



Royal
Canadian
Mounted
Police

Gendarmerie
royale
du
Canada

Security Classification/Designation
Classification/désignation sécuritaire

Supt. David Roper, Officer in Charge
RCMP "D" Division Support Services Branch
1091 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 3K2

Your File Votre référence

Ms. Valerie Todd, Projects Manager
Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators
2323 St. Laurent Blvd.
Ottawa, ON
K1G 4J8

Our File Notre référence

2007-03-21

CCMTA - Police Partnership Award

The following is an application for the CCMTA Police Partnership Award.

Nominee: Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "D" Division Traffic Services

Representative to accept the Award: Insp. A.F. (Al) O'Donnell, Officer in Charge of "D" Division Traffic Services

Partner: Manitoba Car Seat Coalition

In 2001, "D" Division Traffic Services began partnering with the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition (MCSC) in an effort to reduce the number of injuries and deaths caused by motor vehicle collisions among children. Knowing that the MCSC shares many of their Road Safety Vision 2010 goals, "D" Division Traffic Services has developed, nurtured, and enhanced this relationship by partnering with the MCSC for child car seat checkstops, developing child car seat warning notices, helping to obtain funding, and providing overall support for their cause.

What is the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition?

The Manitoba Car Seat Coalition (MCSC) is a group of volunteers, who through education and public awareness, are dedicated to improving the safety of children traveling in motor vehicles. Formed in the fall of 2001, they are a non-profit, independent group, comprised of individuals from various career backgrounds, and from various regions of Manitoba.

Canada

Members attend a 3-day training course and participate in a 3-year certification process to hold National Certification with St. John's Ambulance as Child Restraint Systems Technicians and/or Instructors.

The Manitoba Car Seat Coalition's major goal is to promote the correct and consistent use of child restraint systems in the province of Manitoba in order to reduce the number of injuries and death caused by motor vehicle collisions. The MCSC educates families on proper child restraint use by providing informational material, as well as "hands-on" education at checkstops, and they promote public awareness on car seat safety via media, legislative assembly members, and community groups.

The MCSC is actively committed toward the lobbying of booster seat legislation in Manitoba, and to educating the public and service providers in the correct use of child restraints. They are also committed to promoting the need for increased penalties to be given to adult drivers who do not comply with Manitoba's current child restraint legislation.

How did this partnership form?

Before the formation of the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition, "D" Division Traffic Services was partnering with Manitoba Public Insurance to conduct car seat inspections at checkstops. By 1999, Manitoba Public Insurance was unable to provide any resources to perform car seat inspections with the RCMP, so "D" Division Traffic Services continued to perform car seat inspections on their own.

In October of 2001, the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition contacted the Gimli RCMP Detachment to request assistance in performing a traffic checkstop, which would involve RCMP Members running a checkstop while MCSC members checked car seats (with or without children) for proper use. Gimli was chosen as the initial location due to its close proximity to "cottage country" and thus increased likelihood to find families traveling with small children.

"D" Division Traffic Services realized that they shared a common Road Safety Vision 2010 goal with the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition - to reduce the number of serious injuries and deaths on our roadways. They also realized the benefits that a group of trained volunteers could offer at a checkstop and began partnering with the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition in 2001. They continue to partner together for approximately 6 to 10 checkstops each year and work together on numerous other activities. The MCSC has recognized the RCMP as their foremost partner and displays photos and testimonials of Traffic Services members on their website.

What do the RCMP and MCSC do at a checkstop?

The RCMP and Manitoba Car Seat Coalition perform two different types of checkstops together: “education-based” checkstops and “penalty-based” checkstops. The majority of checkstops are “education-based”, as the goal of both the RCMP and MCSC is to provide positive public education on proper car seat usage.

“Education-based” checkstops generally take place on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon at a location that is pre-determined by the RCMP Member in charge of the checkstop. Depending on the location, anywhere from 1 to 10 uniformed RCMP Members and 2 to 10 MCSC Members (outfitted in bright orange t-shirts) will be involved. RCMP Members stop every vehicle that comes through the checkstop. If there are children under the age of 12, or if there is an empty car seat, the vehicle is directed into the inspection area where the Child Restraint Systems Technicians perform an inspection for proper use and installation (technicians have a list that details every aspect of the child car seat that should be checked). Pamphlets with detailed descriptions of the four stages of child restraint systems, are handed out to each family. The entire inspection/education process takes approximately 20 minutes and is entirely optional for families to participate in, although the majority of families do participate. Fines are generally not handed out during this type of checkstop, except in circumstances that warrant one. Afterwards, the MCSC provides a results sheet with statistics and a summary of the checkstop.

The second type of checkstop is a “penalty-based” checkstop. These checkstops are organized as regular RCMP impaired driving checkstops. One or two Child Restraint Systems Technicians are invited to participate in the checkstop. The technicians will examine any car seats in vehicles coming through the checkstop. Members will give fines to any adult who does not have a child passenger properly secured in a child restraint system.

How has this relationship been enhanced?

Aside from helping to organize checkstops, the RCMP has helped with two other major initiatives in 2005 and 2006 to help make Manitoba children safer.

