

## **Nation's First Statewide Seatbelt and Booster Seat Education Campaign: Ollie Otter's Child Booster Seat Safety Program**

**Ismet Anitsal**

Tennessee Tech University

**M. Meral Anitsal**

Tennessee Tech University

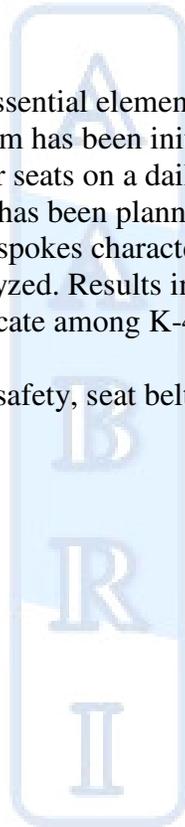
**Kevin Liska**

Tennessee Tech University

### **ABSTRACT**

Booster seats and seat belts are essential elements of children's safety in vehicles. Ollie Otter's Child Booster Seat Safety Program has been initiated to ensure children's and parents' commitment to use seat belts and booster seats on a daily basis. This paper explains the details of booster seat safety campaign and how it has been planned and run. Furthermore, children's responses to the message of campaign's spokes character, Ollie Otter, in the forms of letters and artworks were reported and content analyzed. Results indicated that Ollie Otter has quickly achieved a status of credible safety advocate among K-4 children.

Keywords: booster seat, Ollie Otter, car safety, seat belts



## INTRODUCTION

Motor vehicle collisions kill many children from 4 to 8 in traffic accidents (Table 1, Appendix). Riding unrestrained increases the risk factor for death and injury (Washington State Booster Seat Coalition, 2003). However, only 19 percent of children in that age category are restrained in booster seats (National SAFE KIDS Coalition, 2003). Booster seat usage has been increasing lately (Wall Street Journal, 2004; Glassbrenner and Ye, 2007), still misuse of child restraint systems can amplify a child's injury risk in crash (NHTSA, 2006). Children who do not exceed the requirements of age and weight for booster seat usage should not start using loosely fitting seatbelts designed for adults either (Table 2, Appendix). This precaution will likely to prevent abdominal and spinal-chord injuries as well as face and brain injuries due to misuse of adult seatbelts by children (Wall Street Journal, 2003, CNW Group, 2008). Proper use of booster seat can significantly reduce death and injury risk for children (Baltimore Sun, 2008; CNW Group, 2008). Furthermore, in economic terms, "every dollar spent on a child safety seat saves this country \$32" (National SAFE KIDS Coalition, 2003).

Booster seats are used by children as a transition tool before they are ready to start using adult safety belts, and after they outgrown using convertible seats (National Safety Belt Coalition, 2007). "A booster seat raises your child up so that the safety belt fits right ... The shoulder belt should cross the child's chest and rest snugly on the shoulder, and the lap belt should rest low across the pelvis or hip area – never across the stomach area" (nhtsa.dot.gov, 2007) (Table 3, Appendix).

Does your child need a booster seat? Answers to a set of questions (Table 4, Appendix) such as "Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat?" and "Does the belt cross the shoulder between the neck and arm?" are important before parents can make a decision in booster seat usage. When at least one answer to those questions becomes "no," the child should use a booster seat (SafetyBeltSafe USA), cited in Wollenberg (2002). Beyond the above mentioned decision making process which may seem quite practical to parents in functional sense; parents should also know and obey the laws regarding seatbelt and booster seat use. More than 30 years ago, "Tennessee was the first state in the nation to enact a law making it mandatory for children to be restrained in a safety seat. ... Today, Tennessee is one of only 18 states that currently require children up to the age 8 to be restrained in a booster seat" (Tennessee Department of Safety, 2008). As required by many states currently, "Children under 4'9" tall should ride with a booster seat" (adcouncil.org, 2007), usually from age 4 to 8 (Glassbrenner and Ye, 2007).

