

	Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC)
	Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) Child Passenger Safety & Occupant Protection Healthcare Project 653 West Pratt Street, 4th Floor, Room 432 Baltimore, Maryland 21201

New program teaches ‘tweens’ to be safer car occupants

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children ages 5 to 19 years, and anyone who rides unrestrained in a vehicle is far more likely to be killed or injured in a crash than one who is buckled up. Unfortunately, preteens are less likely to be buckled up than younger children and adults, and they often have other behaviors that increase their risk, such as distracting the driver, sitting in unsafe positions, and riding with unsafe drivers. MIEMSS is seeking to address the problem with an innovative program now being piloted in Maryland.

The ***Be-Tween Riding and Driving*** program has nurse and safety advocates educate youth ages 10 to 15 years to ride more safely in vehicles. The program builds on youths’ interest in becoming drivers in the near-future, and uses a variety of educational techniques including: discussion, hands-on practice, audio-visuals, role plays, games, and pledging. Parents’ participation is a key component of the safe driving pledge, which uses the Safe Kids Worldwide program, “Countdown2Drive.”

More training sessions are planned to teach the pilot program safety educators.

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