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## **Press Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Texas Safety Project Program Manager Named 2013 Child Passenger Safety Instructor of the Year**

The National Child Passenger Safety Board is pleased to honor Bev Kellner, Program Manager of the Texas A&M Passenger Safety Project, as the 2013 Child Passenger Safety Instructor of the Year. Kellner, originally from Massachusetts, has been a nationally certified CPS Technician since 1999 and a CPS Technician Instructor since 2002. She has worked with the Passenger Safety Project since 1996, where she discovered her passion for child passenger safety.

Since 1999 the project has checked more than 20,000 seats, and 99 percent have had some element of misuse. The project also provides online transportation safety training for child care providers. Courses have been completed by almost 22,000 child care providers since 2009. Kellner believes this outreach to child care providers is a special aspect of their program.

“Parents don’t realize the dangers involved even in low speed crashes. They think that if they are just going around the corner, that they don’t need to worry about their seat being installed correctly. We always let them know that most crashes occur close to home,” said Kellner. “Protect your children on every trip!”

Child passenger safety is one of the nation’s most significant injury prevention initiatives, as car crashes are the leading cause of injury and death for young children. In 2011, there were 274 occupant fatalities among children younger than 4 years old. Of the 274 fatalities for which restraint was known, 30 percent were totally unrestrained.

Kellner has a background in economics and desktop publishing. She began at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in 1996 to work on the Passenger Safety Project to assist with the design of their website and resources. In 1999 she had “caught the child

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passenger safety bug” and became a technician. In 2002, she went on to become an instructor.

Kellner said, “Seeing the good work that my department was doing in helping parents keep their children safe, it was hard to resist joining in as a technician. I saw parents hugging techs in the parking lot because of how grateful they were for the help. Sometimes parents – even dads – were in tears when they found out that they had not been transporting their children safely. It was easy to see that all parents wanted to keep their children safe, but doing so was complicated and they needed help!”

Kellner travels throughout the state of Texas. She says “No community is too small. Everywhere we go, parents are so thankful for the assistance with their child safety seats. We have an incredible team of technicians and instructors on our Passenger Safety Project. None of our accomplishments would be possible without teamwork!”

In addition to this award, the Passenger Safety Team was awarded an Extension Superior Service Award in 1999, and Kellner was recognized by the Extension in 2006 for her work on the Passenger Safety Team. Most recently, the Passenger Safety Project was recognized in the 2012 Texas Highway Traffic Safety Plan for Best Practice.

This program checks approximately 2,000 car seats every year, including inspections at checkup events and sponsored fitting stations and individual appointments around the state. Typically, 30 to 40 events are conducted each year.

The National Child Passenger Safety Board awarded Kellner with the third annual Child Passenger Safety Instructor of the Year Award at the Lifesavers Conference in Denver, Colorado on April 13, 2013.

NHTSA [estimates](#) that child restraints saved 263 lives in 2011 among children younger than 5, and an estimated 9,867 lives have been saved by child restraints since 1975. For more information about the CPS Instructor and Technician of the Year Awards and past award recipients, visit [cpsboard.org](http://cpsboard.org).

### **About the National Child Passenger Safety Board**

The [National Child Passenger Safety Board](#) is a collaborative voice providing guidance for the safe transportation of children and ensuring the integrity of the child passenger safety training and certification program. The 22-member Board brings together medical, public health and injury prevention professionals, law enforcement, auto and car seat manufacturers, as well as representatives from our nation’s most respected traffic safety organizations such as the National Safety Council and AAA. It works collaboratively with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and with the Safe Kids Worldwide CPS Certification Program to provide insight from their respective organizations on the CPS technician training and certification program.

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