To save lives, catastrophic injuries, and economic fallout, there is a current need for a creative, adaptive, and ongoing program in Tennessee that aims to solve the problems of awareness, interests, and the actual proper use of booster seats and seat belts. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to go beyond a one-contact-communication point that communicates the major problem. Instead, a major branding effort to build sustainable relationships among stakeholders is to be implemented. It is also critical to implement a strong media plan with an integrative process. This media plan can increase the frequency level of communication exposure, create a positive impact and generate a constructive outcome among the many targeted stakeholders of the nation's first statewide seatbelt and booster seat education campaign in Tennessee.

Given the societal challenges of deaths and injuries among children in automobile accidents, Ollie Otter seatbelt and booster seat safety program has been initiated as a positive and coordinated statewide educational program in Tennessee. The goal of this program is to help

create awareness, develop interest, and lead action for a greater use of booster seats for children and seat belts ([www.seatbeltvolunteer.org](http://www.seatbeltvolunteer.org), 2009). More importantly, it is often a problem to avoid a short term enthusiastic effort of creating awareness and utilization, which stems from one or two promotional impressions in a short period of time. Consequently, it is essential to continue to find creative marketing and promotional strategies that are sustainable and build effective relationships with the various market targets and the stakeholders of Tennesseans. In sum, a creative and intervention marketing program is a must to lower vehicle occupant injuries and deaths from the lack of child safety seat usage. Greater usage rates must be increased to avoid the human and overwhelming misery of child death and injuries. This project aims build a sustainable and ongoing liaison for an important Tennessee social entrepreneurial venture. The present study introduces the nation's first statewide seatbelt and booster seat education campaign in Tennessee. Specifically, the purpose of this study is three fold: (1) to introduce Ollie Otter's child booster seat safety program, (2) to explore the content of art work drawn by children and (3) evaluate children's messages to Ollie in order to better understand how children interpret the messages they received.

Ollie, the seatbelt safety mascot, and an educated child restraint seat advocate made series of presentations on booster seat safety to students (K-4) in Tennessee's elementary schools. Then children have completed their artworks and messages to Ollie. All the artworks and messages have been posted in the campaign's public website ([www.seatbeltvolunteer.org](http://www.seatbeltvolunteer.org), 2009). The current research draws its qualitative data from this website (Figure 1, Appendix).

### **OLLIE OTTER'S CHILD BOOSTER SEAT SAFETY PROGRAM**

Ollie Otter is Tennessee's booster seat and seatbelt safety mascot. He is the spokes character who has been visiting K-4 schools in Tennessee as a very special guest to help accomplish three major objectives of seatbelt and booster seat education campaign: (1) "to promote the use of booster seats," (2) to "encourage students to wear their seatbelts" and (3) "to raise awareness of roadway construction site safety" (Brewer, 2009). In every school he visits, several volunteers join Ollie Otter. Those volunteers come from the schools being visited (e.g., principal, home room teachers, safety education coordinator), booster seat /seat belt advocates who completed the online education program on the subject, and representatives from Safety Education with Tennessee Highway Patrol.

Seatbelt and booster seat education campaign in Tennessee is mainly sponsored by three organizations: (1) Tennessee Road Builders Association, (2) Governor's Highway Safety Office, and (3) Tennessee Tech University (TTU). Tennessee Tech University's Business Media Center does all strategic and tactical marketing and management activities. TTU Business Media Center trains volunteers via online education programs through Tennessee Board Regents Online Continuing Education program, prepares volunteers to perform as Ollie Otter character, coordinates all volunteer activities and presentations statewide. There are currently 214 volunteer advocates who have already completed the online education program in this seatbelt and booster seat education program as indicated in the campaign's website as of January 24 ([www.seatbeltvolunteer.org](http://www.seatbeltvolunteer.org), 2009). The activities of these advocates are listed and continuously updated in the campaign's website. Examples of such activities conducted by an advocate in the program, Susan Cook, include the following: (a) Wartburg Car Seat Checkpoint, (b) Ollie attended Regional Governor's Highway Safety Office meeting, (c) Ollie attended the Oak Ridge Safety Expo, (d) Ollie attended the Hola! Knoxville Hispanic Heritage Festival, (e) Ollie

attended the "Down Syndrome Awareness Group Buddy Walk, (f) Ollie attended car seat checkpoint in Campbell County at Rainbow Chevrolet, (g) Ollie attended "Halloween in the City," (h) Ollie attended "Union County Health Fair" and "helped measure children to get their correct height and educate parents about the importance of using booster seats until the adult seat belt system fits appropriately" (www.seatbeltvolunteer.org, 2009).