In the fall of 2005, the Mounted Police Foundation (a not-for-profit organization that manages the RCMP Licensing Program of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and provides funds to support community activities) made a donation in the amount of \$3000.00 to the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition. “D” Division Traffic Services made this presentation on behalf of the Mounted Police Federation. This grant provided the coalition with both operating funds, as well as funds to purchase car seats for donation to families in need in rural Manitoba. During 2006, when a family participated in a car seat checkstop and they had either no child restraint system or their car seat was found to be out of date, and the family was unable to afford a new car seat, the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition was able to donate one to the family at no cost.

Another initiative between “D” Division Traffic Services and the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition during 2005 and 2006 was the Child Car Seat Warning Notice. Funded by the MCSC, the warning notice was developed upon consultation between the two partners and is similar to a written traffic warning. The Child Car Seat Warning Notice states:

“You are being warned for failing to have a child/ren properly restrained. You are requested to obtain a car seat(s) for your child/ren and produce your vehicle with the car seat(s) installed along with proof of purchase of the car seat(s) and this notice at the _____ RCMP Detachment/Traffic Services Unit, within _____ days to demonstrate that the car seat has been purchased and installed. Failure to comply with this notice within the said time period will result in a charge being laid against you.”

The reverse side of the warning notice lists detailed information on all four types of child restraints, so that parents or care givers are able to make informed decisions on what type of car seat they should be purchasing for their child.

These warning tickets have been handed out by Traffic Services members as opposed to a Common Offence Notice (resulting in a fine). The use of these warning tickets has proven to be a very effective means of educating the public to the dangers of failing to keep children properly restrained and in getting them to take corrective action, as the price of getting a ticket is often substantially more than the cost of purchasing a proper child car seat.

What are the benefits to each partner?

“D” Division Traffic Services is guided by the principles set forth in Road Safety Vision 2010. Road Safety Vision 2010 specifically aims to:

- Raise public awareness of road safety issues
- Improve communication, cooperation and collaboration among road safety agencies
- Enhance enforcement measures
- Improve road safety data quality and collection

The partnership created between “D” Division Traffic Services and the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition addresses all of the main objectives of RSV 2010. Conducting joint car seat checkstops has helped to raise public awareness of issues surrounding child car seat and seatbelt use and demonstrates an excellent example of positive communication, cooperation and collaboration between two agencies concerned with road safety. The development of the Child Car Seat Warning Notice has helped to enhance enforcement measures for the RCMP, and is another example of positive cooperation between road safety agencies.

With regard to improved road safety data quality and collection, the data reports produced by the MCSC from the checkstops have been provided to and used by the International Injury and Prevention Group at their world conferences. In fact, the “D” Division Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Manitoba Car Seat Coalition were recognized at the last world conference for their efforts.

Canada’s goal is to have the safest roads in the world by 2010, by making an effort to decrease the average number of road users killed or seriously injured in motor vehicle collisions by 30%. Two of the sub-targets to reach this goal are directly supported by the partnership between “D” Division Traffic Services and the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition:

- A minimum seat belt wearing rate of 95% and proper use of child restraints by all motor vehicle occupants; and
- A 40% decrease in the number of unbelted fatally or seriously injured occupants (this includes children)

Besides supporting the objectives of Road Safety Vision 2010, Traffic Services and the MCSC benefit in the additional following ways:

- By partnering with “D” Division Traffic Services, the MCSC is able to conduct child car seat checkstops. They would be otherwise unable to do this without police assistance.
- The support of the MCSC allows Traffic Services to have additional resources (people) when conducting checkstops.
- Trained technicians from the MCSC bring additional knowledge on proper child restraint use to the checkstops.
- Educational checkstops, Child Car Seat Warning Notices, and the donation of car seats to families in need all bring positive public attention to both partners.
- The partnership has helped to raise awareness of issues surrounding child car seat use - an issue that is important to both partners.

One of the additional benefits of this partnership is that the success can be measured empirically. Each year, checkstops are conducted in many of the same locations as previous years. Results are compared each year to check if child car seat use is improving. These numbers also help support any arguments for legislation change, as well as provide information on areas that should be targeted for this type of enforcement. The MCSC is able to break down and identify individual problems (i.e. Not tethering the top of an upright child car seat is a common problem in most areas). They have also been able to show vast improvements in child car seat use in areas such as Selkirk and Morris, where car seat inspections are performed regularly. This data gives positive reinforcement that the partnership between “D” Division Traffic Services and the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition is producing positive results.

“D” Division Traffic Services has demonstrated a sustained, significant partnership development with the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition. This strategic partnership has been further nurtured and enhanced through the work put into the checkstops, as well as through the development of the Child Car Seat Warning Notice and donation of car seats to families in need. The main reason Traffic Services patrols the roadways is to save lives and prevent injuries, and this is exactly what the Manitoba Car Seat Coalition is attempting to achieve in their efforts. This partnership is beneficial not only to the RCMP, but to the public we serve.

For any further information or clarification, please feel free to contact me at: (204) 983-7812.

Sincerely,

Supt. D.B. (David) Roper
Officer in Charge
RCMP “D” Division Support Services