

Subject: June Successes!

Hi Everybody –

June occupant protection and training and outreach efforts were *quite* successful! We were able to work with some of the most committed people in close-knit communities – law enforcement officers, 1st responders, childcare providers, Head Start, Child Health Services, and more. And in between classes, we were able to *complete* a very important project – a brand new presentation program that explains the facts about Montana occupant protection, which SKSC coordinators and others will be using in their communities. A narrated version of the presentation, in video format, will also be available online and through other distribution methods.

Smaller towns or rural areas typically mean that we won't be directly reaching large numbers, and we experienced that in Glasgow, Malta, Fort Belknap and Havre. At the same time, reaching such areas is *critical*. While restraint use may be fairly common, in Montana's largest cities, I have counted *fewer than half* (sometimes *far* fewer) of people using restraints in and around these other areas. Reaching a small number of key leaders and other respected community members – especially those who we trust with our lives and our children's lives – makes a big difference.

Each of our presentations was *very* well-received. We were asked a lot of questions, and were able to provide answers and referrals to nearby resources. At least one or two people from each community even expressed interest in further training and certification! Most folks told us that more people – professionals, families and children – *need* training if we are going to make a difference – and some even said that such training should be mandatory.

Speaking of that, the training *was mandatory* for Head Start and CHR personnel, in Fort Belknap! The respective agency leaders made that happen, and were quite happy that they did. And now they are exploring whether we can arrange a return visit, for a class that will be *mandatory for all other childcare providers*. That level of support and commitment does wonders – and other communities are looking at ways to make it happen. Commitment and reinforcement are extremely important to guarantee the success of what we are being told is *vital* training.

Thank you for all that you did to make the efforts successful and empower folks in your communities! And thanks to HMHB and Patty Carrell for doing the hard part of the job – coordinating and personally supporting each and every class. As I have said before, I am amazed at how well the state and local partnerships in Montana work. What a combination it is: great sponsors – great partners – great teamwork – shared goals of reducing injury and saving lives – and making support and resources available where they are needed!

I have attached some photos that tell the story better than I ever could. Keep up the great work!

Joe

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