"The fully-costumed Ollie Otter character encourages children to wear their seatbelts and educates them about Tennessee's booster seat law" (Brewer, 2009). Ollie's messages to the students are simple and includes statements such as "Under 4'9", it's Booster Time!" and "Wear Seatbelts, Everyday!" Specifically, while entertaining children, Ollie Otter communicates Tennessee state law on the use of a booster seat: every child who is under 4-feet-9 inches tall or younger than 9 years old should ride with a booster seat. An orange and white construction site barrel is also displayed during Ollie's visits to schools. The purpose of representing Ollie's home is to teach the importance of roadway safety near construction work zones (Brewer, 2009). Ollie says "Wear Seatbelts Everyday!" and distributes a number of items children and schools to reinforce his message. Those include measuring poster, quick setup display, bookmarks, CD-ROM toolkit, newsletter, coffee mugs, window cling, t-shirts, mouse pads and coloring books. Children can enjoy Ollie's Kid's Club (Figure 2, Appendix) (seatbeltvolunteer.org, 2009). Ollie also sings his song, *Ollie the Otter* (John Farrell, 2008), with children to reinforce the importance of booster seat use in children's minds.

## PROGRAM METHOD

Ollie Otter's Year 1 program was predominantly centered on facilitating K-4 classroom presentations by Ollie the Seatbelt safety mascot and an educated child restraint seat advocate in predominantly rural locations with a special effort made to reach out to all 95 Tennessee counties. Ollie Otter's Year 2 program has been continuing state-wide efforts and will reach into all 95 Tennessee counties to cultivate, train, and mobilize individual seatbelt safety advocates for as many of Tennessee's individual 1,156 public elementary schools as possible. *Ollie's Seatbelt and Booster Seat Safety Program* was initiated in Tennessee on October 1, 2007 to help 57,184 children from 2,928 classrooms in 154 schools from K-4 in Tennessee. Ollie Otter, spokes character for the booster seat program, has already impacted over 13 percent of Tennessee's 1,156 elementary schools in its first year as of September 30, 2008 (Brewer 2008).

A core part of our project has been classroom presentations by Ollie and a trained volunteer seatbelt advocate. Each public school has identified an individual to be recognized and trained as their school's "Ollie Otter's Seatbelt Safety Advocate". Online Training has also been developed, tested, and improved during Ollie Otter's Year 1. Training infrastructure has been provided by the project partner, The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) who will continue to offer infrastructure for the online training through the Tennessee Board of Regents Campus Collaborative Program. The Seatbelt Safety Advocate course will be instructed by the Business Media Center at Tennessee Technological University.

Since children from 4 to 8 years of age are one of the major segments being served, the Business Media Center staff and associates have strengthened lesson plan and handouts for teachers to use. Internet infrastructure has been developed to encourage teachers who want to actively participate to send Ollie Otter artwork and letters. During Ollie Otter's Year 1, over 120 teachers sent Ollie mail. Teachers have emphasized that this exercise allows for important

reinforcement of Ollie Otter's message while at the same time developing core student competencies such as writing, drawing, and communicating.

After having fun with Ollie and listening to him about booster seat safety in his school visits, children K-4 created an art work on the topic and delivered their written messages to Ollie. All the artwork and messages to Ollie are displayed on the campaigns website to the public. A sample of 613 pictures drawn by students from kindergarten to 4<sup>th</sup> grade was pulled from the campaign website and content analyzed (Table 5, Appendix).

## RESULTS

Children K-4 responded Ollie's Seatbelt and Booster Seat Safety Program by providing their artworks and messages to Ollie as a reflection of their understanding of Ollie's messages and his presentation on booster seat safety. In terms of the children's messages to Ollie, it seems that they learned a lot of important lessons about use of booster seats, road safety, the law and buckling up. Children comments like "Thank you for the lesson", "You suld allwase bukul up in a car", and "Buckling up can save people's lives" show that Ollie's messages about seatbelt and booster-seat safety are hitting home.

