

Billings Area Injury Prevention Newsletter

Billings Area Indian Health Service

January-March 2010 Edition

Volume 4, Issue 1

The Crow Tribe Department of Transportation Working to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crash-related Injuries & Fatalities on Reservation

March 2010- The Crow Tribe Department of Transportation is gearing up to conduct road system safety audits for the reservation's transportation system beginning in summer 2010.

Given the Crow Indian Reservation, located in southeastern Montana, encompasses nearly 2.2 million acres of land, it has numerous road systems operated and maintained by the Crow Tribe, Big Horn county, State of Montana, and the Federal government. Road system safety audits incorporate a multidisciplinary approach to understanding behavioral and environmental circumstances of motor vehicle crash (MVC) cluster sites resulting in severe injuries and fatalities.

Results from road system safety audits can target three areas such as environmental modification (straightening a sharp road curve, re-surfacing, etc.), enforcement (DUI prevention, seat belt use, and enacting tribal laws), and/or education (community-based intervention projects aimed at target populations to reduce MVC injuries and fatalities).

The Crow Tribe Department of Transportation

has teamed up with the Billings Area Indian Health Service (IHS) Injury Prevention Program and the United Tribes Technical College's Northern Plains Tribal Technical Assistance Program to conduct detailed reviews of motor vehicle crash data to further understand and identify these characteristics.

The primary data source for identifying these crash locations is based on a past IHS Injury Prevention Fellowship project entitled "The Crow Tribe Motor Vehicle Crash Site Identification Project" which is a geographical information system (GIS) digital map of MVCs that was global positioning system (GPS) plotted based on combined Montana Highway Patrol and Crow Tribal Law Enforcement MVC reports and datasets for years 1996-2008.

Next steps for the Crow Tribe is to bring together various state, federal, and local stakeholders to review the results and make further recommendations on listing top priority MVC cluster sites and what resources will be available to reduce MVC-related injuries and fatalities in the future.

Article submitted by Darcy Merchant, Assistant Area IP Specialist, 406-247-7097.



"INJURIES ARE PREVENTABLE!"

In this issue:

Crow Department of	Pg. 1
Area Wide News	Pgs. 2-3
National Health & Wellness Observance Calendar	Pg. 2-3
Events, Schedules, & Announcements	Pg. 3
Safe On All Roads News	Pg. 4
Safety Spotlight	Pg. 5
Contact Information	Pg. 6

