

SEAT BELT AND CHILD RESTRAINT USAGE

Adopted by Convention Delegates May 1983

Reviewed by Board of Managers July 2012

- WHEREAS,** The California State PTA recognizes the need for education and awareness in the necessary usage of seat belts and child restraints; and
- WHEREAS,** The National PTA adopted a resolution in 1980 supporting parent education programs covering facts and fallacies regarding seat belt and child restraint usage which resulted in a nationwide safety belt campaign by the National PTA in cooperation with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; and
- WHEREAS,** As of January 1, 1983, the state of California enacted a law mandating child restraints for children under 40 pounds or four years of age which the California State PTA supported; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA urge its units, councils and districts to heighten public awareness by promoting parent education programs regarding the need for and proper use of seat belts and child restraints.

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BACKGROUND SUMMARY

More children are killed in traffic accidents than by any other cause. However, 85% of the deaths could be prevented with the use of car safety seats and safety belts. Two-thirds of the 20,000 injuries suffered by California children every year could be prevented. Unfortunately, fewer than 10% of our children are provided with this essential protection.

- Each year 50,000 people die in traffic accidents in the United States and four million are injured.
- Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death in children between the ages of one and 14.
- In 1979 approximately 4,400 deaths from motor vehicles were children under 14. In California in 1976 the deaths numbered about 380.
- Some reports estimate that as high as 60% of the disabling injuries of children and young adults could be prevented by the proper use of seat belts.
- Studies show that as many as 50% of those killed as occupants of passenger cars would have survived if they had been wearing their lap-shoulder belts.
- Nearly 90% of drivers ignore using existing restraints.
- One in every 40 infants born today will die in a motor vehicle-related crash. This will probably happen before the age of 25.
- California State PTA Legislative Platform #10 states: "To prevent, control or eliminate hazards to the health, safety and well-being of all children and youth."