Ollie's message encourages children to remember what to do to be safe since they have been told the right thing to do by Ollie. They can teach to their sisters and brothers to use booster seats. They can teach to their moms and dad to buckle up and slow down when they see orange barrels, too. Children seem to understand consequences of not using seatbelts and booster seats. Ollie told them to remember the price as well. When they need help, they feel they can ask help from Ollie. Additional children's responses to the questions are provided in Table 6, Appendix.

What children highlighted in their written messages to Ollie well corresponds what they communicated in their art work too (Table 6, Appendix). The total sample size for the children's artwork analyzed was 613. Ollie was the dominant piece in children's minds. *Ollie* appeared 82.7 percent of the times in all artwork. Ollie did not appear just because it was cool, but it seems that his message was also so strong. *Seat belt* appeared 51.7 percent of all art work. Children (31.6 percent) need to be *safe* (27.6 percent) while traveling in *car* (24.1 percent). Once they use seatbelt to secure *booster seat* (23.8 percent), they need to tell this to their friends (17.8 percent). Of course everything depends on your *height and age* (15.7 percent). Once you secure yourself, you need to pay attention to *road safety* (15.2 percent) and what is going on around on the road (*orange and white barrels*, etc. 12.7 percent). When you love *ice cream* (7.8 percent), for example, you would love *cool Ollie* (6.5 percent).

## CONCLUSION

The primary target of this campaign was children from K-4 as well as the parents of these children indirectly. As indicated by the content analysis and samples of pictures drawn, Ollie's messages seemed to reach children loud and clear. Children were also willing to share the safety message with their friends, siblings and most importantly their parents. Children, who pay attention to safety precautions and want to wear their seatbelts or think that it is cool to sit on the booster seats, will encourage their parents to pay the same attention to safety of their family.

In order to keep Ollie fresh in minds and reinforce safety messages, other venues besides elementary school education need to be pursued. Attending at regional events in Tennessee is an

important part of the project. Trade shows, health fairs, county fairs, school law seminars, and various school leaders' conferences all allow important visibility for Ollie and his message. Therefore displays have been set up and include posters, promotional brochures, labels, and videos for viewing. Exhibiting at these events allow for senior level program knowledge to support the grassroots efforts.

During Year 1, Ollie the Safety Seatbelt Mascot has already been invited to numerous regional safety events including regional health education events hosted by the Department of Health offices and Department of Safety and Department of Education. We expect that Ollie and his seatbelt safety message will be a frequently requested addition to future state fairs and sporting events. Also, the planned project will include continual participation and promotion of the seat belt safety campaign at the annual national Tennessee Technological University Rural Conference that encourages economic development and community services, where rural government and community leaders attend.

Finally, multiple waves of academic research have been planned and conducted. The objectives of these research activities include the measurement of parents' awareness, interest, attitudes and support towards booster seats, seatbelts and Ollie Otter Campaign. The results of the future research will help to fine-tune the program further.

## REFERENCES

- AdCouncil (2007a), <http://www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=41>, Accessed on 8-23-2007
- AdCouncil (2007b), <http://www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=292>, Accessed on 8-23-2007
- Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (2007), "Booster Seat Law Chart (38 states and DC)," February 24.
- Baltimore Sun (2008), "Backseat Boosterism: Maryland's Booster Seat Law Certain to Save Lives," Baltimore Sun, June 30.
- Brewer, Julie (2008), Personal Interview, September 30.
- Brewer, Julie (2009), Booster Seat Safety Program Held at Minor Hill Elementary: Campaign Features Ollie the Otter Safety Mascot," Press Release, January 16, <http://www.seatbeltvolunteer.org>, Accessed on 1-24-2009.
- CNW Group (2008), "Safe Kids Applauds New Booster Seat Laws to Protect Children," News Provided by Comtex, June 26.
- Durbin, Dennis R.; Michael R. Elliott and Flaura. K. Winston (2003), "Belt-positioning Booster Seats and Reduction in Risk of Injury Among Children in Vehicle Crashes," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 289 (14), 2835-2840.
- Ebel, Beth E.; Thomas D. Koepsell; Elizabeth E. Bennett and Frederick P. Rivara (2003), "Use of Child Booster Seats in Motor Vehicles Following a Community Campaign," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 289, 879-884.
- Ehiri JE; Ejere HOD; Magnussen L; Emusu D; King W and Osberg JS (2006), "Interventions for Promoting Booster Seat Use in Four to Eight Year Olds Traveling in Motor Vehicles (Review)," *Evidence-Based Child Health: A Cochrane Review Journal*, published online in Wiley InterScience, 854-888.
- Farrell, John (2008), "Ollie the Otter" [Official song for Ollie Otter Seatbelt and Booster Seat Safety Program in Tennessee – John Farrell wrote the lyrics and composed the song], Hope River Music, [hoperivermusic@yahoo.com](mailto:hoperivermusic@yahoo.com).

