





**YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE**  
[www.yli.org](http://www.yli.org)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>STEP ONE: HOW TO BEGIN YOUR CAMPAIGN</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<i>Instructions for Short, Successful Traffic Safety Campaign</i> .....	<i>3</i>
<b>STEP TWO: UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>STEP THREE: BRAINSTORMING SOLUTIONS</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>STEP FOUR: STARTING YOUR ACTUAL CAMPAIGN</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>STEP FIVE: DESIGNING A TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN PLAN</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>STEP SIX: GOALS, STRATEGIES AND TACTICS</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>STEP SEVEN: MAKING YOUR POINT</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>STEP EIGHT: GETTING OTHERS INVOLVED AND AWARE!</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>RESOURCES</b> .....	<b>39</b>

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## INTRODUCTION

In every city or town, there's a Traffic Safety (TS) issue that must be addressed in order to reduce accidents, injuries and fatalities. Maybe it's drinking and driving; speeding and reckless driving; or people simply needing to buckle their seatbelts to avoid injuries related to accidents.

Doing something about these issues NOW can reduce and prevent accidents injuries and deaths in your community. Whatever your traffic safety issue is, you can do something about it!

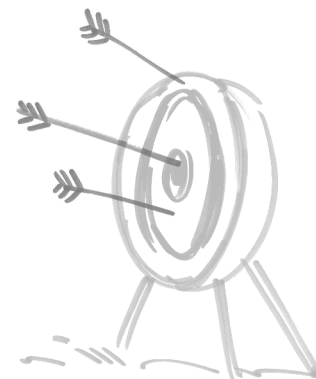
In this guide you will find detailed guidelines, tips and examples for planning, implementing and sustaining your campaign to victory.



## STEP ONE: HOW TO BEGIN YOUR CAMPAIGN

### Targeting a Specific Issue

Come up with a list of issues related to Traffic Safety by reviewing media sources (recent events highlighted in newspapers, television, Internet sources, or radio); asking a group of friends; interviewing family; bringing the topic up at meetings; or choosing one for personal reasons. Once you have your “informants”, sit down, grab a pen and paper, and ask some questions to get the discussion started. Here are a few to help you brainstorm:



- ★ Are there certain traffic safety issues that you frequently hear of in the news?
- ★ If you drive, what traffic safety issues do you feel make driving unsafe for you?
- ★ What traffic safety issues do you feel cause the most accidents, injuries or deaths for young people in your community?
- ★ Has anyone you know ever been in a car accident? What was the traffic safety issue?

As people begin tossing out their answers, write down each issue and what specifically makes it dangerous. There are a lot of things that can make something dangerous. It could be that people disobey traffic laws or that they are simply unaware of correct traffic safety practices. If no one can come up with issues off the top of their head, you might try contacting city officials to get a list of the most common traffic accidents that happen in your community. Once you have a good-sized list, look it over and identify the one issue you want to focus on.



Now it's time to think about what type of campaign you want to run. If you are new to running campaigns you may want to start out with a shorter educational and activity campaign that occurs over a few months and is set in a small community (a school, neighborhood or community organization). You can find information about conducting a shorter-term campaign beginning on the next page. If you'd like to try a larger campaign that includes policy change, skip the next section and go to page 14.

## Instructions for a Short, Successful, Traffic Safety Campaign

The following pages contain brief, step-by-step instructions. In addition to ideas and suggestions, you will also find sample items to copy or customize as you wish. Create a campaign that works best for your group and your community. *Most of all, HAVE FUN WITH IT!*

- FIRST Choose a Campaign Chairperson
- SECOND Determine Campaign Goals and Target Audience
- THIRD Conduct Pre-Survey
- FOURTH Inform Staff about Campaign
- FIFTH Get the Word Out
- SIXTH Distribute Information to Parents and Caregivers
- SEVENTH Plan and Conduct Campaign Day
- EIGHTH Complete Post-Survey
- NINTH Publicize the Success of Your Campaign
- TENTH Conduct Ongoing Incentive Programs

## **First: Identify a Coordinator and Core Youth Participants**

A coordinator and a core group of youth should serve as the contact people for parents, caregivers, other interested organizations, local media and anyone else interested in learning more about your campaign. Collaboration between businesses, schools, youth groups, and different organizations in your community will help to make the campaign a success, so it is important that a few individuals can coordinate their involvement.

A good campaign is designed so that it can be repeated annually to reinforce safe behaviors. When recruiting youth, consider recruiting people who will be ready and willing to take the lead in the following year. This creates an opportunity for the young people to share responsibility and avoids burnout. As importantly, it provides continuity for community contacts and ensures the benefit of experience from prior campaigns.

## **Second: Determine Campaign Target Audience and Goals**

The ultimate goal of your campaign is increased traffic safety. Successful campaigns in the past have combined safety education and incentives that reward health TS behavior. Some examples are:

When you are deciding on your **Target Audience**, spend some time thinking about who should be the focus of your campaign and why.

Some important **Project Goals and Objectives** are to: build campaign momentum, raise awareness of traffic injuries and head trauma, increase helmet purchases and seat belt use, reduce the number of traffic related injuries and lessen the severity of head injuries. (Please see sample goals and objectives listed on page 11.)

Knowing your timeline and budget will allow you to better choose which activities to include: how many incentives you can distribute; and impact, size, and duration of your campaign. If you are limited by time or budget, consider working together with other groups to share ideas and opportunities.

Be sure that you obtain all necessary approvals well in advance of the start of your campaign. On page 12, you will find an example of a letter for a helmet safety campaign.



## Third: Conduct Use Pre-Survey

### *Who practices traffic safety?*

Pre- and post- surveys are easy to conduct and will take a minimum amount of time. Your entire group can be involved in developing the survey, or it can be just a few young people working with the campaign Chairperson. The purpose of the Pre-Survey is to determine how many young people in your community currently practice TS. Although you certainly cannot observe everyone, this will give a general sample of the trends. It will also indicate the extent of the need for the campaign in your community, and show the impact of your campaign afterward.

### *Use Pre-Survey*

Whether you are looking at seat belt use, helmet use, or another traffic safety issue, the Pre-Survey should be done prior to any publicity or education about the campaign and the importance of TS. To collect the best data, the Pre-Survey should be done on two consecutive mornings, excluding Monday and Friday. For example, conduct the survey on Tuesday and Wednesday, or Wednesday and Thursday. Attempt to consider weather conditions. If the weather is bad, you get unreliably high or low numbers and you should conduct the survey on another day.

If the target audience of your campaign attends a local school, the observer should stand near the bicycle racks (helmet safety) or somewhere in the parking area (seatbelt safety) as students arrive onto school grounds. If your target audience is not at a local school, try to observe a similar population in your community (at the local farmer's market, public swimming pool, etc.). Using tally marks, or whatever system works best for the observer, count the total number of males and how many of them are engaging in TS. Also tally the number of females and how many of them are engaged in TS. Total the information and enter the numbers and other necessary information on the Pre-Survey form that you create.



**Think about it: Now that scooters, skateboards, and skates are so popular, you may wish to consider including observations for these activities as well. You may also want to record tallies of adult TS practices.**

Please see the Pre/Post Survey example on page 13.

## **Fourth: Inform Staff About Campaign**

Wherever your campaign takes place, to succeed, you will need the help and support of individuals who work directly with the young people. If you are conducting the campaign in a school environment, it is important that you keep the faculty and staff informed about what you are doing. You will find that most of the people who work with youth are in favor of increasing safety practices and are eager to provide support and assistance. You may be able to call upon these people as speakers, for demonstrations or for other types of assistance.

The Program Director or Principal may wish to tell staff about your campaign or you may do this by asking to speak at a staff meeting, distributing a letter, the Program Summary, Safety Fact Sheets and/or any other materials you feel will be helpful. After the initial campaign announcement, keep staff informed about the timeline and all campaign activities. They are a valuable resource for you and their attitude toward and support for the campaign may be very important.