Injury Prevention Links



IHS.gov



IHS Injury Prevention Program



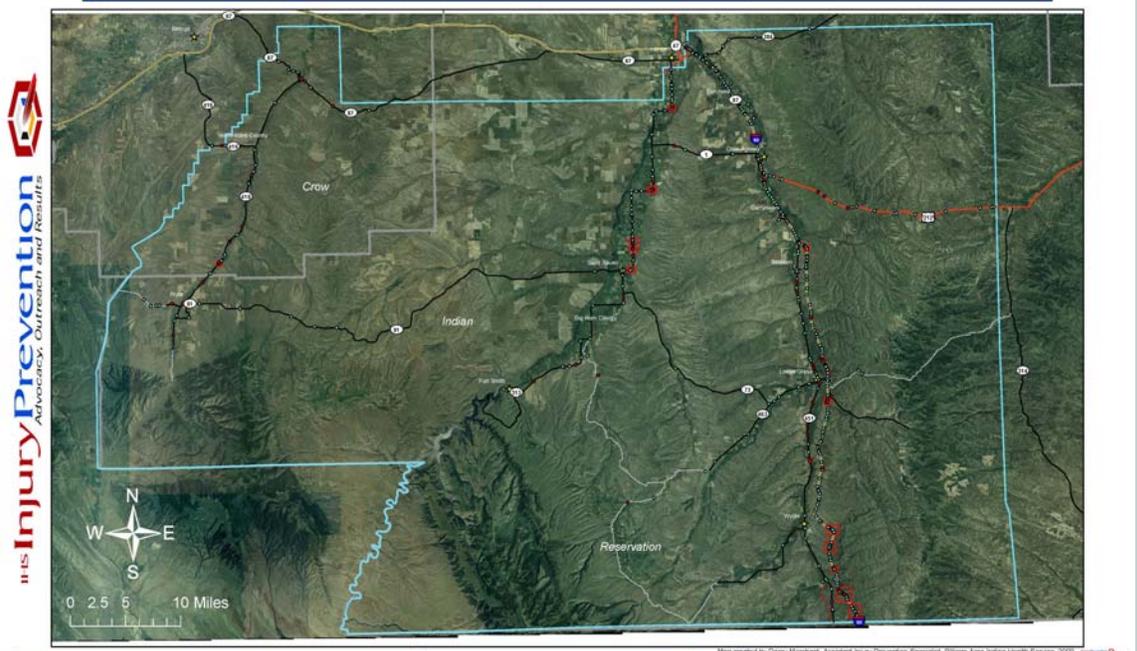
Injury, Violence, Safety website



The IHS IP Newsletter would like to get your feedback on improving the newsletter! Please send an email to Darcy.Merchant@ihs.gov to provide comments or suggestions.

Crow Tribe Motor Vehicle Crash Site Identification Project

Motor Vehicle Crash Injuries & Fatalities, 1996-2008



April 2010

**National Alcohol
Awareness Month**

ncadi.samsha.gov



**National Child Abuse
Prevention Month**

preventchildabuse.org



**National Youth
Sports Safety Month**

nyssf.org



**Sexual Assault
Awareness Month**

nsvrc.org

**Alcohol - Free
Weekend (April 2nd-
4th)**

ncadd.org



Area Wide News and Events

Fort Peck Service Unit

**Seat Belt Saves Fort Peck Tribal
Health Employee**

February 2010– This story involves a young lady who works for the Fort Peck Tribal Health Department. Her name is Merilee Evenson and she is the administrative assistant for the Fort Peck Tribal Health department. On February 5, 2010 at approximately 10:30 am she was on her way to a neighboring town which is off the reservation. She usually does not put on her seat belt when traveling on the reservation however this day she decided to wear her seatbelt.



Pictured Above: Merilee Evenson

That particular day the roads were very icy and snow covered with strong winds pushing cars and trucks off the highway. Merilee was traveling east bound on Highway # 2 along the highline when she lost control of her vehicle due to the road conditions and went down a steep embankment and caused her car to roll several times. When she came to a rest at the bottom of the hill she was still inside her vehicle with no injuries, but was in shock of what had just happened to her.

When all was said and done at the emergency room the doctor informed here that if it was not for the seat belt she could have been seriously injured and even killed. This just goes to show that seat belts do work and save lives.

Recently a primary seat belt law was passed here on the Fort Peck Reservation making it law that Tribal members wear their seat belts while operating a motor vehicle and if not they will be cited. This could not have been possible without the help of many different organizations such as Fort Peck Injury Prevention, Fort Peck Highway Safety Program, Roosevelt County, Tribal Courts, Frank Smith, Louis Peterson and others. We as tribal members see and hear of motor vehicle crashes that result in a loved one lost or handicapped for the rest of his/her life. This is one of the reasons for the primary seat belt law that was implemented on the reservation.

Thank you Merilee for buckling up!!!!!!!

Fort Peck Car Seat Program Works!!!

March 2010– This young lady and her daughter have participated in our quarterly car seat clinics in the past. I show this photo because this couple have been in more than one car crash and the little girl has been in a car seat during the car crashes and has never been hurt.



At times we believe we don't make a difference in what we are trained to do however every time I see this couple in the community with their little girl I feel good about the training that was provided to us by Indian Health Service Injury Prevention Program and Pam Buckman of the Montana Department of Highway Safety. We can utilize the training and actually see the results when we apply it.

Articles submitted by Adrian Spotted Bird, Ft. Peck IP Coordinator, 406-768-5322.



Fort Belknap Service Unit

**Fort Belknap Injury Prevention
Program Updates**

January-March 2010– In the month of January we held a car seat and booster seat clinic for the Fort Belknap Indian Community. We installed five booster seats and four convertible car seats. We also had our PSAs about seat belt use and drinking and driving on our local radio station.