- Higgins, Michelle (2005), "Car Seats for 8-Year-Olds; States Toughen Laws Requiring Kids to Be Restrained in Vehicles; Finding One Your Child Will Use," Wall Street Journal, Eastern Edition, January 27, pg. D1.
- Jacobs G.;Aeron-Thomas A.and Astrop A. (2000), "Estimating the Global Road Fatalities, TRL Report #445, London: Transport Research Laboratory.
- Glassbrenner, Donna and Jianqiang Ye (2007), "Booster Seat Use in 2006," Traffic Safety Facts Research Note, NHTSA's National Center for Statistics and Analysis, August, DOT HS 810 796.
- National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (1999), "Research Update: Booster Seats," <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/research/boosterseat.htm>, Accessed on 8-23-2007.
- National Safety Council, <http://www.nsc.org/traf/sbc.htm> , Accessed on 8-23-2007
- (NHTSA) National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2006), "Traffic Safety Facts Research Note 2005: Misuse of Child Restraints: Results of a Workshop to Review Field Data Results."
- (NHTSA) National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2007), <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/childps/ParentGuide2005/pages/Why.htm> , Accessed on 8-23-2007
- National Safety Belt Coalition (2007), <http://www.nsc.org/traf/sbc/sbcchild.htm> , Accessed on 8-23-2007.
- National SAFE KIDS Coalition (2003).
- Ramirez, Elva (2007), "Reinventing the Wheel: Giving Your Pet a Joyride," Wall Street Journal (Eastern Edition), July 12, pg. B7.
- seatbeltvolunteer.org (2009), <http://www.seatbeltvolunteer.org>, Accessed on 1-24-2009.
- "State by State Booster Seat Legislation" (2008), [http://www.djgusa.com/booster\\_laws/](http://www.djgusa.com/booster_laws/), Accessed on August 11, 2008.
- Tennessee Department of Safety (2008), "Bredesen Celebrates 30 Years of Keeping Children Safe: Anniversary of Nation's First Child Seat Law Commemorated," January 17, <http://www.tennessee.gov/safety/newsreleases/2008/08011730yearsSafe.htm>, Accessed on 11-5-2008.
- Wall Street Journal (1998), "Method of Using Child Booster Seats Divides Experts," Eastern Edition, March 13, pg. 1.
- Wall Street Journal (2004), "Car Child-Restraint Use Rises; Deaths Fall," Eastern Edition, May 3, pg. 1.
- Washington State Booster Seat Coalition (2003), "Quick Facts on Booster Seats," (June).
- Wollenberg, Yvonne Chilik (2002), "Did Those Booster Seats Out of the Garage," Medical Economics, January 11, 79 (1), pg. 15.

