



**TRAFFIC SAFETY
HERO CHALLENGE**

The graphic features a blue background with a white polka-dot pattern and radiating lines. A large white speech bubble with a black border contains the title. Below the speech bubble, two superhero silhouettes are shown: a large male figure on the left and a smaller female figure on the right, both wearing red capes. The speech bubble is connected to the background by a trail of black dots.

TRAFFIC SAFETY HERO

Find your Hero in the Youth Prevention Resource Center (YPRC) and AAA Traffic Safety Hero series! Every community has Heroes. This is a call to action to find and recognize the Hero that might be hiding in plain sight.

YPRC has long partnered with community champions (EMTs, mayors, aldermen, city or county boards, insurance agents (such as AAA Insurance), teachers, local businesses— to promote safe teen driving. Traffic crashes are the number one killer of teens, and we want to work together to save lives.

The YPRC and AAA Traffic Safety Hero series was developed as a tool for local peer leadership groups to collaborate with their community Hero of choice to raise awareness of this issue and help save lives. As a peer leadership group, your task is to implement one or more activities, partnering with your chosen Hero. Your peer leadership group or driver's ed class can use these activities to partner in your community and give your identified Heroes an origin story or a chance to share theirs.



SHARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Be creative! Create signs and props for photos, wear capes—you and the Hero! We want to see you in action, in pictures, videos and news articles.

Make sure to include **#TrafficSafetyHeroes** and **#YPRC**.

Keep an eye on the YPRC's social media platforms! We will track **#TrafficSafetyHeroes** and **#YPRC** and share your exciting activities on our social media.

Direct Links:



[YPRC.IL](https://www.facebook.com/YPRC.IL)



[@YPRCil](https://twitter.com/@YPRCil)



[yprc_il](https://www.instagram.com/yprc_il)



[YPRC](https://www.youtube.com/YPRC)



[@yprc.il](https://www.tiktok.com/@yprc.il)



[yprc.il](https://www.snapchat.com/yprc.il)

#TrafficSafetyHeroes
#YPRC



HOW TO PROCEED

1. Review the activities below.
2. Contact your Hero and ask them to participate in your activity. Possible Heroes include EMTs, mayors, aldermen, city or county boards, insurance agents (AAA representatives), teachers, a local businessperson—anyone local who is dedicated to youth safety can participate.
3. Invite your Hero to a group meeting and decide how to carry out your activities. You can choose as few or as many activities or events as you want.
 - a. Make sure your Hero knows their role in the activity or event. **Page 4** gives suggestions about the role the Hero can play.
 - b. This project may require additional funding. Discuss the plan with your Hero and see how they might help.
 - i. For example, maybe they would be willing to buy Smarties candies. Be clear on what you hope to achieve.
4. Document your efforts! It is essential to take lots of pictures! Please email your photos to yprc@prevention.org and look for them on the YPRC social media channels. Use photos in school publications, local print media, promotional material and much more. Share the pictures with your Local Hero to use as well. You can add your hashtag but always use **#TrafficSafetyHeroes** and **#YPRC**.
5. YPRC will recognize you in our newsletter as we receive your photos throughout the year.
6. Once you have completed your activity, meet to discuss how it went and what could make the project better in the future.



HERO RESPONSIBILITIES

Your Traffic Safety Hero will be part of the planning and implementation of these activities. Invite the Hero to a planning meeting with the peer leadership group, decide on the activity and implement it together, if possible.

Heroes who participate will receive a certificate of appreciation ([click here to download](#)) presented by the peer leadership group, along with a press release for local media ([click here to download](#)). YPRC will highlight your activity and traffic safety Heroes in YPRC newsletters and social media. Do not forget to document and include any press coverage.

POTENTIAL PARTNER SUPPORT /ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	ROLE OF PARTNER
Quick Click Competition (instructions provided)	Serve as a timer or be part of a competition team.
Seat belt survey (instructions provided)	Participate in the survey or bring snacks for students.
Smartie Awards (wording is provided)	Provide the candy for awards or help pass it out.
Evidence Collection	Purchase a banner and thumbprint participants at lunch or after your event. You can give the Hero the banner to hang in their office to display.
Photo Opps	Provide props for photos and social media.
Spread the Word!	Provide GDL Made Simple Brochures .
Hero Announcements	Invite the partner to read announcements at your school.



HERO CONTACT

Take this document to your identified Traffic Safety Hero to explain the activity.