In February we set up a poster board at the Fort Belknap Mid Winter Fair. We teamed up with the Safe On All Roads program and displayed a number of safety materials such as small posters, hats, scarves that the Safe On All Roads provided us. I also gave an Elderly Fall Safety presentation to the new Personal Care Attendants that had training at the Ft. Belknap IHS. I continued to help install Car Seats and booster seats for community members. The PHN department purchased 30 more convertible car seats for our program this month.

Continued on page 3...

May 2010

Correct Posture Month

amerchiro.org



**Healthy Vision Month/
 UV Safety**

healthyvision2010.org

aoa.org



National Bike Month

bikeleague.org



**National Stroke
 Awareness Month**

stroke.org

americanheart.org



**National Physical
 Fitness and Sports
 Month**

fitness.gov

Area Wide News and Events

Continued from page 2...

During the month of March we had Darcy Merchant present his Crow Tribe motor vehicle crash project to the Council. We have been working on a presentation for the Social Services to include some home injury prevention ideas. We also set up a booth during Harlem High School Prom on March 20th and saturated the facility with injury prevention posters so at least they will think about buckling up.

Article submitted by Stan Zander, Jr., Fort Belknap IP Coordinator, 406-353-3165.



Events, Schedules, and Announcements

March 30th, 2010– The IHS Injury Prevention Program in conjunction with the IHS Head Start Program would like to officially announce the **Ride Safe/Sleep Safe Funding Announcement for FY 2011**.

Interested Montana & Wyoming Tribal Head Start Programs can call Jodee Dennison, Area Injury Prevention Specialist, at 406-247-7098 for more information. Registration deadline is April 23rd, 2010.

April 21st-24th, 2010– A National Child Passenger Safety Training will be held in Billings, MT. Please call Koren Bloom at 406-259-9601.

April 22-23, 2010– A National Child Passenger Safety Training (Special Needs) will be held in Great Falls, MT. Please call Mary Kay Burns at 406-454-6950. Opportunity to earn 6 CEUs for current certified CPS technicians.

April 30th, 2010– The Montana Department of Transportation is currently accepting proposals for

FFY 2011 Traffic Safety Funding. Please refer to <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/safety/grants.shtml> for more information, application materials, and instructions. The deadline for the first round of submissions is April 30, 2010.

April 15th-16th, 2010– MT-WY Native Youth Academy Clan Leaders Training; Confederated Salish & Kootenai Indian Reservation.

May 28th, 2010– Crow IHS Injury Prevention Car Seat Clinic at Crow Head Start Center from 10AM-12PM.

June 25th, 2010– Annual Blackfeet Fire & Safety Fair, please contact Freda Heavy Runner for more info at 406-338-6140.

June 26th, 2010– Crow-Northern Cheyenne IHS Hospital Injury Prevention & Healthy Lifestyle Expo at Crow-Northern Cheyenne IHS parking lot.

July 10th-14th, 2010– MT-WY Native Youth Academy, Salish-Kootenai College; Pablo, MT.

IHS Introduction to Injury Prevention Level I Training Announcement!!!

July 26-30th, 2010– An **Introduction to Injury Prevention Level I Training** sponsored by the Billings Area IHS Injury Prevention Program and Blackfeet Service Unit OEHE will be held at the Blackfeet Community College in Browning, MT.

Course Description:

The 3 1/2 day course utilizes group activities, case studies, and lecture formats to introduce participants to injuries as a public health problem. The course includes a discussion of the IHS Injury Prevention Program, with emphasis on the six components of successful programs: Epidemiology, Coalitions, Marketing, Advocacy, Intervention and Evaluation.

The target audience for the course is community members, tribal and IHS employees, and others who are interested in preventing injuries in their community.

Registration deadline is June 17, 2010 and enrollment is open to the first 25 participants.

For more information and to register, please contact Jodee Dennison, Area Injury Prevention Specialist, at 406-247-7098.