**TABLE 1 – BOOSTER SEATS: ESSENTIAL STATISTICAL FIGURES**

<p><b>Who Does Not Use Booster Seats OR Use It Incorrectly</b></p>	<p>According to NHTSA, “Up to 90% of children in the U.S. who should be using booster seat are not” (adcouncil.org 2007a).</p> <p>“Nationally, only 19% of children who should be restrained in booster seats use them” (National SAFE KIDS Coalition 2003).</p> <p>“41 percent of 4- to 7-year old children [in U.S.] were restrained in booster seats in 2006” (Glassbrenner and Ye 2007).</p> <p>“One study found that 72% of nearly 3,500 observed child restraint systems were misused in a way that could be expected to increase a child’s risk of injury a crash” (NHTSA 2006).</p>
<p><b>Increase in Child Restraint Use by Age</b></p>	<p>Five-year-olds: 59% in 2004 from 13% in 1999          Six-year-olds: 34% in 2004 from 4% in 1999          Seven-year-olds restrained in booster seats: 14% in 2004 from 4% in 1999          Eight-year-olds: 9% in 2004 from 0% in 1999          (Wall Street Journal 2004).</p>
<p><b>Motor Vehicle Collisions</b></p>	<p>“In the United States, 1,791 children younger than 15 years were killed and 282,000 were injured as passengers in motor vehicle crashes in 1997” (cdc.gov 1999).</p> <p>“Motor vehicle collisions are the single largest killer for children age 4-8 years” (Washington State Booster Seat Coalition 2003).</p> <p>“Riding unrestrained is the greatest risk factor for death and injury among child passengers” (Washington State Booster Seat Coalition 2003).</p> <p>“Of the children ages 0 to 14 years who were killed in motor vehicle crashes during 2005, nearly half were unrestrained” (NHTSA 2006).</p>
<p><b>What Campaigns We Can Learn From</b></p>	<p>Click or Ticket is the most successful seat belt enforcement campaigns ever, helping create the highest national seat belt usage rate of 82 percent” (adcouncil.org 2007b).</p> <p>“Ollie Otter’s Child Booster Seat Safety Program teaches Tennessee school kids child booster seat laws and regulations for car booster seat requirements in nation’s first statewide seatbelt and booster seat education campaign” (seatbeltvolunteer.org, 2009).</p>

**TABLE 2 – USE OF BOOSTER SEATS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES**

<p><b>Seat Belt Syndrome</b></p>	<p>“Devastating pattern of injuries that can happen to children who are bucked into an ill-fitting seat belt during a crash” (CNW Group 2008).</p> <p>“Seatbelts designed for adults can pose risk to children of abdominal and spinal-chord injuries ... Loosely fitting belts also can lead to injuries to the face and brain sustained when the head strikes the knees or other surfaces” (Wall Street Journal 2003).</p>
<p><b>Child Safety Seat and Beyond</b></p>	<p>“The back seat is generally the safest place in a crash. If your vehicle has a passenger air bag, it is essential for children 12 and under to ride in back” (National Safety Council 2007).</p> <p>“Young children are safer riding in the back seat. But that advice may not be true in ... older cars ... that were built before 1988. ... Those vehicles don’t have airbags, and few have shoulder belts in the back seat” (Wall Street Journal 1998).</p> <p>“The estimated direct annual costs of road traffic crashes are enormous, almost 5% in the USA (Jacobs et al. 2000), cited in Ehiri et al. 2006).</p> <p>“Every dollar spent on a child safety seat saves this country \$32” (National SAFE KIDS Coalition 2003).</p>
<p><b>What Happens During a Collision</b></p>	<p>“Children prematurely moved to seat belts are 4 times more likely to suffer serious head injuries during a collision than children in child safety or booster seats” (adcouncil.org 2007a).</p>
<p><b>Can Booster Seat Protect?</b></p>	<p>“A properly used safety seat or booster reduces the chances of a child being seriously injured or killed in a car crash by more than half” (Baltimore Sun 2008).</p> <p>“The booster seats provide 60 percent more protection than seat belts alone, for children four to nine years old” (CNW Group 2008).</p>
<p><b>What About Pets? Do They Need Booster Seats?</b></p>	<p>“Pets roaming free in cars face the same dangers as passengers who don’t buckle up. There are a number of pet-restraining options, including miniseat belts and harnesses, even booster seats for small dogs” (Ramirez 2007).</p>

