

Diversity & Evaluated Community Programs
Child Seat Distribution in Texas

*Photo of child in a
child restraint*



Department of State Health Services
with Texas Department of Transportation

Best practices for child seat distribution

*Photo of children in
child restraints*

1. *Availability & Accessibility*
2. *Education*
3. *An investment from the caregiver (either in time or money)*

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Legislative Authority provided in 1986, amended in 1993

- HEALTH & SAFETY CODE
- CHAPTER 45. DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY SEAT SYSTEMS
- § 45.001. DEFINITION. In this chapter, "child passenger safety seat system" has the meaning assigned by Section 545.412, Transportation Code. Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 311, § 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993. Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 165, § 30.203, eff. Sept. 1, 1997. § 45.002.
- CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY SEAT SYSTEM PROGRAM. (a) The department may establish a program to distribute child passenger safety seat systems to indigent persons in this state. (b) A program established under this section may distribute new or used child passenger safety seat systems that have been donated to the department for distribution. Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 311, § 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993.

Graphic depicting legislative action

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Source of funding

*Photo of
child in a
child
restraint*

Texas uses Department of Transportation Highway Safety 402 funds for a wide range of child passenger safety activities, including child seat distribution for low-income families.

DOT funds also provide child seats for state partners conducting checkups and inspection stations.

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Pending legislation could provide another source of funds for child seats

- In the current 2009 Texas legislative session, companion bills in the House (HB528) and Senate (SB61) would require children to be restrained via a child restraint until they reach 8 years of age, unless at least 4'9" tall.

Fines from citations (after June, 2010) would go to a special fund managed by the Department of Transportation to use for the purchase of child seat systems for low-income families.

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State-funded child seat distribution programs in Texas

- During FY2008:
- 5,542 seats provided to subgrantees for inspection stations throughout Texas locations via community technician partners.
- Safe Riders' Child Seat Distribution & Education Program provided 8,269 seats via community classes.
- For CPS Week, a total of 1,460 seats provided to support over 30 checkup events.
- Safe Kids coalitions (11) and Safe Communities coalitions also provide seats.

*Photo of CPS
instructor
teaching in a
classroom*

*Photo of CPS
technicians
working at an
inspection
station*

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State-funded inspection stations

▪ Partners:

- Texas Children's Hospital (Houston)
- Injury Prevention Center of Greater Dallas
- Thomason Hospital (El Paso)
- Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center (Waco)
- Thomason Hospital (El Paso)
- Brazos County TxDOT District (Bryan)
- Texans in Motion (Austin)
- Scott & White Hospital (Temple)
- Texas AgriLife Extension (Multiple rural locations throughout Texas)

Photo of inspection station setup

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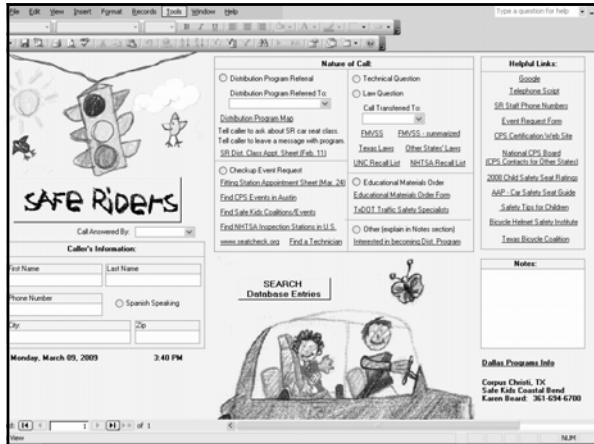
Safe Riders Distribution & Education Program

- Seats provided to low-income families (self-certified) via one-hour community classes.
- Each community partner conducts a minimum of 2 classes per month. Size is limited to 5 families per class.
- 119 current community partners, including health clinics, public health departments, county extension offices, pregnancy centers and social service agencies. Community partners are selected via a yearly application process. Selected community partners receive training prior to beginning or continuing a program.
- If staffed with CPS technicians, partners can offer a seat checkup following the class. If not, only a classroom session is conducted and the client is referred to the nearest CPS inspection station or CPS technician for a future checkup.

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Graphics of flyers for child seat distribution program in English and Spanish

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Outline of educational class

- Sign-in; release of liability explained & signed
- Introduction to child passenger safety
 - Video (12 minutes)
 - Stress importance of consistent use
- Details regarding the child seat they will receive
 - Parts of their seat & how they work
 - Rear-facing/forward facing rules & recommendations
 - How to secure a child within the seat (hands-on activity)
 - Resources for correct installation in the vehicle
 - Placement of the seat within the vehicle
 - Never leave a child unattended in vehicle & spot the tot
- Questions and answers
 - Resources, including local inspection stations

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Videos of distribution class activities & interview with participant following a child seat check.

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Child seats save lives of three children in El Paso crash



Two of the seats were received through a Safe Riders distribution program class.

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Diversity: Language

• *During 2007, of 8,341 calls for referrals to child seat distribution programs:*

- *1,829 (22%) were Spanish speakers.*
- *14% of classes are dedicated for Spanish speakers.*

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Map of Texas showing distribution program and Safe Kids Coalition locations

As of February 2009:
119 Distribution program locations
11 Safe Kids coalitions

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Evaluation

▪ State-funded inspection stations

- Monitored by local DOT traffic safety specialists.
- Seat allotments dispersed in two segments (2nd allotment sent after it has been verified that the 1st allotment of seats were distributed successfully).

▪ Distribution program

- Monthly reports provide input for ongoing evaluation.
- Clients provide input when problems occur (such as no return calls, etc.).
- Monitoring visits.
- Training of program partners evaluated and updated based on feedback.

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Outside evaluation:
Practicum offering



University of Texas School of Public Health

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES - Safe Riders

*Department: Division of Prevention and Preparedness Services
Job Type: State/Regional Health Department
Related Areas: Health Promotion, Behavioral Sciences, Public Health-General
Location: Austin, TX*

Develop a program evaluation plan and/or conduct a program evaluation of the State-wide child seat distribution program for low-income families. Safe Riders distributes about 10,000 child seats each year to low-income families across Texas via educational classes conducted by community partners.

*More Information
<https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/saferiders/>
http://www.sph.tmc.edu/practica/search/search_detail.cfm?oppid=7578*

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Summary

➤ Texas provides seats and related education to low-income families via a variety of methods:

- Inspection stations & checkups
- Systematic distribution program via community classes

➤ Education is key component of all seat distribution activities.

➤ Best practices include an investment in either money or time by the caregiver.

For more information, contact:



Texas Dept. of State Health Services

<saferiders@dshs.state.tx.us>

<www.dshs.state.tx.us/saferiders>

Telephone: 800-252-8255

*Photo of CPS instructor
with caregiver
consulting vehicle
owner's manual*

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