## **Fifth: Get the Word Out!**

### ***Get Young People Excited About the Campaign***

The best way to ensure a successful campaign is to get as many young people as possible engaged. By participating in your activities, youth will become more invested in the campaign outcome. The activities you conduct are limited only by your creativity. If your campaign is taking place in a school setting:

1. **Challenge** other schools in your area to see who can reach 100% or the highest TS participation. Ask a local pizza or ice cream shop to provide an award to the school that attains the highest percentage.
2. **Encourage** a class to judge a poster contest and help display the winning posters.

3. **Conduct** seat belt or helmet checks. One day, without warning, hold checks at the entrances to your school. Stop all people entering the school grounds to check for seat belt/helmet use. Give a candy bar or other reward to those who are wearing their seat belts or helmets and give a note to those who are not that emphasizes the importance of TS. Keep count of the number of people who wore their seat belts or helmets, and the number who did not. Conduct checks again in the following months to see if more people are practicing TS. Try a check when students are leaving school, too. Your goal is 100% participation.



**Develop as much publicity and awareness about the campaign as possible. Print articles in the school newspaper, letter to the editor of your local paper, etc. Advertise the students' involvement. This provides good photo opportunities to the press. Publicize assemblies and other school activities, especially if you can find "newsworthy" guest speakers. Local sports figures and other celebrities attract publicity.**

Supply a Safety Fact Sheet and/or other relevant materials and emphasize the commitment toward traffic safety expressed by your group.

## **Sixth: Distribute Letter and Information to Parents and Caregivers**

In order to have an impact on the number of young people practicing traffic safety in your community, parents and caregivers need to know about the importance of the issue. It is recommended that you send home a letter about TS. You may use the sample letter on page 12, customize it as you wish, or write something altogether different. Be sure to include the important facts about injuries and/or attach a separate fact sheet.

Your target audience will determine how best to distribute the information. If your organization has paired up with a local school, check with the office about distributing letters in classrooms. If your campaign is linked with an existing event, display information about the event.

## Seventh: Plan and Conduct the Campaign Day!

Plan a “Safety Day” for young people, parents, caregivers, members of your organization and other community members. Encourage participation by planning fun activities around the day. The following are some ideas that have been used successfully in other campaigns:

### ★ *Contests/Incentives:*

Have young people design posters emphasizing helmet safety. Display artwork and award prizes to the winner.

Put license plate numbers of all drivers who are buckled up coming into the parking lot in a hat for a drawing to win prizes such as a pizza party or ice cream sundae party.

### ★ *Safety Assemblies*

Invite guest speakers from bicycle clubs or local law enforcement to give a presentation. Consider scheduling the talk at a time that parents and caregivers can also attend. You might consider a local pediatrician dedicated to head injury prevention as a speaker, or a volunteer (possibly a survivor). Locate speakers that will appeal to young people. Discuss the program with speakers ahead of time to make sure they strongly advocate helmet use.

### ★ *Conduct Special Events*

The Quick Click Buckle Challenge, which emphasizes the ease of putting on and taking off seat belts, is a fun way to get people to buckle up. Winning teams can even compete with teams from other schools or challenge teachers to a “belt-off.” Providing awards to the winners adds to the fun of the competition.

As part of, or following, a bicycle helmet safety presentation or discussion, have a “Melon Drop.” This requires dropping a ripe melon from the height of child’s head onto a tarp covering the ground. Discuss the similarities in size and weight to a child’s head.

### ***High School Students from Sayre in Pennsylvania conduct successful “Quick Buckle Challenge”***

Students participated in groups or as individuals. They had to be seated and buckled in the driver’s seat of the car. Once they were told to “go” they had to unbuckle from the driver’s seat, go to the rear left seat, buckle and unbuckle and then repeat the process to the right rear seat and finally the front passenger seat. Once the student was buckled in the passenger seat, the clocked stopped.

★ *Involve the Community*

Combine the campaign with community or school activities, such as an open house, safety fairs, downtown festivals, Halloween carnivals, etc. Publicize the event in connection with the campaign. Ask the local businesses for donations or coupons to use in conjunction with these events as contest prizes or incentives for children who are wearing helmets.

★ *Involve Local Law Enforcement*

Include Community Service, Traffic or Bike Patrol Officers in your planning and educational programs. Obtain coupons or prizes for officers to distribute to youth who are wearing seat belts or helmets after the campaign and publicize these efforts.

★ *Be sure to invite the Media!*

## **Eighth: Complete the Use Post-Survey**

### ***Who is Practicing Traffic Safety Now?***

The Post-Survey should be conducted 2-3 weeks after Safety Day. It should be conducted exactly as the Pre-Survey was, on two consecutive mornings, Tuesday through Thursday, counting the number of males and females practicing traffic safety. Again, consider weather conditions. Review the Third step, on page 5, for more specific instructions.

## **Ninth: Publicize the Success of Your Campaign!**

This entire campaign provides a great opportunity to receive positive publicity for your organization and the young people involved. By writing articles for newsletters, editorials for the local newspaper, etc., you can publicize each portion of the campaign. This type of publicity and community involvement will make your campaign even more successful.

Don't forget to get coverage **after** the campaign as well. Let parents, caregivers, and the community know how successful you were in educating youth and their families. Continuing to contribute toward a positive attitude and environment around traffic safety will help keep young people feeling good about using safe practices. Use this success to create the momentum for an annual event.

## **Tenth: Conduct Ongoing Incentive Programs**

Now that you have successfully educated people about traffic safety, the ongoing challenge is to keep young people practicing their new safety-conscious behaviors.

As parents and caregivers become more aware of the safety issues, they will begin to enforce seat belt and bicycle helmet use by their children. Also, as traffic safety becomes more common, these practices will be accepted as the “norm” and continue to grow in acceptance by everyone. In addition, experience shows that where mandatory traffic safety policies are set and where ongoing incentives for young people are provided, there are very high seat belt and helmet use rates. There are many incentive programs you can establish throughout the year within your community. Be creative and have fun with it!



**Work with local merchants and service groups to sponsor and support incentive programs. They may provide discount coupons for merchandise, fun foods, or services. The coupon program can even be expanded to include law enforcement by developing a positive reinforcement “safety ticket” and discount coupon that local law enforcement officers can give to young people they see wearing seat belts and using bicycle helmets.**

This is a good time to decide what you would like to do for your next campaign. If you feel like you are ready to try a more extensive policy campaign, continue on to the next part of this toolkit for more ideas and information!

## ***Sample Goal Statements and Objectives***

Sample goals statements from Traffic Safety campaigns across the United States are shown below. Look them over and decide which objectives are most easily measureable, which are least measureable, and which would be useful in your campaign.

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### **Program 1**

***Goal: To have fewer bicycle-related head injuries***

#### **Objectives**

1. By the end of the project, to increase by 30% parents' knowledge about bicycle-related injuries, bicycle safety, and helmet use;
  2. By the end of the project, to increase by 20% the number of children ages 5-10 using helmets.
  3. By the end of the project, to increase by 30% the availability of bicycle helmets; and
  4. To display helmet and bicycle safety materials at a minimum of five community sites.
- 

### **Program 2**

***Goal: To promote the use of seat belts***

#### **Objectives**

1. To make parents and the general public aware of the need for seat belt use.
2. To involve other agencies and civic organizations in an effort to assure the continuation of this project.
3. To significantly increase the use of seatbelts, especially for children ages 5-15.
4. To reward effective seat belt use by providing incentives.

**Sample Letter to a Site Director, Program Director or Principal**

Date

Dear Ms./Mr. \_\_\_\_\_,

We are all concerned about the health and safety of California's children. Research shows some startling statistics regarding the danger of injury, disability and death to our children from preventable injury. Annually, nearly 2,000 California children end up in hospitals with bicycle-related injuries, almost a third of which are traumatic injuries to the brain. The risk of death or catastrophic disability from serious head injury is obvious. However, these numbers do not include children who visit emergency rooms because of milder head injuries and are sent home for "observation."

Studies show that the risk of head injury can be reduced by 85% simply by properly wearing a bicycle helmet. Even mild head injury can have a demonstrated effect on school performance with subsequent problems with comprehension, memory and speed of thinking.

In an effort to reduce the risk of injury to youth in our community, we would like to bring the California Bicycle Helmet campaign to your organization/school. The campaign is a community service project that consists of an educational component regarding bicycle helmet safety, as well as bicycle helmet sales.