**TABLE 3 – BOOSTER SEATS 101**

<b>What Is Booster Seat?</b>	“A booster seat raises your child up so that the safety belt fits right – and can better protect your child. The shoulder belt should cross the child’s chest and rest snugly on the shoulder, and the lap belt should rest low across the pelvis or hip area – never across the stomach area” (nhtsa.dot.gov 2007).
<b>Why to Use Booster Seats</b>	Booster seats are “used as a transition to safety belts by older kids who have clearly outgrown their convertible seat and are not quite ready for the vehicle belt system” (National Safety Belt Coalition 2007).
<b>Who Needs to Use Booster Seats</b>	“Safety belts are designed for adults, and children under 4’9” tall should ride with a booster seat” (adcouncil.org 2007a), usually from age 4 to 8 (Glassbrenner and Ye 2007).
<b>The First Law on Booster Seat</b>	“The first law on booster seat was enacted in 2000 in Washington state. ... That law, which went into effect in 2002, was spurred by the death in 1996 of a 4-year-old Anton Skeen, who was riding in an SUV and strapped in with just an adult seat belt” (Higgins 2005).
<b>Booster Seat Law in TN</b>	Up to age 9, children must be restrained. Up to 60” standing height, children must be restrained. There is a penalty of \$50 and potentially a CRS safety course. Free or low-cost seats are not offered to low-income families. Public transportation vehicles are exempt from booster seat laws. Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (2007)

**TABLE 4 – DOES YOUR CHILD NEED A BOOSTER SEAT?**

“If you answer to any one of the following questions as No, then your child should use a booster seat:”
1. “Does the child sit all the way back against the auto seat?”
2. “Do the child’s knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat?”
3. “Does the belt cross the shoulder between the neck and arm?”
4. “Is the lap belt as low as possible, touching the thighs?”
5. “Can the child stay seated like this for the whole trip?”

Source: SafetyBeltSafe USA, cited in Wollenberg (2002)

**FIGURE 1 – OLLIE OTTER’S CHILD BOOSTER SEAT SAFETY PROGRAM:**



Source: "Ollie Otter's Child Booster Seat Safety Program," <http://www.seatbeltvolunteer.org/>, Accessed on August 11, 2008

**FIGURE 2 – OLLIE’S KIDS CLUB**



Source: "Ollie Otter's Child Booster Seat Safety Program," <http://www.seatbeltvolunteer.org/kids/index.html>, Accessed on August 11, 2008

**FIGURE 3 – SELECTED PICTURE GALLERIES OF OLLIE OTTER’S CHILD BOOSTER SEAT SAFETY PROGRAM, TN**



Spencer Elementary  
Ms. Scott - Grade 3  
(21 images)  
(2007-11-08)



Spencer Elementary  
Mrs. Duncan - Grade 2  
(15 images)  
(2007-11-12)



Spencer Elementary  
Mrs. Hillis - Grade 3  
(22 images)  
(2007-11-12)



Spencer Elementary  
Mrs. Underwood - Grade 3  
(16 images)  
(2007-11-12)



McEwen Elementary  
Mrs. Janna - Grade K  
(16 images)  
(2008-05-27)



McEwen Elementary  
Unknown Teacher - Grade ?  
(14 images)  
(2008-05-23)



McEwen Elementary  
Mrs. Duncan - Grade 1  
(15 images)  
(2008-06-25)



McEwen Elementary  
Mrs. Avery - Grade ?  
(16 images)  
(2008-06-25)

Source: "Ollie Otter's Child Booster Seat Safety Program," <http://www.seatbeltvolunteer.org/>, Accessed on August 11, 2008



