



WASHINGTON  
**Traffic Safety**  
COMMISSION

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:**

Angie Ward, WA Traffic Safety Commission, [award@wtsc.wa.gov](mailto:award@wtsc.wa.gov), 360-725-9888  
Cindy Harvey-Benzing, Media Consultant

### **“Buckle Up! Your Family is Waiting for You!” High School Senior Helps Launch Statewide Seat Belt Campaign**

**Lewis County, WA** – What would you do if you knew that some of your friends were carelessly putting themselves at the risk of dying?

When Stanzi Hay, a senior at Asotin High School, conducted an observational survey, she found that nearly nine out of every ten students and adults arrived at school buckled up; but she was concerned about those who weren't. These were her friends and classmates, and she didn't want their loved ones to experience a tragic loss simply due to a negligent decision to drive or ride unbuckled.

“Unsafe behavior behind the wheel is a big deal. The decision to not buckle up while driving kills teens just like me every day across America,” said Hay, reflecting on what drove her to dedicate her senior year to promoting seat belt usage and teen driving safety.

She decided to tackle this issue through the development of a yearlong safe driving campaign. One of the many projects she led this year was a three-week-long seat belt campaign at Asotin High School called, “Buckle Up: Your Family is Waiting for You!” She wanted her peers to understand that the decisions made within a vehicle impact countless others' lives and those of their family members.

The campaign resulted in increased seat belt use among fellow-students, and by the end, 96 percent were arriving to school protected by seat belts.

That's a bit higher than our state seat belt use rate of 95 percent. So for the next few weeks, Hay is taking her message statewide and joining the Washington Traffic Safety Commission to encourage drivers across the state to buckle up every time.

“Your family is waiting for you,” Hay reminds drivers and passengers. “For their sake, buckle up.” After all, Hay points out, “The use of seat belts has saved the lives of nearly 300,000 Americans since 1975.”

Washington law enforcement officers will join the national Click It or Ticket campaign aimed at encouraging everyone to wear their seat belt on every trip. Lewis County law

enforcement agencies will be running extra patrols from May 23 to June 5, 2016, through the coordination of the Lewis County Target Zero Task Force.

These extra patrols are part of Target Zero—striving to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in Washington by 2030. For more information, visit [www.targetzero.com](http://www.targetzero.com). Additional information about the Washington Traffic Safety Commission can be found at [www.wtsc.wa.gov](http://www.wtsc.wa.gov).

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An astounding 95 percent of Washingtonians wear seat belts according to WTSC 2015 annual seat belt survey. This makes Washingtonians some of the best citizens in the nation for buckling up!

Still, each year in Washington about 100 people who were not belted die in crashes.

A seat belt ticket is \$136.

Washington deadly crash data is available by state and county here: <http://wtsc.wa.gov/research-data/quarterly-target-zero-data/>

For journalists on word choice:

A “crash” happens when a vehicle collides with another object. Using the word “accident” assumes it was a bizarre occurrence that no one could have stopped, when in fact the circumstances leading up to 90 percent of car crashes are predictable and preventable. WTSC is seeing and hearing “crash” in the news more often lately and wants to thank those journalists who are already making this insightful choice.