

Serving Rural Families: Understanding Issues, Implementing Solutions

**Carol Meidinger, CPS Consultant
Bismarck, ND
carolm@bektel.com**

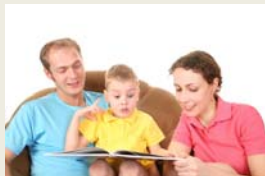
Understanding Issues

- National Survey of Children's Health (Health Resources & Services Administration, MCH Bureau)
- Measures health & well-being of children birth through 17
- Allows states to target services & interventions



National Survey

- Children's health care needs and parents' concerns about health and safety are consistent between urban, large rural and small rural areas



National Survey

- Health issues, access barriers & risks vary for urban and rural children



National Survey

- Children in rural areas face particular risks to their health and wellbeing, not necessarily because of geographic location, but because of demographic characteristics



Understanding Issues

- Children in rural areas are more likely to live in poor families
- **How that affects child passenger safety?**
 - Affordability of car seats
 - Family priorities
 - Use of second-hand car seats



Understanding Issues

- Children in rural areas are more vulnerable to death from injuries
- **How that affects child passenger safety?**
 - Children using vehicles at young ages – ATVs, tractors, licensing at 15
 - Perception about buckling up in small communities (only going a few blocks)

Understanding Issues

- Access to health care is limited in rural areas
- **How that affects child passenger safety?**
 - Greater distances to clinics
 - Less likely to have a preventive health care visit
 - Emergency response time
 - May be more likely to use public health services

Understanding Issues

- Children in rural areas are more likely to have public insurance – Medicaid, CHIP
- **How that affects child passenger safety?**
 - Can we integrate CPS through these programs?

Understanding Issues

- Children in rural areas are more likely to be overweight or obese
- **How that affects child passenger safety?**
 - Availability of higher-weight harness seats
 - Premature graduation to boosters and seat belts

Understanding Issues

- Children in rural areas are slightly more likely to have chronic conditions – physical, emotional, behavior and developmental
- **How that affects child passenger safety?**
 - Special needs transportation resources

Understanding Issues

- Rural families tend to value their independent nature
- **How that affects child passenger safety?**
 - Opposition for occupant protection laws
 - Values are passed on to children
 - Messaging

Understanding Issues

- Rural children more likely to attend religious services once a week; adolescents are more likely to volunteer
- **How that affects child passenger safety?**
 - Opportunities for messages and messengers

Implementing Solutions - ND

- **Child Passenger Safety Education**
 - Integrated into existing programs
 - Routine, ongoing education
 - Special campaigns
 - Child Passenger Safety Month

- **CPS Advisory Committee**

Implementing Solutions - ND

- **Car Seat Checkups, Technician Re-certification**
 - Regional Structure – Safe Kids Grand Forks, Safe Kids Fargo-Moorhead, CPS Consultants
 - Use of Technician Proxies
 - CEUs – Webinars, State Conference, Interactive Video Networking, Promotion of CPS Board online opportunities

Implementing Solutions - ND

- **Trainings**
 - Certification
 - Law Enforcement
 - Hospitals
 - Other

Implementing Solutions - ND

- **Car Seat Distribution**
 - Distribution programs – public health
 - Availability of car seats in rural communities
 - Reimbursement by Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF)

Implementing Solutions - ND

- **Tribal Communities**
 - Special (limited) funding for tribal communities for car seats
 - Tech proxy
 - Onsite trainings
 - Car seat checkups

Implementing Solutions - ND

- BISMARCK, N.D. — Before the oil boom started, fatal crashes were rare in McKenzie County, maybe two or three a year. In 2013, there were 22 fatal crashes there.



Implementing Solutions - ND

- **Memorial services scheduled for 3 Ray teens killed in crash**
RAY - The Highway Patrol says the teens were in a westbound pickup truck that collided with a semitrailer on an icy U.S. Highway 2 on Monday night. All three boys were members of the Ray basketball team.
- Focus resources in northwest ND – oil country.
- Education – ND CPS law
- Hospital programs – baby boom – often don't have car seats
- Certification training in Williston – heart of oil boom

Evaluation

- Quantitative
- Observation Surveys
- Misuse Rates from Checkup Data

Summary

- Focus resources on under-served populations
- Recognize community protective factors
- Involve youth in planning activities and engage with them to strategize solutions
- Partner with rural groups (4-H, County Extension, Scouts, church)
- Think strategically about messages and audience.