*[Include information about helmet sales.]*

We request your approval and support of this valuable program. I would like to meet with you as soon as possible to plan the campaign and set a workable timeline. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your commitment to the safety of California's children.

Sincerely,

---

Safety Campaign Chairperson



**Use Pre- and Post-Survey**

Please fill out the following survey form completely. The Pre- and Post-Survey observation forms are identical, so be sure to indicate at the top whether you are observing before or after your safety campaign. It is recommended that you use a simple method such as tally marks to record your observations. When you have finished, total the number of tallies and enter that number in the columns provided.

**PRE-SURVEY**

*(circle one)*

**POST-SURVEY**

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students attending this school: \_\_\_\_\_

What grade levels attend this school? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a traffic safety policy in effect at this school? (circle one)                      YES                      NO

Location of observation \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Day One Observation</b>		Observer: _____	
Date: _____	Day: _____	Time: _____	Weather Conditions: _____
Number of males wearing seat belts/helmets (riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.)	Number of males <b>not</b> wearing seat belts/helmets (riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.)	Number of females wearing seat belts/helmets (riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.)	Number of females <b>not</b> wearing seat belts/helmets (riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.)
Total:	Total:	Total:	Total:

<b>Day Two Observation</b>		Observer: _____	
Date: _____	Day: _____	Time: _____	Weather Conditions: _____
Number of males wearing seat belts/helmets (riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.)	Number of males <b>not</b> wearing seat belts/helmets (riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.)	Number of females wearing seat belts/helmets (riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.)	Number of females <b>not</b> wearing seat belts/helmets (riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.)
Total:	Total:	Total:	Total:

## STEP TWO: UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE

### Examining the facts and identifying the important players

You know what you are concerned about. You know what needs to change. You're probably wondering, 'why hasn't it happened already?'

If you want to be successful in your campaign, you need to be able to convince the powers that be with the facts to back up your argument. First, you need to brainstorm! Try just generally mapping out the forces for and against what you want to happen. Draw a visual map of the problem, including the people involved, the organizations, and/or institutions. Work out what the mechanisms are for the change you want to see happen in your community, and the steps you think you need to take to get there.

From this skeleton map, you will be able to identify potential allies and opponents and develop an effective campaign strategy.

#### *Did you know?*

- 53% of automobile deaths involving 16-19 year olds occur on the weekends.
- 16-19 year olds have the lowest seat belt use rate of all drivers. This rate becomes worse when there are other teens in the car.

– Office of Traffic Safety, 2007

Below are some questions to consider as you do your "mapping":

- ★ What level of government is responsible for dealing with the issue?
- ★ What policy (law, rule, or guideline) currently exists to deal with the problem?
- ★ If a policy does exist, answer the following questions:
  - What are the advantages and disadvantages of the policy?
  - How might it be improved?
  - Does this policy need to be replaced? Why?
  - What disagreements, if any, exist in your community about this policy?
- ★ Where can you get more information about this issue and the positions taken by different individuals and groups?
- ★ Are there other issues in your community that are related to this issue? and
- ★ Are there other groups in your community that would be interested in supporting your work around this issue?

## STEP THREE: BRAINSTORMING SOLUTIONS

### Choosing a Practical Solution to Your Issue

Once you've selected your target issue, the next step is to come up with a practical solution that will address the issue. For example, say you've chosen seat belt safety as your issue. From your information-gathering efforts, you've learned that a lot of young people do not "buckle-up", causing several injuries a year. A possible solution could be installing traffic cameras to increase the chance of non-compliance of the seat belt law actually being punished and to discourage drivers and passengers from being in cars without a seat belt.



To get you started, below is a list of possible issues and some practical solutions:

<i>Safety Issue</i>	<b>Practical Solution</b>
<i>Cars hitting cyclists</i>	Creating a bicycle lane so that cyclists don't weave through traffic
<i>Red Light Violations</i>	Installing a traffic camera in busy intersections
<i>Drinking and Driving</i>	Setting up sobriety check points on holidays and other days that the risk of drinking & driving is increased
<i>Dangerously Shaped Roads</i>	Warning and caution signs about curvy roads; building a barrier on hillsides and cliffs to keep cars on the road
<i>Speeding</i>	Installing a speed meter that tells drivers how fast they're going
<i>Cars hitting Pedestrians</i>	Building a new traffic signal; installing more stop signs A wider sidewalk, or a new sidewalk if there's not one already

This list is by no means exhaustive; feel free to take these suggestions and tailor them to your own community and passions. From that, work out who your target audience is and look at it from their point of view.

## STEP FOUR: STARTING YOUR ACTUAL CAMPAIGN

The period of time from campaign inception to the actual adoption of TS policy typically takes one to two years. In this period, it is important that you and your group drive the process from the beginning and establish yourselves as both a source of information and political support for elected officials and other change makers in order to get the most aggressive policy. Outlined below are the basic steps in getting a jurisdiction to adopt a policy. While they are roughly in order, it is important to note that many of the steps often happen simultaneously.

1. ***Set Goals for the Traffic Safety Policy:***  
Develop a campaign and platform that includes your community's traffic safety needs and the overall goals of your policy.
2. ***Organize Your Base:***  
Organize and educate a base of youth and adult allies who will strongly advocate for your cause. This base needs to be vocal at every step in the process. They should have good advocacy tools, including knowledge of how to interact with media, preparation for meeting with community and government stakeholders and so forth.
3. ***Find a Champion:***  
Find a policymaker or policymakers to champion the process and sponsor a study or actual legislation. Provide the elected official(s) or key organizational policymaker with comprehensive information about your campaign and other similar efforts so that he or she is well-informed.
4. ***Contact the Media:***  
It is important to contact the media at key milestones in your campaign, including when the policy is first being considered by key policymakers or when other key people are developing their response to the policy. (Refer to the Message and Media section for more details).
5. ***Engage with City Staff in the Analysis:***  
Once key stakeholders introduce the concept, the policymakers' staff is often directed to carry out an analysis, either in house or through a hired consultant. This typically requires funding and takes anywhere from 3 to 9 months. The report is generally an effort to understand the issue and analyze the potential effects of any new policy. More often than not, policymakers rely heavily on outside consultants to craft a policy. It is important to note that staff members and hired consultants are typically sympathetic to the issue and can be allies; however, their influence is limited.

6. ***Understand the Roles of the Key Policymakers:***

While it is the city council that will ultimately enact the policy, in many communities the planning commission plays a critical role as the sounding board of the council. The planning commission will often provide recommendations to the council, sometimes exchanging recommendations multiple times until both groups can agree on the specifics of a policy. In our experience, this back and forth can result in a diluted policy unless advocates are vigilant about overseeing the process and advocating for their IH goals.

7. ***Opposition:***

Opposition can come from anywhere—it depends on your issue. It is crucial to stay engaged with as many policymakers and influential stakeholders as possible in order to help counter opposition.

8. ***Adoption and Monitoring:***

After the policy is adopted, it is important to monitor it to ensure the policy is implemented correctly. And finally, don't forget to publicize the success of a newly adopted or strengthened policy.

## STEP FIVE: DESIGNING A TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN PLAN

One of the most critical parts of a successful campaign is developing a timeline that will serve as your campaign plan. Many people plan event-by-event, thinking only of the big tactics that will gain visibility or attention for their campaign. A campaign plan can help to identify measurable goals, strategies and tactics. With a campaign plan, youth and adult advocates can anticipate milestones and workloads ahead of time ensuring smoother management of time and resources.

Campaign plans are also an essential tool for coordinating with other youth groups, teachers, parents and community leaders. A campaign plan allows groups and individuals to share work with many people; creates opportunities to recruit new people to your efforts; and creates opportunities for new leadership. Remember to design age appropriate activities for youth. high school age youth can be easily taught how to write letters to the editor and prepare talking points for meetings with major policy makers, while elementary age youth may be more comfortable with flyering, creating flyers and presenting the issue for their school classes.

The following template will help you create a TS campaign plan to use with your primary coalition partners. When adopting the template to fit your own campaign, be sure to include the people who will do the campaign work in the planning process.