State of Montana News & Events

Safe On All Roads Update

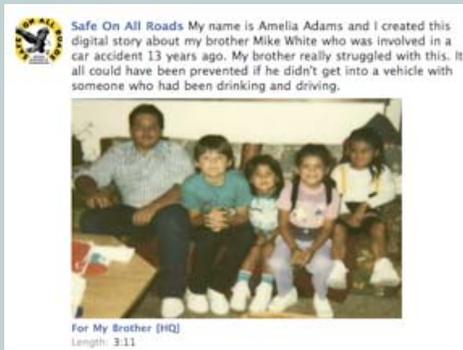
Montana Department of Transportation Native American Traffic Safety

The Safe On All Roads program is the Native American Traffic Safety program of the Montana Department of Transportation. The program seeks to reduce crash deaths and injuries through increased seat belt use and impaired driving prevention. Public education and other strategies are implemented through local coordinators on the American Indian reservations in Montana.

January-March 2010

Digital Stories

In January, the Safe On All Roads program partnered with the Department of Public Health and Human Services American Indian Screening program to help sponsor a Digital Story Workshop in Pablo. Three people created a visual record of a personal story related to traffic safety. Margene Asay created a tribute to caring for the safety of children in your vehicle. Patty Stevens retold the story of a vehicle crash that cost the life of one of her sons and seriously injured another. Amelia Adams created a story about her older brother, who eventually committed suicide after years of struggling with the injuries he received in an alcohol-related crash. Her moving digital story appears on the SOAR Facebook page January 24th post (www.facebook.com/SafeOnAllRoads).



Travel Translations

Did you know that in the White Clay (Gros Ventre or A'a'ninin) language "Niitaanaacaaach 'iin'ikiit'o! Nei'itouckiiich 'oosiichii!" means "Choose Life! Tighten the belt!?" During February, the local SOAR coordinators began collecting tribal language translations for phrases such as "Safe travel" and "Protecting families," with the help of elders and educators. The phrases are being used in the distribution of customized "We Buckle Up" static window clings—but we see potential for many other uses in local educational outreach. The translations in Salish and Kootenai languages also appear on the SOAR Facebook page.

Basketball Season Safety Belt Promotions

Basketball season brings everyone together in the reservation communities, providing an opportunity to reach a broad section of our target audiences of young people and families. SOAR coordinators distributed "Buckle Up" license plate



frames for 22 different high schools in reservation communities.

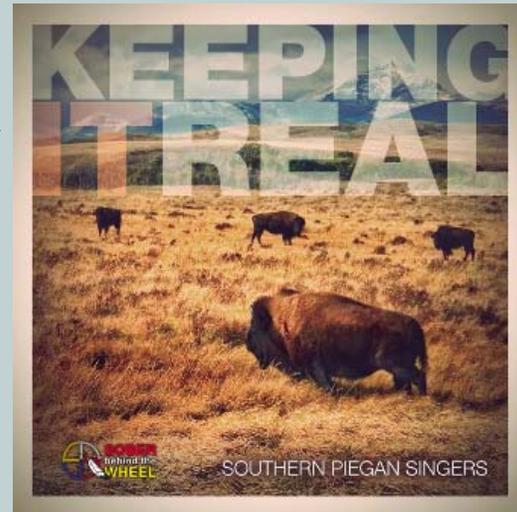
The license holders were given out at events such as Boys and Girls Senior Night Basketball games, major home games and at pep rallies like the one pictured for the Two Eagle River School in Pablo.

Mini-basketballs imprinted with a buckle up message were also popular with youth.



Southern Piegan Singers Sober Behind the Wheel Drum Group Music CD

A project to produce a CD with a focus on sober driving is in progress. A group of ten young men under the tutelage of Anthony Yellow Owl, Sr. of Browning recorded 14 songs on the CD. The cover design is being finalized in March. When the CD is produced, copies will go to the SOAR coordinators for use in special promotions and drawing prizes. The drum group has included songs dedicated to the Sober Behind the Wheel campaign and the Blackfeet Medicine Wheel.



Child Passenger Safety Pocket Brochures

A pocket-sized guide to child passenger safety was updated, printed and distributed to the SOAR coordinators and program partners on the reservations.



What's Next??!