The Traffic Safety Hero Activity is a way to engage partners on the local level and highlight traffic safety Heroes who care enough to get involved with local peer leadership groups to reduce teen traffic fatalities.

Bottom line, this is about saving lives in your school and community and allowing your traffic safety Hero to be a part of the solution to the number-one killer of teens in this country.

YPRC wants to recognize those Heroes who actively collaborate with peer leadership groups.

If possible, the traffic safety Hero can contribute funds to offset some expenses and, more importantly, some of their time working directly with committed and enthusiastic students.

We hope you can plan an exciting event or activity for your school to raise awareness of this critical issue.

We leave it open for any ideas you have or that your Hero might suggest. Involve them in the conversation as much as possible to develop a working relationship.





YPRC

YOUTH
PREVENTION
RESOURCE CENTER

RESOURCES

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ACTION PLAN

Note: You can use this form as a planning tool to coordinate your event.

[Click here to download the template](#) to use for each of your activities.

What (Action Steps)	Resources Needed	Who is Responsible	Deadline	Completed
<i>List steps to complete the activity</i>	<i>What will you need?</i>	<i>Who is responsible for getting this step completed?</i>	<i>Date Needed</i>	<i>Checked off when done</i>



SEAT BELT SURVEY

Meet an hour before school to survey seat belt use by students and adults entering the school parking lot. Consider passing out Smarties candy with a seat belt message to each driver who enters the lot. See the example on page 13.

Announce the percentages sometime during the school day, encouraging students and staff to improve those numbers. See the survey forms on page 10.

INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: CONDUCTING YOUR SEAT BELT OBSERVATIONAL SURVEYS

- Conduct two unannounced seat belt observational surveys. Conduct one at the beginning of your campaign (a pre-observational survey). Complete a second survey (a post-observational survey) at the end of your campaign.

STEP 2: SELECTING YOUR OBSERVATION TIMES

- Be sure to choose observation times when the highest number of vehicles enter or exit the school parking lots. Immediately before and after school are the best times. Please be consistent with your time of day for each survey; for example, if you conducted your first survey in the morning, complete your second survey in the morning.
- Each observation period must be held for a minimum of 30 minutes or until the parking lot has mostly cleared (or filled).
- Confirm an adult will participate at this time.

STEP 3: SELECT YOUR OBSERVATION TEAMS

- Two people are needed for the observation team: one observer and one recorder.
- Students, teachers, or other community members may serve on the observation teams.
- The observer will observe and then verbally give the information to the recorder.
- The recorder will use the Data Collection Forms (forms provided) on a clipboard to fill out the data according to the ongoing verbal statements of the observer.

Observers: Make sure you can see the vehicle, driver and front window seat passenger. Sample as many vehicles as possible within the collection time while maintaining accuracy and randomness (for example, do not skip SUVs because it may be hard to look inside them). An example of what the observer might call out would be, "two occupants, driver, belted; passenger, not belted."



STEP 4: SELECT YOUR OBSERVATION POINT

The safety of the observation team is the priority. When standing in specific locations for observations, never place yourself in a dangerous spot for the sake of the data. Be sure to stand where drivers entering and exiting the parking lot can clearly see you. Talk with your advisor to determine the best places to conduct the survey. Here are some suggestions:

- Choose a safe spot that is clearly visible to drivers.
- Avoid driveways.
- Choose a safe spot that is clearly visible to drivers.
- Observe cars going in one direction only (entering or exiting the parking lot).

STEP 5: GET APPROVAL TO CONDUCT SURVEY

Coordinate all seat belt observations with the appropriate school authorities. Be sure to let school officials know precisely when and where your surveys will occur. Explain that an adult will be present for the survey.

If motorists ask what you are doing, indicate that you are involved in a traffic study. Keep your interactions to a minimum. If someone accuses you of collecting personal or private data (license plate numbers, for example), assure the individual that no personal data are recorded. If you feel uncomfortable with a person or situation, refer them to an adult partner who is present.

STEP 6: COLLECT YOUR DATA

As field observers, the observation teams are the critical link in this effort.

- Observation teams collect data on all motor vehicles, including cars, pickups, vans and SUVs.
- Observation teams are to observe drivers and front-seat, right-side passengers. Do not observe front-seat, middle passengers or back-seat passengers; it is difficult to see if they are belted, and you have a limited time to collect information.
- Only shoulder harnesses, properly used, should be recorded. If a harness is tucked behind the back, please do not record it as being used).