**TABLE 5 – CHILDREN’S MESSAGES TO OLLIE**

<b>What It Is:</b>	<b>Children’s Unedited Comments to Ollie the Otter:</b>
<b>Important Lessons:</b> In terms of the children’s messages to Ollie, it seems that they learned a lot of important lessons about use of booster seats, road safety and the law.	Thank you for the lesson. ... The safety tips helped a lot. ... I learned about safety, it’s the law. I learned about road safety. I need to be in a booster seat. ... I can’t ride without a car seat.
<b>Save Your Life.</b> Children said always buckle up to save your life.	Go slow and buckle up. ... Be safe. Buckle up. ... Bucle your setbelt. ... You suld allwase bukul up in a car. ...Buckle up every time you get in a car. ... Buckling up can save people's lives. ...The set belt is saf bekas it will stop you for gowing therow the wendor. I like to be safe all wase sit in the back. ... I lurned to set in the middel so if the car gets hit on the side I mit not get hit as bad.
<b>Ollie Is Cool.</b> Children seem to love Ollie Otter, the mascot, and listen to what he says. Because Ollie is cool. Ollie is BFF (best friends forever). He is fun, too. He is the best otter in the world. Therefore you had better buckle up and use booster seats unless you are 9 or 4’9”.	I love Ollie otter! ... Ollie yor my BFF [Best Friends Forever] forever and you are the coolest in the wrld. I had fun when you came. ... Be safe have fun ... I had fun I wish you would come back. Listen to Ollie advice be safe. ... Be safe with Ollie. ... You aro the best mascot. ... Go Ollie go. ... Your are cool. ... Rocky road ice cream. ... Booster seats and seatbelts, rocky road ice cream, orange and white, you otter buckle up. ... Ollie's favorite things booster seats and seatbelts, food: rocky road ice cream, color: orange and white, state: tennessee, motto: you otter buckle up. ... You must be 9 or 4’9” or in a booster seat. ... Ollie Otter told us to always wear a seat belt also he told us to ride in a car seat.
<b>Use booster seat. You otter buckle up.</b> Because Ollie says so. Ollie teaches you and you teach everyone. Tell your parents the right thing to do: buckle up and ride in a booster seat if you are under 4’9”.	I ride in a booster like you said to. ... If someone is note wering there seatbelt you say you otter buckle up. ... I love your motto you otter buckle up. I do think that buliking up is important, some people think it isnt important but it is. ... Thanks for teaching me that I need to be in a booster. ... If you are under 9 you have to be in a booster seat. ... I have to be in a booster seat because I'm not tall enough. ... Now I can tell my dad it is important to be in a booster if you are under 4ft 9. ... You haft to be 4 ft. 9nch to ride without a booster seat Ollie says so! ...I learned cones at the side of the road means slow down. Buckle up when you are in the car. Ride in a booster seat. Where your other strap around your chest or you will go frontwards.
<b>Teach others to use booster seats.</b> Children can remember what to do to be safe since they have been told the right thing to do by Ollie. They can teach to their sisters and brothers to use booster seats. They can teach to their moms and dad to buckle up and slow down when they see orange barrels, too.	I can always remember to put on my seatbelt since you have tought me so much about seat belts and booster seats and now I can always be safe no matter where I go. ... Put your seatbelt on. Seatbelts always come first. Booster seats first. ... Bukle up or be in a bustuer seat. ... I use my booster seat to keep safe. ... I sit in my booster seat. ... I ride in a booster seat. ... Riding in a buster seat is verey safe for me and my sister. ... I have to ride in a booster seat. My sister has to ride in a seatbelt. My brother has to ride in a booster seat. ... I have always sat in a booster seat. My mom and dad always wear a seatbelt. My sister wears one to. ... I wear a seatbelt all the time even when I am in a booster seat. .... My mom she forgot my babysiter's daughter's booster seat and I said mom where is her booster seat and she said she dose not need one and I said at school they said if your not 4’9 you ride in a booster seat.
<b>Consequences:</b> Children seem to understand consequences of not using seatbelts and booster seats. Ollie told them to remember the price as well.	If you don’t buckel up you will pay the price. ... If you ever crash and you ain't in a booster seat or a seat belt you will get hurt bad. ... Never unbuckle your seatbelt or you could get hurt. ... Next time you can buy me a car seat. ... I hope you help other kids. ... My mom said she's not going to waste money so I'm using my old car seat. Well at least I'm safe.

**TABLE 6 – CONCEPTS USED IN PICTURES DRAWN BY STUDENTS  
FROM KINDERGARTEN TO 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Ollie	507	82.7
Seatbelt	317	51.7
Child	194	31.6
Safe	169	27.6
Car	148	24.1
Booster Seat	146	23.8
Friend	109	17.8
Height/ Age Requirement	96	15.7
Road	93	15.2
Orange/ White	78	12.7
Learning	77	12.6
Trees/ Flowers	59	9.6
Ice cream	48	7.8
Cool	40	6.5
House	27	4.4
Accident	18	2.9
Fun	18	2.9
Rainbow	14	2.3
Cheer	7	1.1
<b>Total Sample Size</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>100.0</b>