### Template Campaign Plan

1. **Goal:** To get (#) of elected officials to vote in favor of an ordinance that has (#) specific policies.
2. **Background:** Layout the basic political picture. Identify potential obstacles that need to be overcome as well as advantages that will make the work easier.
3. **Votes:** Do a vote chart of your council or board of supervisors. Rate each elected official based on how you think he/she would vote today, without any additional information (1 is completely opposed, 5 is a champion).
4. **Targets:** Choose your swing votes (not champions, not completely opposed, but could potentially be a vote on your side). Determine: what influences their decisions? Who do they listen to? Who do you know that has influence with them?
5. **Primary Strategies:** Identify your primary strategies for the components of a campaign, including media, grassroots organizing, coalition building, events, and lobbying
6. **Allies:** Identify the groups that are already working with you.
7. **Potential Allies:** Identify the groups that are not opposed to you that might have influence over your targets.
8. **Opposition:** Identify the groups and organizations working against your goals.

## STEP SIX: GOALS, STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

The table below can be used to help layout the campaign plan by identifying your goals, strategies and tactics. Goals should be the measurable outcomes of a campaign; strategies are the methods of obtaining the goals; and tactics are how you achieve the strategies. When possible use numeric goals for specific strategies and explain how and when it will be accomplished through the tactic

GOALS	STRATEGIES	TACTICS	WHO	DEADLINE
<i>Prepare youth to publicize issues</i>	<i>Create talking points Organize public presentations</i>	<i>Conduct trainings so that youth may practice talking points Use talking points to create oral and print presentation of issue</i>	<i>Romero</i>	<i>09/30/07</i>
<i>1 newspaper article</i>	<i>Call local reporter</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Send information</i></li> <li>• <i>Get report to answer questions</i></li> </ul>	<i>Joe</i>	<i>10/27/07 (before the hearing)</i>
<i>Support from 3 key policymakers</i>	<i>Set up meeting with the policymakers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Recruit key speakers to attend the meeting</i></li> <li>• <i>Assemble packet of information for key policymakers</i></li> </ul>	<i>Allison Grant</i>	<i>11/15/07 10/30/04</i>
(#) of newspaper articles				
(#) of letters to the editor				
(#) of signatures you will collect				
(#) of people that will attend key hearings				
(#) of phone calls you will get to target council members				
Who you will recruit to testify at hearings				

## STEP SEVEN: MAKING YOUR POINT

### Engaging others in your campaign

The real success of your campaign will depend on your capacity to influence the people with the authority or power to make changes affecting your issue: these are typically people in government, public services, businesses or the voluntary sectors.



Individuals and small groups can lobby influential figures just as successfully as large organizations. If you can demonstrate that change is wanted, needed and supported by your community, influential figures will have to listen to your requests - even if they disagree with them.

#### ***Stop here! Do a little research...***

Before you go about learning *how* to engage decision-makers, you first need to take a look at *which* decision-makers in California make the most sense for you to connect with. Check out the Resources section, starting on page 40; this section breaks down the various forms of government (state, county and local) and the decision-making bodies within each one.



## ***Moving Forward***

Once you have a clear picture of who is responsible for setting the agenda in multiple areas of government, you should be better able to map out your potential allies and opponents for your campaign. Make a list of the policymakers you need to make contact with. For tips to remember as you go about your campaign, read on...

### **★ *Identify the right decision-maker***

- Find out who is responsible for the issues your campaign addresses, and prioritize your lobbying toward the most relevant decision-makers.
- It's always a good idea to influence a wide variety of people and to lobby at all levels of decision-making.
- Important decisions are made by both elected political representatives and unelected individuals.
- Political representatives have a formal obligation to listen to your concerns, especially if you are part of the constituency that elected them
- Unelected decision-makers may have significant power, however, many have no formal obligation to address your campaign's concerns.

### **★ *Making Contact***

- Contact influential people in time for them to respond to your request. Be mindful of policy decision deadlines.
- You may want to meet decision-makers only a few days before a decision is made so campaign's arguments or proposals will be fresh in their mind.
- Always demonstrate that your requests are in the decision-maker's interest

### **★ *What can decision makers do for you?***

- Make decisions in your campaign's favor
- Change working practices or policy in their organization or service
- Explain any opposition they have to your campaign and its aims
- Use their influence with the local authority
- Pass on your recommendations when they are consulted by others
- Write a public statement supporting your campaign
- Speak publicly at a meeting about your cause

★ *How to contact a decision-maker*

The best way to get in touch with decision-makers is to put it in writing, which will give them time to brief themselves on the issue and on your position.

- Connect your request to the decision-maker's interests.
- Keep the letter as short as possible, and tackle just one subject per letter
- Send with your letter supporting information and evidence such as photos or videos (clearly labeled).
- Always ask for a response.
- If you send an email, always ensure you send the email to a named recipient, and request confirmation of receipt.
- Make sure you already have the decision-maker's name before you call an organization or office.

## Sample Letter to Decision-maker

*The letter below is a sample of one used in a traffic safety campaign, advocating for seat belt assemblies to fit all sizes of people. You can use this as a simple template for your own campaign.*

---

The Honorable (First and Last name of Senator)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (Last name of Senator):

I am writing in support of the petition to amend (Name of legislation).

There are laws in 49 states and the District of Columbia that require seat belt use, yet there is no federal regulation that requires vehicle manufacturers to make seat belt assemblies that fit people who weigh over 215 pounds. What good are stringent safety requirements if we cannot fasten our seat belts?

I am a supporter of the Buckle Up America Campaign. How can rigorous enforcement of state and local seat-belt laws be encouraged when regulations exist that seem to be based on exclusion of a significant portion of our population?

Because obesity is more prevalent in certain racial and ethnic populations, more common in women than in men, and more common in older people than young, denying fat people the protection of being included within the limits of federal seat belt regulations disproportionately affects these disadvantaged groups. That amounts to discrimination.

Please amend (Name of legislation) to provide a means for large people to buckle their seat belts in vehicles they are riding in.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)  
(Your Address)

## Meeting a decision-maker

Face-to-face meetings are the best way to address your issue with a policy maker, and it's easier than you may think to visit policy makers. Read on...

### *Before the Meeting*

- ★ First, schedule a meeting. Some offices of elected officials require meeting requests in writing (you can usually fax these). Feel free to follow up with a phone call a few days after you submit your request.
- ★ Make sure you've done your homework. Find out the basics about the person and her/his organization/office, including what other issues or campaigns s/he has been involved with. This will help you frame your presentation.
- ★ Whenever possible, take along at least one other campaign supporter. Don't go overboard—three to five is perfect number for a visit. Make sure you plan what each of you will say – including how long – before the meeting.
- ★ Be prepared by planning your presentation in advance. Plan a five-ten minute presentation and expect to spend no more than 15 minutes with the policy maker. Make your important points in a clear and succinct manner. It also helps to include personal stories and to note if you are the policymaker's constituent(s).

### *During the Meeting*

- ★ Make sure one of you takes notes. It's important to keep a record of how the meeting went and what was sent, particularly if you decide to do follow-up
- ★ Be flexible. There may be interruptions and changes in schedules or staff's availability. If it turns out that you can't meet with the policymaker, you may meet with the staff person who assists the policymaker (like a legislative aide) in the area you want to address.
- ★ Be on time. You will usually have very little time with the policymaker and you don't want to waste it. If you are running late, call ahead to let the policymaker's office know that you will be late and ask if the appointment should be rescheduled.
- ★ Leave materials behind. A short (one-to two-page) summary regarding the organization you represent, the issue you are meeting about, and your request for action is all you need to leave.



**Remember that not everyone is going to agree with you – think about the arguments against your case. Try to anticipate disagreements and prepare responses. Have these explanations prepared and written down in the brief you hand over. The more prepared you are, the better!**

### ***After the Meeting***

- ★ Follow up. Send a note in the mail right after the meeting, thanking the policymaker for her/his time. This not only shows good personal relations, but also will help the policymaker take note of your issue or campaign.
- ★ If you have permission from the person/people you meet with, you can write a press release reporting the meeting and its outcomes. See the sample press release on page 37 of this toolkit.
- ★ Stay in touch by keeping your supporters informed about the progress of your campaign or any decisions or changes as they occur.