STEP 7: COMPLETING THE FINAL SURVEY FORM

The last stage of the seat belt observation is entering the information you recorded. Here are some suggestions about what to do with the data.

- Have a math teacher or math club members compile the data and present the results.
- Reveal the results in the morning announcements, a PSA or in your press release.
- Don't forget to take pictures and share your results with yprc@prevention.org.



PRE AND POST SEAT BELT SURVEY DATA COLLECTION FORM

Date _____ Time _____ Location _____

Indicate the number of occupants (including the driver) and whether the driver and passenger are belted or not belted by placing the number in the appropriate box. [Click here](#) to access a printable form. **Remember to make several photocopies for each survey.**

of Occupants

Driver

Front-Seat Passenger

	YES	NO	YES	NO
Total # of Occupants	Total # Yes and No		Total # Yes and No	



QUICK-CLICK COMPETITION RULES

Get approval from the administration to hold a Quick-Click Buckle Up Competition during lunch or homeroom. Promote the competition to get students interested. Secure a four-door vehicle, a whistle, a stopwatch and a “Quick-Click Crew” to host the competition. Keep track of times and make sure to recognize the fastest team in the announcements at the end of the school day to keep the buzz about buckling up going.

To participate in the Quick-Click Competition, there must be a team of four students and/or adults. When the first whistle blows, the team of four is at the starting line, and the following rules apply:

- 1.** The team must have four members.
- 2.** Teams may check seat belts before their run to determine belt type and that there are no kinks, jams or twists.
- 3.** Teams start behind the starting line (5-10 feet in front of the car).
- 4.** For safety, all doors must always remain open. Participants are to make a concerted effort not to touch the doors. You may choose to set a penalty for touching the doors.
- 5.** When the first whistle is blown, the four members run to and enter the vehicle and buckle up in one of the four seat positions.
- 6.** As each seat belt is buckled, team members raise both hands in the air.
- 7.** When all four seat belts are buckled and all eight hands are in plain view, as determined by the Quick-Click crew, the whistle will be blown to signal team members to unbuckle and rotate clockwise to the next seat.
- 8.** Members must exit the vehicle after each position. Sliding across seats or the hood is not permitted and will result in disqualification.
- 9.** Team members advance clockwise around the car until they have buckled up in all four positions, raising both hands each time and being signaled by the whistle.
- 10.** The clock is stopped when all four team members buckle their seat belts in the fourth rotation and raise their hands. The winning team and the second and third place teams will be announced at the end of the day. Determine prizes for the winning team, donated by a local business or the Hero. Quick-Click crew times are final.



QUICK CLICK COMPETITION TRACKING

	Team Name	Time	Penalty	Total	Place
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					



SMARTIE TEMPLATE

Print the [Smartie template](#), cut the messages, and attach them to the Smartie to hand out to students using their seat belts during the survey.

Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!	Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!
Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!	Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!
Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!	Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!
Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!	Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!
Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!	Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!
Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!	Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!
Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!	Be a Smartie! Buckle up in every vehicle, every seat, every time!



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT EXAMPLES

Use the following PSA example in your daily announcements. Send it to local radio stations and newspapers to raise awareness of what you are doing. Ask the administration to post marquee messages to raise awareness on this critical issue.

[SCHOOL NAME] and [HERO NAME] would like to remind you to buckle up, in every vehicle, in every seat, every time.

Vehicle crashes are the #1 killer of teens. No text, phone call, email, or picture is worth the risk [SCHOOL NAME] peer leadership group and [HERO NAME] remind you to keep two hands on the wheel and two eyes on the road.

Teen motor vehicle crashes are preventable, and proven strategies can improve young drivers' safety on the road. In 2018, almost 2,500 teens in the United States aged 13–19 were killed, and about 285,000 were treated in emergency departments for injuries suffered in motor vehicle crashes.¹ That means that nearly seven teens aged 13–19 died every day because of motor vehicle crashes and hundreds more were injured. Also, fatal and nonfatal motor vehicle crash injuries among teens 13–19 years of age resulted in about \$11.8 billion in medical and work loss costs in 2018. (CDC, 2020)

SAMPLE MARQUEE SUGGESTIONS

Get the community involved! Share the following suggestions with local businesses to use on their marquee signs!

