

Click it AND Ticket, Teen Seatbelt Project



Goal: To increase seatbelt use among teen drivers with a positive, peer-driven, research-supported educational campaign that also raises awareness in the larger community about the importance of buckling up and the state (and national) Click It or Ticket Program.

Background: Washington State has a seatbelt use rate of 96.5%. Washington has been a national leader, alongside Oregon, in seat belt use since the adoption of the Click it or Ticket Project and primary seat belt law in 2002.

Additionally, teen drivers are part of a high-risk group that has the highest rate of seat belt non-use.

Project Description: Each high school-based project begins with a seatbelt observational survey (conducted by students with assistance from Traffic Safety officials) which determines the baseline seat belt use among the school community (students and teachers driving onto the school property). A second survey follows the project intervention components to measure the impact of the project.

School Resources Officers (SROs), High School Leadership students and their advisor partner (coached by Traffic Safety officials) conduct the intervention which involves identifying and rewarding students who drive onto the high school property buckled up.

A Mirror Image of Click It or Ticket: Students who drive onto school property buckled up receive “tickets” redeemable for rewards. Participating students and SROs position themselves in and around the school parking lot. Students arriving buckled up are given a “ticket.” The “ticket” is modeled after a real ticket, but contains information about why the student is smart to be buckled up (because seat belts reduce injuries and save lives).

There is an area on the “ticket” for the student’s signature, and this becomes their entry form for a drawing.

Once the student enters the school building, the “ticket” is redeemable for candy (or fruit). During morning announcements, the school principal (previously coached by Leadership students) makes a few statements about the importance of buckling up and then announces the big winner who is awarded a debit card worth \$124 (the cost of a REAL ticket for not using a seat belt).

Leadership students are also tasked with promoting seat belt use at the school. Some suggestions include:

- putting up seat belt posters (provided by Traffic Safety officials)
- encouraging teachers to add traffic safety themes to their curriculum
- encouraging teachers to air traffic safety educational videos
- promoting and organizing an all-school, traffic safety assembly
- encouraging student newspaper reporters to write about seat belt use and traffic safety
- writing guest articles in the high school electronic newspaper that goes to parents
- bringing in guest speakers on traffic safety themes
- putting photos in the school year book about the project

Leadership students are tasked with being “public information officers” for the project. They are trained (by Traffic Safety officials) about how to work with the media; they then conduct media interviews. Traffic Safety officials promote the project with the press, then encourage reporters to interview the students, faculty and school administrators. The school benefits from the positive, pro-safety news stories about the school in the local media; the larger community is reminded about the importance of buckling up and the state (and nation’s) Click it or Ticket project.

As mentioned, Leadership students collect observational survey data before and after the project (with coaching from Traffic Safety officials) which not only measures the impact of the project, this involves them in conducting research, which teachers and administrators appreciate.

Grant funds from the Traffic Safety Commission pay for the following: up to four \$124 debit cards per school (one for each intervention) candy and fruit given to “ticketed” students, poster and “ticket” printing costs, and project T-shirts for Leadership students

After developing the project, the Washington Traffic Safety Commission received \$25,000 in grant funds from State Farm to underwrite the costs of the project, hence media and educational materials now carry the State Farm logo and insurance agents partner with students to give away “tickets” and/or make presentations at the school on the insurance impacts of bad driving choices.

The project is called “Click it AND Ticket” to build on the state and national Click it or Ticket seat belt project brand, capitalize on the verbal connection and further the Click it or Ticket Project messaging.