## STEP EIGHT: GETTING OTHERS INVOLVED AND AWARE!

Educating the people around you about your issue and asking them to get involved are both great ways to get the issue of traffic safety out there. Utilizing the media (which includes newspapers, magazines, television, radio and the Web) is a highly effective way to achieve that support. Having a solid media plan is key, because it will not only increase public knowledge of your issue or campaign, but can also help build credibility and membership. Support from the community is a compelling factor for your city or town decision-makers to take action. There are four basic ways to do this: through print, radio, television or direct contact.

- ★ **Print** – Print is often the best medium for more in-depth media coverage. Did you know that opinion pages are often the most read section of the newspaper? Letters to the editor or opinion editorials can be effective ways to reach your audience. If you want to get an article written in the newspaper, you can send out a press release or organize a full media event, like a press conference. Press conferences can be a big undertaking, so make sure your traffic safety story is a big one! See page 33 on how to organize a press conference; page 36 for a sample letter to the editor.
  
- ★ **Radio** – Believe it or not, radio still reaches wide audiences. Often you can get radio exposure through holding events, but sending a press release and making follow-up calls will often result in similar coverage (especially with public access stations). Another strategy is to contact the public affairs program producers directly concerning your issue, and ask to participate in any on-air community forum pieces they hold.
  
- ★ **Television** – Television is often the most common source from which people get their news. Because there are so many stories packed into such a short time, coverage is rarely in-depth. Your local television station is a great way to get your message out; holding an event is a great way to generate a good response from television stations.
  
- ★ **Direct contact** – If you are working on a long-term or intensive campaign, it will be a good idea to establish some working relationships with a few local reporters. Given that, it is important to know how to engage with reporters so that you can be best prepared. Here are some things to remember when talking to a reporter:
  - Take time to prepare for the interview – practice your message. What are the key points that you really want to hit?
  - Try to do some basic research on the kind of publication/news source the reporter is from, if possible. It helps to know to whom you are talking when you're being interviewed.
  - Always ask when their deadline for the story is – this can come in handy if you need to get back to them about a particular question, or want to give additional information.

- If you can't confidently answer a question, it's completely appropriate to say "I don't know but will get back to you." Then, make sure you follow up!
- Think about who from your campaign is really the best person to directly engage with reporters – it's just as important that your media point person is informed about your message as it is that s/he is comfortable talking with others about it.
- Be able to anticipate your opponents' critiques, and have your counterpoint ready to go.
- Be prepared to set boundaries: don't answer personal questions. If you're asked a question that doesn't seem to relate to what you're trying to get across, it's ok to bring the conversation back to the point you are trying to make.
- Get your message across clearly and concisely; don't assume that a reporter knows jargon or technical terms just because you do.
- Remember that the reporter is just that – a reporter. There is no such thing as "off the record."

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***Other Ways to  
Generate Support***

- ★ **Attend a city council meeting** Lots of city council meetings are open to the public. Find out when the next one is and bring up your issue or campaign for discussion. Or, go the extra mile and prepare a proposal to present at the meeting and challenge the city council to do something about dangerous traffic issues.
- ★ **Start a letter-writing campaign** One letter to a city official can make an impact, but imagine what one hundred letters could do! Challenge students and community members to write a letter to a city official. You can let them write their own letter or you can provide them with a template they can just sign and send! Make sure each letter addresses the most important details: what behavior needs to be changed, why it's important and urgent and how you want the decision-makers to do it.

## Event Planning

In the course of your campaign you may face challenges. The policy may get stalled or a major decision maker may oppose your group's policy proposal. Organizing an event or action can help move a campaign forward, raise awareness of the need for TS practices, increase the visibility of your effort and your group, build and strengthen your volunteer base, and develop leaders. Overall, your group or organization will be stronger than before the event took place and the issue you are working on will be better received. Below are the steps needed to organize a successful event

### 1. *Develop a concept for the event:*

- Work with the youth to find out what would be an effective event. Ask them these critical questions:
- What are we hoping to change?
- How will you bring about the change?
- Agree to the type, tenor, and content of the event.

### 2. *Build the event team:* The more people involved, the bigger and better the event will be. Assign people to key tasks, look to match natural strengths and interests to tasks. If youth are matched with adult-allies they are able to successfully support the event planning process. Think about having youths and adults partner in roles such as:

- **Volunteer coordinator**—coordinates the volunteers prior and during the event.
- **Phone supervisor (or team)**—coordinates phone banks, manages phone lists, finds new phone lists, recruits callers, and develops call scripts.
- **Door-to-door coordinator (or team)** – finds the meeting site to pick up instructions, materials, food, and feedback. Creates materials for door-to-door recruitment and recruiting people.
- **Site coordinator**—secures the location, manages the food for the event, makes sure all materials for the site are ordered (microphones, camera, decorations of the room).
- **Press point person**—handles the press, coordinates pre-press publicity, press advisory, press release, makes calls to major outlets, checks in with the press the day of the event, and creates press packets.
- **Partner organizer**—talks to other organizations that might want to participate, cosponsor or attend the event.
- **Transportation coordinator**—works on transportation to the event (if needed), such as getting buses donated from the local union or rents vans to pick up people that cannot attend otherwise.



3. *Create a plan (including timeline) and goals for the event.* Figure out:

- How many people do you want at the event?
- When do you want the event?
- Who else can you get involved to help with the event? (Parents are often willing to take on a temporary role to assist the process.)
- Who will do which task when?



**Example Event Plan – (Excerpt)**

**Date and Time:** 2/8/07 “Day In Action”

**Goal:** Demonstrate the need for Traffic Safety by organizing 50 people to wear signs listing names of people that have been injured in a traffic accident in the past six months at the next city council meeting.

**Outreach:** 5 people (names and phone numbers)

**Tasks:** design outreach materials by January 1<sup>st</sup>: flyer, pledge to attend, and call-script (assign a person); coordinate door-to-door recruiting on January 25<sup>th</sup>: food, calling, and location (person); call existing lists on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> (people to recruit callers).

4. *Check the plan:*

- Make sure the event is reasonable given the resources you have.
- Look for opportunities to simplify the plan.
- Look ahead for times that are too crowded and try to adjust the timeline in advance.
- Make certain to avoid school hours so the maximum number of youth may attend
- Is the event appropriate to meet the end result?

5. **Choose a site for the Event:**

There is never a perfect site, but keep in mind:

- The symbolism (a site of many fatalities, schools, public government office)
- Presence of a built-in crowd: how many people are normally at the site at the time of day that the event is scheduled?
- Do people know where the site is?
- How many people will it take to fill the site? You need roughly 5 square feet per person (including the press area). So, a site that is 50' x 100' (5,000 sq. ft.) needs 1,000 people to fill it. This is important because too few people in a large space looks like a poorly attended event, while the same number of people in a smaller space looks like a well attended event.
- What kind of visual can the site create?
- Can you get permission to use the site? Is it too expensive?
- How easy is it to get to the site? Is it transit accessible? Is there good handicap access?

6. **Build A Crowd:** Who do you want at the event? Mostly youth? Do you want a broad spectrum of people who are concerned about Traffic Safety? Are you trying to reach people that live in a certain district? Once you figure out who your audience is, then you can think of the best ways to reach them.

- **Phone banking**—calling people you know is still one of the most effective ways to get people to events.
- **Door-to-door**—recruiting people one-on-one, especially in targeted neighborhoods helps build relationships between activists and is a very effective way to get many new people involved in a short amount of time starting from a small base. Make sure you schedule in time to do reminder calls.
- **One-on-One Meetings** – Set up one-on-one conversations with people and recruit them to the group.
- **Presentations to organizations, schools and other youth groups**—can help give people a sense of your overall campaign work as well as letting them know of a specific event. Asking for a few minutes for classes, congregations, and groups can dramatically increase support and doesn't take much time.
- **Leaflets**—best when reinforced by phone calls and door-to-door work.
- **Posters**—place in visible spots where your audience is likely to be, can also help reinforce phone-calling and door-to-door work.
- **Free Media**—public service announcements, letters to the editor, or a feature story can help bring attention to your issue as well as your event and help get supporters you never even thought of.
- **Other techniques**—mailings, paid media, personal invites from someone the audience knows, tabling in front of grocery stores, libraries, or at farmers markets.