- Put your phone in park!
- Click it or ticket. Front and back seat too!
- You never know. Buckle up.
- Texts cause wrecks.
- Put an end to distracted driving
- It can happen to you! Do not text and drive; arrive alive!
- Be alert. Accidents hurt!
- Better to arrive late than never!
- Alert today, alive tomorrow.



PRESS RELEASE

Submit the following press release to local media to inform them of your critical traffic safety work to keep teens safe. [Click here to download a template.](#)

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

[date]

[ADVISOR NAME & INFORMATION]

[SCHOOL NAME AND PEER LEADER GROUP] PARTICIPATES IN TRAFFIC SAFETY HERO ACTIVITY TO RAISE AWARENESS OF TEEN DRIVING ISSUES

[SCHOOL NAME AND PEER LEADER GROUP] Joins Forces with Local Traffic Safety Hero in hosting activities to shine a spotlight on the #1 Killer of Teens in the Country

The Youth Prevention Resource Center (YPRC), along with AAA and [SCHOOL NAME AND PEER LEADER GROUP], partner with a local traffic safety hero to educate young people about the importance of wearing a seat belt.

Dozens of traffic safety peer leadership groups across the state are participating in the Traffic Safety Hero Activity. As part of a local event, [SCHOOL NAME] and [NAME OF LOCAL TRAFFIC SAFETY HERO] are [DESCRIBE ACTIVITIES].

The YPRC and AAA's Traffic Safety Hero Activity is conducted in partnership with a community partner [NAME OF LOCAL TRAFFIC SAFETY HERO] to keep young and novice drivers safe. We hope to help raise awareness about teen traffic safety issues with these activities. Car crashes remain the leading cause of death among 15-20-year-olds, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) identifies seat belt use as the most effective strategy to prevent those deaths and minimize injuries. Fewer than half of young Illinois drivers killed in crashes were restrained, according to the most recent data. Half of those who were not wearing seatbelts would have survived if only they had buckled up. Though Illinois' seat belt usage rates continue to climb, ongoing education is needed about the value of properly using safety restraints. Distractions behind the wheel and elsewhere in the car are almost always preventable. The YPRC and [HIGH SCHOOL NAME], along with [HERO NAME], encourage youth and adults to buckle up—in every vehicle, in every seat, every time.



_____ is recognized as a

TRAFFIC SAFETY HERO

GIVEN THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 20_____

**BE A
HERO!**



Presented By: _____



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

AVAILABLE FOR PRINT



ACTION PLAN

SEAT BELT SURVEY

SMARTIE TEMPLATE

PRESS RELEASE

Seatbelt Survey

Date:

# Of Occupants	Driver	Front-Seat Passenger	# of Occupants	Driver	Front-Seat Passenger
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
	YES NO	YES NO		YES NO	YES NO
Total # of Occupants	Total # Yes and No	Total # Yes and No	Total # of Occupants	Total # Yes and No	Total # Yes and No

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Date:

Advisor Name & Information:

School Name and
Peer Leader Group:

PARTICIPATES IN TRAFFIC SAFETY HERO ACTIVITY TO RAISE AWARENESS OF TEEN DRIVING ISSUES

School Name and
Peer Leader Group:

Joins Forces with Local Traffic Safety Hero in hosting activities to shine a spotlight on the #1 Killer of Teens in the Country

The Youth Prevention Resource Center (YPRC), along with AAA and **School Name and Peer Leader Group:**
partner with a local traffic safety Hero to educate young people about the importance of wearing a seat belt.

Dozens of traffic safety peer leadership groups across the state are participating in the Traffic Safety Hero Activity. As part of a local event, **School Name:**
and **Name of Local Traffic Safety Hero:**
are **Describe Activities:**

The YPRC and AAA's Traffic Safety Hero Activity is conducted in partnership with a community partner
Name of Local Traffic Safety Hero:

to keep young and novice drivers safe. We hope to help raise awareness about teen traffic safety issues with these activities. Car crashes remain the leading cause of death among 15-20-year-olds, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) identifies seat belt use as the most effective strategy to prevent those deaths and minimize injuries. Fewer than half of young Illinois drivers killed in crashes were restrained, according to the most recent data. Half of those who were not wearing seatbelts would have survived if only they had buckled up. Though Illinois' seat belt usage rates continue to climb, ongoing education is needed about the value of properly using safety restraints. Distractions behind the wheel and elsewhere in the car are almost always preventable. The YPRC and **High School Name:**
along with **Hero Name:**
encourage youth and adults to buckle up—in every vehicle, in every seat, every time.

