

Saved by the Belt

- A Taos Pueblo Family's Story



On the afternoon of April 25, 2006, Ms. Vanessa Maestas, a Taos Pueblo tribal member, brought her three children to the Taos-Picuris Health Center to be fitted for car seats. The three seats that were installed in her car were acquired from a program through Safer New Mexico Now.

Later that same evening, on her way back to Taos from a trip to Jemez Pueblo, Vanessa was involved in a crash on New Mexico Highway 4 near Jemez Springs. Her car left the highway and **rolled 4 times** down an embankment before coming to a stop. All three children were secured in their new car seats and were unharmed. Vanessa, who was eight months pregnant at the time, was wearing her seat belt and sustained only minor bumps and bruises.



Vanessa returned to work a week later and on May 25, 2006, one month after the crash, Vanessa delivered a healthy baby boy.



Vanessa and family - June 2006

Seat belts and car seats save lives! **Always** set a good example for your children by buckling up **every time** you are in the car! For more information on where to obtain a car seat or to find out if your car seat is installed properly, contact Safer New Mexico Now at (505) 332-7707. In the Taos area, contact the Taos-Picuris Service Unit at 758-4224.