The SOAR team has several new occupant protection poster ideas in the works. We are also scheduling a paid media campaign aimed at youth and young adults this spring. The emphasis will be on the importance of one decision—don't get into a vehicle with a driver who has been drinking.

For more information on the Safe On All Roads coordinators, visit www.safeonallroads.com.

Article submitted by Randi Szabo, Program Manager, Safe On All Roads, MT Dept. of Transportation, Native American Traffic Safety. For further questions or information, please call Randi Szabo at 406-454-3422, ext. 103.

Safety Spotlight: NATIVE AMERICAN ROAD SAFETY



Photo from CDC website.

American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) are at increased risk of motor-vehicle related injury and death with rates 1.5 to 3 times higher than rates for other Americans.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Injury Prevention & Control: Motor Vehicle Safety website <http://www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/native/>

Injuries Among American Indians/ Alaska Natives Fact Sheet:

- Injuries are the leading cause of death for AI/AN ages 1 to 44 and the third leading cause of death overall. (1)
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of unintentional injury for AI/AN ages 1 to 44. Adult motor vehicle-related death rates for AI/AN are more than twice that of whites and almost twice that of blacks. (1)
- Among infants less than one year of age, AI/AN have consistently higher total injury death rates than other racial/ethnic populations and the highest rate of motor-vehicle traffic deaths. (2)
- Among AI/AN 19 years and younger, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of injury-related death, followed by suicide, homicide, drowning, and fires. (3)

What are the Major Risk Factors?

- **Low Seat Belt Use**
 - More than 3 out of every 4 (76 %) of passenger vehicle occupants who died in motor vehicle crashes on reservations were unrestrained at the time of the fatal crash. (4)
- **Low Child Safety Seat Use**
 - Though child safety seat use rates for AI/AN communities vary greatly, rates are generally much lower than national rates. In 2008, the national child safety seat use rate for children from

birth to age 7 was 87 percent. In one study of three Northwest tribes, car seat use rate ranged from 12%–21% for children from birth to age 4. (5)

Alcohol Impaired Driving

- AI/AN have a relatively high prevalence of alcohol-impaired driving and the highest alcohol-related motor vehicle mortality rates among racial/ethnic populations. (6,7)
- Among crashes on reservations from 1982 to 2002, an estimated 65 percent were alcohol-related. Nationally, during this same time period, 47 percent of total crashes were alcohol-related. (5)

How Can Injuries Be Prevented?

Proven and effective strategies to reduce motor vehicle crash-related injuries and deaths are well established; these include use of occupant restraints, primary laws, high visibility enforcement, and strict blood alcohol content laws. Although each AI/AN community is politically and culturally unique, effective strategies can be tailored to meet the specific needs of tribes.



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7. Naimi et. al. Alcohol-Attributable Deaths and Years of Potential Life Lost Among American Indians and Alaska Natives – United States, 2001-2005. MMWR 2008;57(34):938-941.





Mission of the Indian Health Service

Injury Prevention Program

Billings Area Indian Health Service

Office of Environmental Health & Engineering

Injury Prevention Program

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Please [click here](#) to visit the Billings Area Indian Health Service website.

Past Newsletters

For Past Issues of the Billings Area IHS Injury Prevention Newsletter, please [click here](#) to be redirected to the National IHS Injury Prevention website's Area Programs webpage.

Billings Area Injury Prevention Newsletter is edited by Darcy Merchant.

THE MISSION OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE IS TO RAISE THE PHYSICAL, MENTAL, SOCIAL, AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH OF AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL.

THE GOAL TO ASSURE THAT COMPREHENSIVE, CULTURALLY ACCEPTABLE PERSONAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TO AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE.

OUR FOUNDATION. TO UPHOLD THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S OBLIGATION TO PROMOTE HEALTH FOR AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES, AND CULTURES AND TO HONOR AND PROTECT THE INHERENT SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF TRIBES.

OUR MISSION:

TO RAISE THE HEALTH STATUS OF AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKAN NATIVES TO THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL BY DECREASING THE INCIDENCE OF SEVERE INJURIES AND DEATH TO THE LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL AND INCREASING THE ABILITY OF TRIBES TO ADDRESS THEIR INJURY PROBLEMS.