

## **Boost America!** *Talking Points for Mississippi*

### **Mississippi Booster Seat Statistics**

- According to safety experts, all children who have outgrown child safety seats should be properly restrained in booster seats until they are at least 8 years old or 4'9" tall."
  
- A properly installed booster seat should lift a child for safety, better sitting posture and comfort. The seat should raise the child up so that the lap belt fits low and snug across the hips and the shoulder belt fits snug across the middle of the chest.
  
- In Mississippi, **79%** of children ages 4-8 are **not** riding in booster seats when in the family car.
  
- Booster seat awareness and education is needed. In fact, 78% of parents surveyed in Mississippi are misinformed about the proper age for booster seat usage.
  
- Nationally, more than 450 children age 4 to 8 are killed each year, and thousands are injured from riding unprotected or in a booster seat that is not fitted properly.

### **The Solution**

- Ford Motor Company, along with United Way of America, the U.S. Department of Transportation and 25 other safety partners have embarked on the nation's most extensive public/private child passenger safety partnerships ever created.
  
- Local United Ways are working with *Boost America!* to help distribute booster seats to thousands of families that might not otherwise be able to afford these important safety devices.
  
- Ford Motor Company's *Boost America!* campaign has donated just over 500,000 seats thus far.
  
- *Boost America!* is the most comprehensive child safety campaign ever implemented by an auto manufacturer.

### **Boost America Campaign Key Components**

- Nationwide, one million booster seats will be given away.
  
- 500,000 will go to income eligible families pre-screened by United Way, a *Boost America!* partner.
  
- In Mississippi, **10,000** seats will go to families in need.
  
- Ford will provide vouchers for the other 500,000 booster seats to purchasers of Ford Motor Company vehicles. The vouchers are redeemable at Toys "R" Us stores in Mississippi and across the country.

- *Boost America!* will host media events in all 50 states to raise awareness and publicize this issue. **In Mississippi, Governor Musgrove, will participate in a *Boost America!* press event and give away the first official seat to a Mississippi family on December 6th at Mississippi's 2001 Transportation Safety Summit in Jackson.**

### **Specific Giveaway Information**

- The first and largest booster seat giveaway event in Mississippi will be Saturday, December 8, 2001 at the Jackson Medical Mall parking lot from 10 a.m. to noon.
- Families will be screened for eligibility on-site the day of the event.
- To qualify for a booster seat:
  - families **must** bring the child/children who will use the seat(s)
  - the child must weigh between 40 and 80 lbs. And be between 42 and 60 inches tall (child will be weighed and measured)
  - families **must** bring the vehicle in which seat(s) will be used
  - the vehicle must have lap and shoulder belts
- Families can call 352-4357 for more information.

### **Mississippi Partnerships for Boost America!**

- Locally, many partners support the Boost America! campaign.
- Ford Motor Company donated the seats and their local dealers are participating.
- United Way of the Capital Area is managing the giveaway event, pre-screening applicants, and publicizing to families that might be eligible.
- Mississippi Safe Kids Coalition is managing the technical side of the giveaway event, by recruiting qualified technicians to install the seats.
- Mississippi Department of Transportation is hosting the Boost America! press conference/media event during its MS Transportation Safety Summit, to stress the importance of booster seat usage as a safety measure, and also coordinating publicity.