**7. Design the Program:**

Make sure your event doesn't have any surprises. Choreograph the event from the time the first person shows up to set up tables until the debrief is over in an "event flow." This document will help ensure the youth and adults have a common idea of what to expect, help avoid disasters before they strike, and give everyone something to do (so a few people aren't running around frantic, and others are sitting around bored). Things to include in the program:

- Arrival times for set-up (Include arrival times for everyone that is playing a role at the event).
- Room set-up including where decorations should go and who is in charge.
- Where will the food go? The stage? The children's play area?
- Make sure you have someone overseeing the overall agenda of the day, someone that can politely interrupt a speaker and move the agenda along (especially when you invite elected officials to speak).
- Someone assigned to each task and the time they need to complete that task (check in at the door, clean-up, greet the caterer).

**Example Event Flow**

Put the details at the top: date, location, address, directions, a contact name and phone number.

<b>TIME</b>	<b>EVENT/ASSIGNMENTS</b>
3:00 – 4:00 PM 4:00 – 5:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth and adults arrive and assist with set up of event</li> <li>• Registration &amp; Reception</li> <li>• Registration: Claudia, Saerom</li> <li>• Decorations/Setup: Cindy, Sarah, Leila</li> <li>• Greet Volunteers: Jenna</li> <li>• Greet Media: Juanita</li> <li>• Signage and door: David</li> </ul>
5:00 – 6:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and Introductions</li> <li>• Welcome: Cindy</li> <li>• Intros MC: Cindy</li> <li>• Late registration: Saerom</li> </ul>
6:00– 6:30 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Featured Speaker: Tommy (notes sent – reviewed speech)</li> <li>• Intro: Cindy</li> <li>• Speaker: Tommy</li> </ul>
6:30 - 7:30 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debrief- Carol's House (directions) All coordinators to meet and</li> <li>• Discuss event</li> </ul>

**8. *Coordinate the Public:***

- Have everyone sign in and recruit volunteers from the crowd – events are the most common way for new people to get involved in a political effort.
- Have something for youth of all ages to do at the event (elementary age and younger can do drawings that can be posted in strategic locales).
- Arrange the set-up to ensure the event looks crowded.
- Make sure you have translation provided for the audience.

**9. *Walk Through the Event:***

As you get closer to the event, keep walking through it. This will help you see gaps or holes, and help you remember key items (like the power cord for the mike). Make sure you do a walk through before the event. Give yourself plenty of time to walk through the volunteers who will help staff the event.

**10. *Getting Publicity on the Day of the Event:***

See “How to...Hold a Press Conference” below.

## How to Hold a Press Conference

(adapted from the Western Organization of Resource Councils)

A press conference is a voluntary presentation of information to the media. In a press conference, you decide what information is presented, how it's presented and who presents it. It is an opportunity to get your story on TV, radio or in the newspaper. Like any kind of event planning, there are certain tasks you need to do before, during and after the press conference to ensure it's a success.

### ***Part A: Before The Press Conference***

First, it's important to define the goals of your press conference.



**Think about it: are you trying to get publicity about your campaign and the traffic safety issue? To get widespread media coverage? To send a message to a key decision-maker about what you want? To develop the skills of the people involved in your effort? To highlight the strengths of your group?**

Once you've clarified your goals, you can then begin planning.

### **Planning**

- ★ Clearly state your reason for holding the press conference: maybe the news you're going to talk about hasn't been covered yet, or there is an emergency, or an important new issue.
- ★ Decide what message you want to get across. Outline your demands to a decision-maker; include information on how people can get involved (especially specifics of an upcoming action or activity).
- ★ Decide on the location of the press conference. How simple this is will depend on your specific needs. Think about things like: is it convenient to get to? What are the specific circumstances of your campaign that might inform where you need to hold a press conference? What kind of equipment or assistance might you need to provide people who attend (microphones, lighting, etc)?
- ★ Set the date and time of your press conference. Do some research on the deadlines of your local reporters first. It will also help to check out any other major or similar events that will compete with your press conference.
- ★ Invite the media. Send a press conference advisory (see sample below) via fax and/or email at least a week before the event. It's a good idea to follow up via phone 1-2 days later to ensure that they received it; in addition, it's recommended that you do reminder phone calls the day before your press conference.

### **PRESS CONFERENCE ADVISORY**

To: News Editors and Assignment Editors

From: Traffic Safety Group 415-XXX-XXXX

Event: Press Conference for Traffic Safety Group Petition Drive Kick-Off, 4:30 pm, Wednesday, Jan. 17, City Hall, Room #101

Subject: Traffic Safety Group President Melissa Gabriel and Petition Drive Coordinator Jason Kim will announce the beginning of a petition drive calling for a new traffic light installed at the intersection of Maple and Crandall Ave.

- ★ Invite guests. This includes anyone allied in your campaign, prospective supporters and key decision-makers.
- ★ Prepare your spokesperson(s). As mentioned earlier, it's important to have people who understand your campaign and are comfortable and confident speaking about it publicly. 1-2 speakers at a press conference is generally accepted. Make sure your spokesperson(s) practice beforehand to keep messages concise and clear. Ten minutes is a good allotment of time for statements.
- ★ Choose a moderator. It's important to have a person facilitating the process during the day so that it goes smoothly and can keep reporters on the subject at hand.
- ★ Prepare background materials. These can include a copy of your press release, written statement, fact sheet or anything else that may help contextualize your issue. It's a good idea to have a number of these packets on hand during the press conference for anyone who asks.
- ★ Prepare visual aids. Charts, maps, photographs or other visuals can help get your message across more effectively. Beware that slide shows are difficult for television, radio and other print reporters to use.

### ***Part B: During The Press Conference***

Be prepared to welcome any television reporters at least fifteen minutes before the beginning of the conference. They usually require some extra lead time to set up their equipment. Meet everyone at the door and ask each person to sign-in (their contact information will be handy for future events). Make sure to pass out the background materials you've prepared.

#### ***Tips for the Moderator***

- Start as close to on time as possible (usually no later than ten minutes after the scheduled time).
- Welcome everyone and briefly introduce the speakers.
- Keep speakers to the agreed upon time (10-15 min max).
- After speakers are finished, open it up for questions.
- Use your good judgment about when to end the press conference – don't let it drag out.
- Once all the important points are made, thank everyone for coming and offer additional information that they can obtain. This is also a good time to mention any upcoming actions/activities they can get involved in.

## Sample Letter to Editor

*The letter below is a sample of one used in a traffic safety campaign, advocating for more seat belt usage education for the African American community. You can use this as a simple template for your own campaign.*

[insert date]

Letters to the Editor

[insert newspaper name]

Dear Editor:

Every February, we observe Black History Month. We celebrate the contributions made by Black leaders, educators and others, and take advantage of this time to focus on our legacy of struggle and sacrifice. This is a good thing; learning about how we got here and where we came from can only make us stronger and wiser as we continue to evolve and grow.

Black History Month is also a time for us to focus on the things that can enrich and strengthen our families and relationships. We already know about eating healthy, exercising, and practicing positive safety behaviors. But we don't always remember to do one of the easiest, most effective things that can save our lives and the lives of our loved ones. We don't always use our seat belts and make sure that children are correctly restrained in the back seat in the correct child safety seat for their age, weight and height.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), seat belt use among African-Americans is at 80 percent. While this is certainly positive, it still means that approximately one out of five African-Americans still does not buckle up on every trip. In fact, in 2002, motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of death for African-Americans age 3 and ages 5 to 14, and the second leading cause of death for African-Americans age 2 and ages 15 to 29. NHTSA also reports that of the 31,415 passenger vehicle occupants who were killed in crashes in 2005, 55 percent of them weren't wearing seat belts.

