Project Name: Buckle Up for a Buck

Origination Agency & Date: Kandiyohi County. This project was brought back from a Lifesavers Conference and first implemented in Minnesota by KCTEST in 2016.

Timeline:

1) Contact organizations with drive through windows to ask permission for uniformed EMTs, law enforcement officers or other volunteers to provide positive education on seat belts.
2) Contact potential donors for funding the project.
3) Line up 20 minutes at each site during dinner rush. This allows the teams to talk to people while they are waiting in line and will not keep them from getting through.
4) As cars approach, give drivers one dollar and the informational brochure if everyone in the vehicle is buckled. Only give a brochure if they do not. Educate them on the importance of wearing a seat belt.

Reason for Project: Seat belts save lives. This allows a positive interaction between uniformed officers and the public. Great visual story for the local media. Garners a lot of great public feedback, unpaid media coverage, and public sharing on social media platforms. Responders request to repeat the project each year because they like the positive interaction.

Who was on the team? Assigned or volunteer EMTs and law enforcement officers.

Lessons Learned: Use teams of two—one EMT and one officer. Having an EMT lessons the nervous-factor. Never use grant funds. Let people know that the dollar bills were “donated by the ABC company” so you don’t have issues with taxpayer dollars. Do NOT issue seat belt citations while in the drive through. This is only an educational interaction. Also, even though it is only one dollar, people have such a strong reaction to an officer giving them a dollar. The photos shared on social media is huge. Fast food restaurants typically give coupons to hand out in addition to our dollars.

How did you incorporate the 5 E's? Any of the E’s can participate on these teams. It’s nice to have a uniform there for the media photos and elevate perceived importance, but use whatever volunteers you have.

Who to contact: Kandiyohi County Traffic Education & Safety Team; Stephanie Felt, Coordinator; 320-214-6700 X 3821; stephaniefelt@hotmail.com

Note: Contact Stephanie Felt for a copy of the KCTEST brochure.