



LAW ENFORCEMENT CONVERSATION STARTERS AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASSROOM

The month of May not only brings the *Click It or Ticket* May Mobilization, it also brings lot's of busy activities for teenagers such as the prom, graduation, summer jobs and extra-curricular sports. In short – May marks the beginning of the summer driving season and with it an increased risk for teens in vehicles. Use the opportunities you have in the classroom or elsewhere to remind teens about the importance of safety belt use and the risk of getting a ticket. The following is a brief list of ideas on how you might engage students in a group setting to get them to discuss belt use.

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- **Issue a mock ticket.** To get your students thinking about the *Click It or Ticket* May Mobilization right from the start, begin by asking how many among them don't wear their safety belt or have forgotten to do so at least once during the past week. When (if) any students raise their hand, you will present them with a ticket. The citation won't have their name on it, but it will indicate the fine amount and state the broken infraction – failure to wear a safety belt. This may demonstrate the reality that not buckling up is both costly AND against the law. Find out the specific fine amount and license point assessment for your State and tell you students.
 - **Relate a personal experience.** No matter how rowdy the class, your point of view as a law enforcement officer will be very compelling to young people. If you've been on the scene of a car crash where people were killed or seriously injured, share with your students your observations and feelings about the pain and suffering the victims, their families and their friends experienced. Don't spare them the harsh details – the highway certainly doesn't. Ask your students what they think of this and how they, their family and friends would feel if they were involved in a car crash. Ask how they would feel if a friend or family member were killed or injured in a wreck and they found out they could have been saved by a safety belt.
 - **Ask for their personal stories.** Ask your students to share and discuss any personal stories they might have about the consequences of a car crash. This could be a crash that they were personally involved in or that a family member or friend was involved in. Ask how wearing or not wearing a safety belt could have or did affect the outcome. Ask them if they know anyone who has ever received a ticket for not wearing a safety belt.
 - **Give students a quick and fun quiz.** Use the fact sheet and State safety belt rates in this planner to "quiz" your students on the statistics about safety belt use, teens in traffic crashes and the economic cost. Offer rewards for correct answers such as: getting out of class early, candy or a Buckle Up America bumper sticker.
 - **Get suggestions from them.** Ask your students for suggestions on how safety belt use among teenagers could be improved or what they could do to get their peers to buckle up. See if you can get a group consensus on the top three ideas and determine student interest in pursuing one of them. If they're interested, have them decide on which initiative as a class they might take-on at their school and get them to elect a committee.