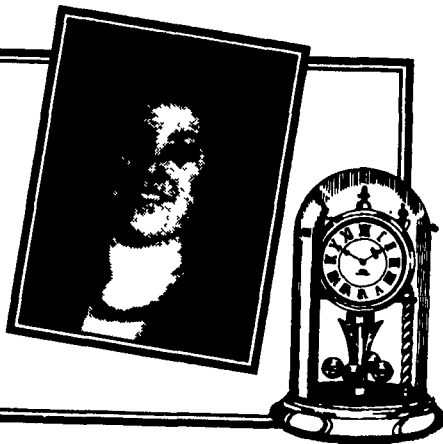


Taking Time
by
Rebecca Escott



Buckle Up Your Children!
Perhaps like me, many of you have heard the statistics that four out of five car seats are not used properly. It shocked me to think that many children are not really protected the way their parents think they are. Unless car seats are used exactly as directed they don't guarantee the level of protection that is needed.

Recently I researched this problem. I spoke with Angela Ostentuber, a traffic injury prevention specialist in southeastern Pennsylvania. She conducts safety checks with local police departments and trains local health departments to present educational programs in their communities. Once I interviewed her, my shock about car seat misuse turned to embarrassment. I realized I was part of the statistic. There were things that I wasn't doing correctly — things that made my daughter less protected.

One common mistake that parents make is that they don't strap the seat into the car tight enough. A car seat should not move more than one inch in any direction. The best advice I got was this — installing a car seat is often a two-person job. It may help if one person kneels on the car seat while the other tightens the belt. I found that I could get my car seat much tighter even if I just placed one

knee on the seat while I pulled the belt.

In many models of cars, seat belts are a combination lap-shoulder belts. These belts require a locking clip (an H-shaped metal clip placed just above the belt clasp) to keep the belt from loosening. All current models of car seats come with a locking clip.

Another mistake that parents make is that they don't strap the child in tightly enough. If a child fusses, the parent kindly loosens the straps. Unfortunately, this puts the child in jeopardy if they are in an accident. The safety guidelines specify that the car seat harness should be snug enough that an adult can only slip one finger between the strap and the child's collarbone. Any sliding clasp should be high on the child's chest (roughly arm pit level) to keep the child's head and upper body from moving too much.

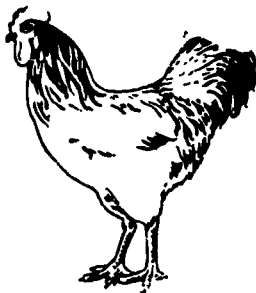
A third mistake that parents make is that they put a child in a forward-facing seat too early. It is important that a child stay in a rear-facing seat until she is at least one-year-old and at least 20 pounds. This is one of the areas that we did wrong. If your child is a 20-pound nine-month-old and is too big for the rear-facing infant seat that you brought him home from the hospital in, then you need

to buckle him up in a rear-facing convertible seat that accommodates children up to 40 pounds. Once the child is both 20 pounds and one-year-old, he can then sit in a forward-facing seat.

Although Pennsylvania rules are not this stringent, the highway safety programs recommend that children use some sort of car seat or booster seat until they are at least eight years old and 80 pounds. They also suggest that no one under the age of 12 should ride in the front seat of a car.

I know for many families these expectations seem ridiculous. You have children who want to sit in the front, who think they are too old for car seats. You have infants who would rather look at you in the mirror or watch the lights on your dash board than stare at a gray seat back. You just don't have the patience to listen to their complaining one more time. But remember why you are doing it. And remember there are a lot of crazy, out-of-control drivers on the roads these days. You want to protect them!

Each year nearly 1,400 children under 15 years of age die in motor vehicle crashes. Another 280,000 are injured — most because they are not properly secured in their vehicles. Your choice to buckle them up in a rock solid car seat may save their life.



Poultry team from Penn Manor. From left, Josh Murry, Jull Greider, Garrett Neff, Cheri Lake, and Tyler Swanson.

On Sept. 17-20 Penn Manor's Poultry Evaluation and Technology Team and Tyler Swanson went to the Big E Eastern States Exposition in Springfield, Mass.

The Poultry Evaluation and Technology Team, consisting of Juli Greider, Garrett Neff, Cheri Lake, and Josh Murry, placed first as a team.

Garrett Neff placed first as an individual. Tyler Swanson went to Eastern States for extemporaneous public speaking. He placed in the top 10.

The Poultry Evaluation and Technology Career Development Event consisted of identifying chicken parts and grading chicken carcasses. Eggs were graded for interior and exterior quality. Live birds were placed according to egg production and a class of broiler/breeders was kept or culled according to the quality of the birds.

Contestants also gave oral reasons for the placing of broiler/breeders and carcasses. There was also a written test on the knowledge of the poultry industry. A team activity consisted of having 20 minutes to research a topic relating to the poultry industry and then 10-15 minutes to present it to a panel of judges. The presentation was followed by a few questions asked by the judges.

The extemporaneous public speaking contest consisted of picking a subject out of a hat and having 30 minutes to prepare a 4- to 6-minute speech about your topic. After the speech, the judges have five minutes to ask questions about a contestant's knowledge of the topic and ag industry.

During their spare time, FFA members explored the largest state agriculture fair in New England. There were rides, games, exhibits, and lots of fun.

Attention Farm Bureau Members:

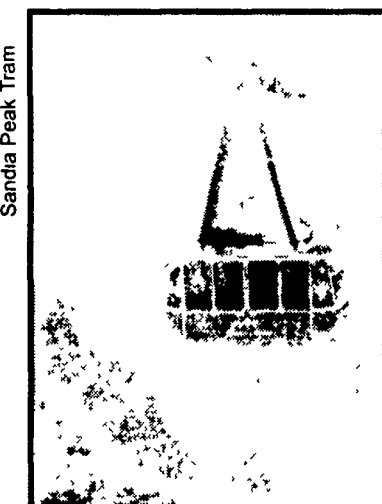
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 - "Old Town"
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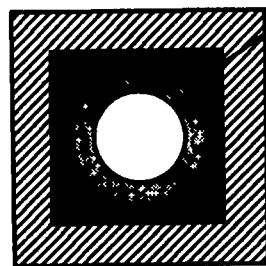
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