to the first two questions before discussing the other questions]

What is the main point of this ad?

How does this ad make you feel?

What makes this ad strong/weak?

What might you do as a result of seeing this ad?

To what extent do you believe this ad?

How relevant does this ad seem to you?
How likely is this ad to get your attention?
What is appealing to you? Unappealing?
What is understandable? Not clear?
What colors/color schemes would you prefer?
What changes in format would you suggest?

D. COMPARISON/CONTRAST [15 minutes]

1. Now that you have seen all of the artwork, write down the two ads that would most likely effect your deciding to use a child safety seat at all times. (Allow respondents complete this task). Now, write down the ad that, in your opinion, would least likely to change your behavior.
2. Let's go around the room. I'd like each of you to share the responses you've written down.

[Note: Moderator asks the following questions]:

What makes this your top choice? Your second choice?
What could be done to improve the ads you liked best?
What makes this your bottom choice?
What other information, if any, would you want or need?

E. AUDIO MESSAGE TESTING [25 minutes]

1. I'm going to play some taped messages that are designed to emphasize the importance of always using a child safety seat. These messages will not stand alone, but will be part of a larger radio or TV ad about using child safety seats. After I play each message, we'll spend time discussing your reactions.

[Note: Themes are not read aloud to the respondents]

Speaker: Mother

Theme: Mother as **protector** of helpless child

"My child isn't going to buckle herself in her carseat. She depends on me to keep her safe, so I always buckle her."

Theme: Caring for child enhances **self-esteem**

"As a parent, there are many things I do for my child that make me feel good about myself. Buckling my child in a carseat is one of those things."

Theme: Looking ahead to a happy future

"I have a lot of dreams for my child's future. That's why I buckle him in his carseat today - so he'll have that future."

Theme: Tradition and family values in child care

"When I was a child, my mother took care of me and did all that she could to keep me safe. Now that I have a child, it's my turn. That's why I always buckle him in a carseat"

Theme: It's a life-or-death matter

"When your child is not in a carseat, even a minor accident can be fatal. Life or death - it's your choice. Buckle your child safely in a carseat."

Theme: Parental care and nurturance

"There are many different ways you can show you love your child. One special way is to make sure that whenever you travel, you buckle him in his carseat."

Speaker: External Authority Figure (e.g. law enforcement official)

Theme: Personal responsibility

"As a parent, it's your responsibility to do everything possible to keep your child safe from harm. If you want your young child to stay healthy, there is something you must do now - buckle her in a carseat."

Theme: It's the law

"In the State of Georgia/Tennessee, every child under the age of four must be placed in a carseat when traveling. Buckle up your child, or pay a fine. It's the law."

Speaker: Child

Theme: Child provides validation - safety

"I could get hurt if the car crashes and I'm not in my carseat. Thank you mommy for keeping me safe by buckling me."

Theme: Child provides validation - nurturance

"Even when she's in a hurry, mommy always takes the time to put me in my carseat. I know my mommy loves me because she buckles me."

Theme: Child makes request - **nurturance**

"Mommy, I can't buckle myself in my carseat. If you love me please buckle me."

Theme: Child makes request - **safety**

"Mommy, I don't want to get hurt if we have an accident. Please keep me safe. Buckle me in my carseat."

[Note: Messages are played one-at-a-time and the following questions are asked]:

What does this message communicate to you?

What makes the message strong/weak?

How could this message be stronger?

How believable is the message?

Would this message catch your attention? Why or why not?

What is appealing or unappealing about the message?

2. What other suggestions do you have for effective audio messages?

F. IMPLEMENTATION SUGGESTIONS [10 minutes]

1. What ideas do you have for local area events or activities that could be used to promote the increased use of child safety seats? - probe for existing annual events; picnics; fairs, entertainment; local personalities; contests; displays; best time of year; best locations

2. What could be done to ensure that these events will be well-attended and successful? - probe for promotional activities; key participants

III. CLOSING [5 minutes]

Thank you again for taking the time to meet with me today. Before closing, do you have any additional comments that you would like to offer about the topics we discussed? (If not, conclude the session; if so, briefly allow further discussion). Let me give you your stipend for participating today/tonight. Again, thank you. (Note: If observers are present, moderator can use a "false close" to confer with observers prior to concluding the session).

APPENDIX D. - RESPONDENT SCREENER

RESPONDENT SCREENER FOR CSS FOCUS GROUPS

Note to Recruiter: For Jefferson County, consider only black female respondents. For Fentress County, consider only white female respondents. Recruit 12 participants for both Group 1 and Group 2.

Hi, my name is () and I'm calling about a study sponsored by the Department of Transportation. All persons selected for the study will be paid \$35.00 for participating in a 2-hour group session. During the group, you will be asked to talk about yourself, your child/children, living in Jefferson/Fentress County, and your attitudes and feelings about child passenger safety. The group will be scheduled on () and will be held at (). Before I continue, are you interested in participating? (If yes, continue; if no, thank and terminate)

Now, I have to ask you several questions to determine if you are eligible to be part of the study.

1. What is your age?

- () 16-19; consider for Group 1; continue
- () 20-29; consider for Group 2; continue
- () over 30; thank and terminate

2. Do you have a child 4 years old or younger?

- () yes; continue
- () no; thank and terminate

3. How old is (are) your child(ren)?

- () less than 1 year; try to recruit six for each group, continue
- () 1 year to 3 years old; try to recruit six for each group, continue

4. Are you married (not separated)?

- () yes; no less than two, no more than five per group; continue
- () no; no more than eight per group; continue

5. Which best describes your household income level?

- () less than \$15,000 per year; continue
- () more than \$15,000 per year; thank and terminate

6. When your child is riding in a vehicle, how often is he/she in a child safety seat? (Provide the following choices)

- () never; continue
- () sometimes; continue
- () most of the time; continue
- () always; thank and terminate

Note to Recruiter: If a respondent has more than one child three years old or younger, determine child safety seat usage for each child before continuing. For example, a respondent who always uses a child safety seat with her infant, but does not do so with her 2 year old could be considered for participation in the study.

7. Have you and your child traveled in a vehicle during the past week?

- () yes, continue
- () no; thank and terminate

8. How long have you lived in Fentress/Jefferson County?

- () more than three years; continue
- () less than three years; thank and terminate

9. Have you participated in a research or focus group in the past year?

- () no; continue
- () yes; thank and terminate

Participant's Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Notes to Recruiter:

1. Vehicle ownership is not a variable.
2. Employment status is not a variable.
3. Educational level is not a variable.
4. Public assistance participation is not a variable.

DOT HS 808 274



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

NHTSA
People Saving People
www.nhtsa.dot.gov