NHTSA and other traffic safety, medical, educational and community-based organizations are working hard to teach us about positive traffic safety behaviors. But it's up to us to buckle our seat belts on every trip and make sure that when children ride in a vehicle, they are seated and properly secured in the back seat in the correct safety seat for their height, weight and age. With this in mind, please remember to:

- Always wear your lap and shoulder belt;
- Place the lap belt low and snug across the hips, and never across the stomach;
- Place the shoulder belt flat across the collarbone and chest;
- Make sure that all children are seated in the correct child safety seat for their size and age;
- And, make sure that all children age 13 and under are riding in the back seat and are properly restrained.

For more information about seat belt and child safety seat use, visit [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov) or [www.BoosterSeat.gov](http://www.BoosterSeat.gov).

Sincerely,



## Sample Press Release

*The press release below is an abbreviated version of one used in a traffic safety campaign, addressing non-traffic safety problems related to motor vehicles. You can use this as a template for your own campaign.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Date:

Contact Name: (First, Last Name)  
Contact Number: 202-XXX-XXXX

### **Motor Vehicle Dangers That Are An Easy Fix Continue to Kill and Injure Children**

***Safety Groups, Survivor Advocates, and Members of Congress  
Urge Passage of Safety Law Requiring Federal Response***

***More than 32,000 Americans Sign Petition Demanding Action***

***Consumers Union Releases “Best and Worst” List for Blind Zones***

Child safety advocates and families whose children have been killed by vehicles in backover incidents, strangled by power windows or inadvertently knocked a vehicle into gear came to Capitol Hill today to urge Congress to pass legislation preventing these unnecessary deaths and injuries. Each week at least 3 children die and 175 more are injured because of deadly blind zones that obscure children from the view of drivers backing up, power windows that can be as lethal as guillotines to young children caught in their grip and other non-traffic incidents. Last year, at least 222 children died in non-traffic incidents. Since 1999, over 1,100 children have been killed with over 157 fatalities to date in 2006.

“The real tragedy is that all of these deaths could have been prevented with existing technology. We call on Congress to make the safety of our children and the passage of legislation to eliminate these dangers a priority before Members go home,” said Janette Fennell, Founder and President of KIDS AND CARS. Fennell and the families traveled to Washington, DC to unveil a petition signed by over 32,800 Americans urging Congress to enact the Cameron Gulbransen Kids and Cars Safety Act.

“**Children are needlessly dying in red states and blue states**”, said Bill Nelson from Dix Hills, NY whose son Alec was inadvertently backed over by a family member. Bill, his wife, Adriann and their three children attended the press event. Consumer Reports measures the blind zone behind every vehicle it tests, and has uncovered many vehicles that have dangerously large blind areas – including a 69-foot blind zone behind the 2006 Jeep Commander for a 5’ 1” driver. Tests reveal that those vehicles equipped with rearview cameras completely eliminate the blind zone. **“Unfortunately, the few vehicles that now come with this rear-view technology are higher-end models, and most devices are available only as a costly option,”** said Sally Greenberg, Senior Product Safety Counsel for Consumers Union, publisher of Consumer Reports. **“We believe that rearview visibility is essential, and that we need for a federal safety standard. The cost is nominal compared to the value of a child’s life.”** Technology was exhibited that is currently available to improve rearward visibility and prevent power window strangulation.

The Cameron Gulbransen Kids And Cars Safety Act (S. 1948 and HR 2230), sponsored by Senators Clinton and Sununu in the Senate and Representatives King and Schakowsky in the House, address non-traffic safety problems. These bills would decrease the incidence of child injury and death by:

- ★ Providing drivers with a means of detecting the presence of a person or object behind their vehicle;
- ★ Ensuring power windows automatically reverse direction when they detect an obstruction to prevent children from being trapped, injured or killed;
- ★ Providing for the vehicle service brake to be engaged to prevent vehicles from unintentionally rolling away (Senate version only);
- ★ Providing for a reminder system for drivers who might inadvertently leave a child behind in the backseat of a vehicle, resulting in injuries and deaths from hyperthermia or other causes (House version only);
- ★ Establishing a child safety program to disseminate information to parents about these hazards and ways to mitigate them.

The legislation does not mandate any specific type of safety technology but directs the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to issue safety standards.



## RESOURCES

The following pages are by no means exhaustive, but rather are meant as reference points to get you started on research for your traffic safety issue campaign. You'll find resources divided into three primary sections: Useful Web Sites; California Decision-Makers 101; and Glossary of Terms.

### Useful Web Sites

[www.assembly.ca.gov](http://www.assembly.ca.gov) – Official site of California's state assembly; includes current, complete list of all members

[www.senate.ca.gov](http://www.senate.ca.gov) – Official site of California's state senate; includes current, complete list of all members

[www.BoosterSeat.gov](http://www.BoosterSeat.gov) – Helpful site including important details of using booster seats, including a helpful campaign

[www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov) – Official site of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[www.cacities.org](http://www.cacities.org) – Official site of League of California cities, which is an association of California city officials who work together to enhance their knowledge and skills, exchange information, and combine resources so that they may influence policy decisions that affect cities.

[www.csac.counties.org](http://www.csac.counties.org) – Official site of California State Association of Counties, whose primary purpose is to represent county government before the California Legislature, administrative agencies and the federal government.

[www.courtinfo.ca.gov](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov) – Official site of the judicial branch of California's state government

# California Decision-Makers 101

## Part A: California State Government

California state government is comprised of three basic branches (similar to our federal government): legislative, executive and judicial. Legislative branch makes laws; executive enforces the laws; judicial interprets and applies the laws. Below, you will find some additional information about what each of these branches do, and who you should know if you want to create some policy change!

### 1. Legislative branch (to make laws): SENATE & ASSEMBLY

**SENATE:** While there is no singular leader of the Senate, there are some important people and bodies of people you should know...

<i>WHO</i>	<i>THEIR SIGNIFICANCE/ROLE</i>
<i>President pro tempore</i>	Elected by a simple majority of her/his colleagues
<i>Lieutenant Governor</i>	Nearly no official power; can only vote to break a 20-20 tie
<i>Rules Committee (5 members)</i>	Appoints Senators to committees and assigns bills to committees
<i>Budget &amp; Fiscal Review Committee</i>	Handles the state budget
<i>Appropriations Committee</i>	Hears any bill with direct or implied state cost; has power to "kill" almost any major bill

Currently, there are 23 standing committees in the California State Senate. This does not include select and joint committees, or the nine sub-committees (Appropriations, Budget & Fiscal Review, Business, Professions and Economic Development, Education, Energies, Utilities and Communications, Environmental Quality, Health, Judiciary, Natural Resources and Water, Transportation and Housing). For a full list, visit [www.senate.ca.gov](http://www.senate.ca.gov).

**ASSEMBLY:** The most powerful person in the Assembly is the Speaker, but there are other roles to know as well...

<i>WHO</i>	<b>THEIR SIGNIFICANCE/ROLE</b>
<i>Speaker</i>	Elected by a simple majority of her /his colleagues; assigns most committee chairs and members
<i>Lieutenant Governor</i>	Nearly no official power; can only vote to break a 20-20 tie
<i>Rules Committee (5 members)</i>	Appoints Senators to committees and assigns bills to committees
<i>Budget &amp; Fiscal Review Committee</i>	Handles the state budget
<i>Appropriations Committee</i>	Hears any bill with direct or implied state cost; has power to "kill" almost any major bill

At the time of creating this manual, there are 29 standing committees in the California State Assembly. This does not include select and joint committees. For a full list, visit [www.assembly.ca.gov](http://www.assembly.ca.gov).

## 2. Executive Branch (to enforce laws):

Technically, the Executive Branch of state government includes several important roles. Unlike the federal government, California state government has several executive officials who are elected directly by the people. Details of their roles are below.

