



Buckle Up Yurok



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Danielle Lippert
Program Coordinator
California Rural Indian Health Board

More Information

**The Community Guide:
CPSTF Findings on Cancer
Prevention and Control**
[www.thecommunityguide.org/
topic/motor-vehicle-injury](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/topic/motor-vehicle-injury)

The Yurok Tribe
www.yuroktribe.org

**The California Rural Indian
Health Board**
www.crihb.org

Child safety seat use increased by 34 percent on the Yurok Tribe Reservation, four years after Buckle Up Yurok (BUY), a tribal motor vehicle injury prevention program, was started.

The program was developed by the California Rural Indian Health Board (CRIHB). In 2010 CRIHB received a four-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention to launch BUY.

The grant required the program to use motor vehicle injury prevention strategies recommended by the Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF). A list of these recommendations was provided to CRIHB, but they could also be found on the Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide) website.

Danielle Lippert, the program’s coordinator, says she had not heard of The Community Guide prior to working with BUY, but found it to be very helpful.

“The [CPSTF’s] findings helped us choose interventions that we could be confident were effective,” Lippert says.

Establishing Legislation

Injuries are the leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaskan Natives ages 1 to 54.¹ Among ethnic groups in the United States, American Indian and Alaska Native children experience the highest rates of injury mortality and morbidity.² Despite those alarming numbers, laws requiring child safety seat and safety belt use did not exist on the Yurok Reservation before the BUY program began.

However, Yurok’s Police Chief had already drafted a proposal for a traffic code that would adopt California’s primary restraint use laws. Primary safety belt laws allow police to stop motorists solely for being unbelted. Secondary safety belt laws allow police to ticket unbelted motorists only if they are stopped for other reasons such as speeding. The CPSTF recommends primary safety belt laws over secondary safety belt laws because they are more effective in reducing motor vehicle-related injuries and deaths.

It took one year to finalize the traffic code and additional year and a half for the Tribal Council to review it, according to Lippert. Throughout this time the BUY program held child safety seat events. At the events drivers were shown how to properly install the child safety seats and more than 260 seats were given away. Child safety seat distribution and education programs are a CPSTF recommended strategy for increasing child safety seat use.

Engaging Community Partners

CRIHB is located in Sacramento, which is about a six-hour drive from the Yurok reservation that surrounds the Klamath River in northern California. Lippert says she could only visit the reservation every other month, so the Yurok Police Department and other community partners played a critical role in helping the BUY program carry out its activities.



“The Yurok Police Department has worked closely with CRIBB on this project, beginning with the planning of the proposal,” Lippert says. “The Yurok PD staff implemented many program activities and assisted with data collection locally.”

Also, the BUY program trained a group of teenagers to educate their peers on traffic safety habits. This group, named the BUY Teen Coalition, developed presentations that were given at local schools and community events. Topics discussed in the presentations included teen traffic safety, proper occupant restraint use, graduated drivers licensing, and the effects of alcohol on a developing brain.



Embracing Progress

In October 2012 the Tribal Council approved the traffic code. The traffic code does not require officers to issue citations for lack of restraint use. It is at their discretion to issue a citation or just give a warning. Yurok police officers that were involved in the BUY program held enforcement check points, which helped Lippert observe safety belt and child safety seat use.

Safety belt use on the reservation fluctuated during the four years of the BUY program. From 2011 to 2012, safety belt use increased from 75 percent to 81 percent. In 2013, safety belt use dropped to roughly 74 percent then increased to nearly 81 percent in 2014.

The enforcement checkpoints and other BUY activities were advertised on the program’s Facebook page as well as featured in local newspapers and promoted on the local radio station. Community-wide information and enhanced enforcement campaigns are also a CPSTF recommended strategy for increasing child safety seat use. Lippert says the program worked with the Yurok Tribal Court to develop an hour-long class that covered the basics of child passenger safety.

“Once the vehicle code had been passed, we knew we wanted to develop a child passenger safety education class that could be offered in lieu of paying a fine,” Lippert says.

Twenty-four Yurok Tribe employees have been certified as child passenger safety technicians, which Lippert believes will help create a culture of traffic safety in the community.

The BUY program ended in 2014. However, the Federal Highway Administration’s Tribal Transportation Program awarded the Yurok Tribe with funding to develop a tribal safety plan. Lippert says the plan will identify current community safety issues and ways to address those issues. The BUY program will serve as a foundation to build that plan.

Lessons Learned

- **Involve the community you’re helping.** Always consider how community members can get involved and how doing so benefits them. Various departments and programs have similar goals and working together can trim the workload for staff members.
- **Spread your project over multiple partners.** Turnover can be a big challenge when working with small groups. Having multiple partners can ensure work still gets completed in a timely manner.
- **Be persistent.** You may have to call, email, and give in-person invitations multiple times before you can recruit partners for your program.

¹Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2014. Atlanta, GA. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html>. Accessed on August 1, 2015.


²Wallace, L., Patel R., Dellinger, A. Injury mortality among American Indian and Alaska Native children and youth—United States, 1989–1998. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. 2003; 52(30):697–701.

What is The Community Guide?

The Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide) is an essential resource for people who want to know what works in public health. It provides evidence-based recommendations about public health interventions and policies to improve health and promote safety.

The Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF)—an independent, nonfederal, unpaid panel of public health and prevention experts—bases its recommendations on systematic reviews of the scientific literature. With oversight from the CPSTF, scientists and subject-matter experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conduct these reviews in collaboration with a wide range of government, academic, policy, and practice-based partners.

www.thecommunityguide.org

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