

Seatbelt Use and Safety Meeting Kit

Everyone has heard that seatbelt use is crucial for saving lives on the road, but not everyone wears one. Studies show about 1 in every 7 people do not wear their seatbelt. There are many reasons why people do not wear seatbelts, but the facts are that they save lives.

EXCUSES WHY PEOPLE DO NOT WEAR SEATBELTS

It is **“not cool”**.

They are **“uncomfortable”**.

The myth **“it is more dangerous to wear seatbelts than not to”**.

The Big Question – Why

According to the NHTSA, seatbelts reduce crash related injuries and deaths by half. In 2016, they saved an estimated 15,000 lives. Individuals who do not wear their seatbelt are more likely to be ejected from the vehicle in a crash. Seatbelts serve as a restraint for passengers in a vehicle. They restrain an individual to the seat instead of being ejected from the vehicle or being thrown around the interior of a vehicle in the instance of a crash.

How Seat Belts Work

The basic idea of a seat belt is simple. Wearing a belt keeps passengers from being ejected from a vehicle in a crash. When a vehicle stops abruptly, its passengers will also stop. The life saving difference is where on the body a force is applied to stop the person, and how suddenly it is applied. For example, stopping by hitting your head on the windshield is much more likely to cause injury than stopping because a seat belt forces the center

of your body to stay in a cushioned seat.

As seat belts have developed over time, there are several different kinds.

- A 2-point seat belt, also called a lap belt, has only two attachment points, one near each hip.
- A 3-point seat belt, also called a lap/shoulder belt, includes a lap belt and a shoulder belt and has three attachment points, one near each hip and one over a shoulder.

Today's seat belts are three-point seat belts, which spread the stopping force across the pelvis and upper body. Because three point belts spread the force across more of the body than two point belts, they minimize the strength of the force in one area, minimizing injury.

Remember that seat belts are designed for adult sized bodies, which is why child safety seats are so important in the case of an accident. Child car seats allow the force of an accident to be spread across an area appropriate to keep a child safe.