<i>WHO</i>	<b>THEIR SIGNIFICANCE/ROLE</b>
<i>Governor</i>	Chief executive of the state; has the responsibility of carrying out the laws of California (those enacted by the legislature and those initiated by the people)
<i>Lieutenant Governor</i>	Becomes acting Governor in case of absence or disability of Governor
<i>Attorney General</i>	Heads the states Department of Justice; serves as legal counsel for the state and most state agencies
<i>Secretary of State</i>	Responsible for keeping the official record of the acts of legislature and executive departments; also supervises elections
<i>Controller</i>	Maintains accounts of all state and local government finances; oversees collection of state taxes
<i>Treasurer</i>	Reports to the legislature each quarter on how much money the state has, including how any reserve funds have been invested
<i>Superintendent of Public Instruction</i>	Administrative head of the Department of Education; policy-making abilities of this office are limited by the governor-appointed Board of Education
<i>Insurance Commissioner</i>	Oversees the operations of the state Department of Insurance; has the authority to approve or deny various types of insurance rates
<i>Board of Equalization</i>	Oversees county property tax assessment practices throughout the state; the tax programs administered by the Board are concentrated in four general areas: sales and use taxes, property taxes, special taxes and the tax appellate program.

### **3. Judicial Branch (to interpret and apply laws):**

The judiciary is viewed by some people as the most powerful of the three branches of state government, because the state Supreme court can strike down acts of the Legislature or initiatives that conflict with the state and federal constitutions. The court can also use its power to invalidate acts of the executive branch that violate a statute or the Constitution.

There are four levels of court in California: Municipal, Superior, Courts of Appeal and the Supreme Court. Descriptions of their roles and significance are below. For more information, visit [www.courtinfo.ca.gov](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov).

<b>WHO</b>	<b>THEIR SIGNIFICANCE/ROLE</b>
<i>Municipal Courts</i>	Local courts that primarily hear misdemeanor and small-claims actions
<i>Superior Courts</i>	County-wide courts that hear juvenile criminal cases, felonies, appeals and civil cases that cannot be tried in municipal courts
<i>Courts of Appeal</i>	Divided into six regional districts; each division within each court contains three or four justices, with three justices normally sitting on each appeal
<i>The Supreme Court</i>	Highest court of the state; handles appeals from the district courts of appeal

## Part B: Local Government

Local government provides us with many of the essentials of every day life, such as: law enforcement, fire protection, public parks, health clinics, public schools and trash collection. All local governments are agents of the state, but have different functions, powers and structures that are determined by the state constitution and statutes of legislature. There are several units of local government, including: counties, cities, city-counties, school districts and special districts.

### 1. Counties

California has 58 counties. Counties are responsible for all elections, property-tax collection, maintenance of public records such as deeds, and local-level courts within their borders; as well as providing law enforcement (through the county sheriff and sheriff's deputies) to areas that do not lie within incorporated cities. To find out which county you are in, visit [www.csac.counties.org](http://www.csac.counties.org) for a complete list and map.

While there are many decision-makers in counties, there are some key players you should know. Below are some general reference points to get you started.

<i>WHO</i>	<i>THEIR SIGNIFICANCE/ROLE</i>
<i>Board of Supervisors</i>	Elected by the public (usually according to district); California requires each county have at least five supervisors. This body is the legislative and executive body of county government, including adopting a yearly budget. Primary responsibilities include overseeing services to county residents (like public works, health and welfare programs, courts, jails and voter registration)
<i>County Administrative Officer</i>	Responsible for bringing more integration to county government; in many counties, the board of supervisors appoints the administrative officer, who then provides research and recommendations to the board
<i>Judicial</i>	Every county has a court of law, usually called the Superior Court or County Court, located in the County Seat (the "capital" of the county)



## 2. Cities

California has 478 cities. Most people live in one of these cities, although some live in unincorporated areas in which municipal services are provided by the county. Cities have more power for local self-government. Because cities are incorporated areas within the larger territory of a county, city governments are more concerned with providing special services, such as police, fire protection and trash collection. For a list and description of the cities in California, visit [www.cacities.org](http://www.cacities.org).

There are two basic types of city governments: Mayor-Council or Council-Manager, both of which are explained below.

<i>TYPE OF CITY GOVERNMENT</i>	<i>SIGNIFICANCE/ROLE</i>
<i>Mayor-Council</i>	The traditional form of city government in the U.S.: a legislative body (the council) and the chief executive office (mayor) are elected separately by the voters of the city. Mayoral power will vary depending on the amount granted by the city's charter or state law. Strong mayors usually have the authority to appoint or remove city officials, and have veto power over ordinances passed by the city council.
<i>Council-Manager</i>	The most common type of city government in California: a city manager is appointed by the elected city council. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the state's cities have this type of government, which centralizes the administrative functions. The typical city manager supervises the administration of ordinances passed by the city council, and has the power to appoint / remove heads of the city's administrative departments (e.g. Public Health).

There is another type of municipality, called a City-County. This is a combined city-county, usually operating under a charter. For example, San Francisco, CA is both a city and a county. There are very few of these in the United States.

### 3. School Districts

Public schools for grades kindergarten through 12 are operated by independent districts with directly elected governing boards. Local school districts have the primary responsibility for administering California’s public school system. There are three basic types of school districts: unified (includes both elementary and high school education levels), elementary (includes kindergarten and grades 1-6 or 8) and high school (includes grades 9-12, but may include grade 7 and above).

There are many decision-makers to know if you want to ally or lobby for change in educational policy. Below is a breakdown of who mostly sets the agenda.

<i>WHO</i>	<i>THEIR SIGNIFICANCE/ROLE</i>
<i>State Legislature</i>	Assembly & Senate – allocates state funds for education; also sets policy
<i>State Board of Education</i>	Considered the chief education policy-making body in California; hands down its policy decisions to the State Department of Education
<i>Superintendent of Education</i>	Elected statewide by the people; formulates policy with funds allocated by the legislature
<i>State Department of Education</i>	Regulates elementary, secondary and special schools (public and private)
<i>County Offices of Education – County Superintendent of Schools</i>	Responsible for general administration, research, planning and support for public schools within their county
<i>Local School Districts</i>	Governed by elected school boards; ensure that education is administered at the local level

### 4. Special Districts

Sometimes called Community Service Districts, these are formed to deal with matters that extend beyond city and county boundaries, such as air pollution or flood control. They also serve in unincorporated areas as their local governance body dealing with fire, safety, water and community issues.

## Glossary of Terms

**Allies** – those in helpful association with another. Allies are often vital to successful campaigns, the more public support you have for your issue, the better chance change will occur.

**Campaign** - activity or series of activities pursued to accomplish a purpose or goal. Campaigns can be small or large scale, and can serve individual or public interest. For example, a politician’s campaign, an advertising campaign for a new product or a campaign for better traffic lights.

**Executive** (branch) – decision-making body of government (both federal and state) responsible for enforcing laws.

**Judicial** (branch) – decision-making body of government (both federal and state) responsible for interpreting and applying laws.

**Laws** - a rule of conduct or procedure established by custom, agreement, or authority. Laws can be local, state, federal or international.

**Legislative** (branch) – decision-making body of government (both federal and state) responsible for making laws.

**Legislature** - an officially elected or otherwise selected body of people vested with the responsibility and power to make laws for a political unit, such as a state or nation. For California, the legislature is comprised of the Assembly, Senate and other departments.

**Lobbying** – an attempt by a group or individual to influence the decisions of government or other decision-makers. Lobbying can include oral or written efforts.

**Media** - the plural form of the word medium. A “medium” is a means of mass communication, such as newspapers, magazines, radio or television. Technically, it is any medium through which people communicate; a filter between the communication of two people or parties. For example, speaking with a friend over instant messenger or cell phone involves what is called a “medium.”

**Opponents** – those that act against or disagree with other people’s interests. Opponents are also vital to developing successful campaign strategies, as you will want to be as prepared as possible.

**Policy** – law, regulation or rule. Policies can be institutional or public. Public policies are ordinances and other regulations that are usually accompanied by specified penalties that can be applied when violated, such as having to be at least twenty-one years of age to purchase or consume alcoholic beverages in the U.S. Institutional policies are enacted by various institutions such as colleges and universities, businesses, workplaces, such as a dress code.

**Veto** - power or constitutional right of one branch or department of government to refuse approval of measures proposed by another department, especially the power of a chief executive to reject a bill passed by the legislature and thus prevent or delay its enactment into law. For example, governors and mayors often have this power.







***START YOUR OWN TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN***

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