

Enforcement and Justice Services Products and Technical Assistance

2011

Traffic Occupant
Protection Strategies



Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS)

- enhancing officer safety, enforcement, and public education

About

TOPS:

◆ *Demonstrates the importance of seat belt use by law enforcement personnel*

◆ *Training can be conducted during briefings, or in a four-hour block*

◆ *TOPS provides an excellent base of knowledge for law enforcement participating in seat belt crackdowns as well as for sustained enforcement efforts*

Seat Belt use continues to be an issue that dramatically impacts the number of injuries and deaths that occur on our roadways. Non-use and improper use not only affects the general public, but law enforcement officers around the country as well. In fact, 55 percent of officers killed in motor vehicle crashes from 1980—2008 were unrestrained.

2010 marked the 13th consecutive year that traffic related incidents have been the leading cause of line-of-duty death for law enforcement. TOPS explains why officers, deputies, and troopers are at greater risk of death or serious injury from traffic crashes than the general public, and the protection afforded by proper restraint use. The curriculum focuses on issues that law enforcement officers in the field can put to immediate use: crash dynamics; the basics of seat belts and child restraints; and working effectively with networks at the State and Local level.

The class explains the law enforcement role in saving lives by increasing belt use; supports law enforcement's participation in the *Click it or Ticket* mobilization efforts and places a heavy emphasis on usage and enforcement by law enforcement.

Additional Information

The TOPS Curriculum is an effective tool as agencies prepare for seat belt and ***Click It Or Ticket*** mobilizations.

The curriculum is in DVD format and includes all of the instructor and student materials, handouts, and video clips in a single package.

Taught in as little as four hours, the curriculum is designed with flexibility to address local traffic safety and enforcement issues, and can be presented in a series of roll call sessions if needed. TOPS is an important training initiative that can be used to increase officer safety and significantly improve community safety by impacting crime through aggressive traffic enforcement.

If you're interested in hosting a TOPS class for your department or in your area, contact your NHTSA Regional Office.



Any questions? *Contact Joel Bolton at 202-366-2084 or at joel.bolton@dot.gov*

