



NATIONAL  
**CHILD PASSENGER  
SAFETY BOARD**

A program managed by the National Safety Council

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rear facing • forward facing • booster seat • seat belts

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**Claudia Summers Receives Child Passenger Safety Instructor of the Year Award**  
*North Carolina resident distinguishes herself with work in and out of the classroom*

ITASCA, IL – She was “voluntold” to get involved in child passenger safety. She experienced her first “aha” moment within the first hour of her first training course.

Claudia Summers was raising two boys. They were 3 and 1 at the time. “I realized if I wasn’t doing what was best for my children, then there were a lot of other caregivers in the same boat,” she said.

Fast forward to today.

Summers, a resident of Waxhaw, N.C., is one of two recipients of the National Child Passenger Safety Instructor of the Year award, presented by the [National Child Passenger Safety Board](#). The award is sponsored by [Toyota Motor North America](#).

She has experienced a number of “aha” moments since first becoming a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician and later a CPS Instructor nearly 20 years ago. In 2022, she served as the lead instructor for nearly half of the certification classes in North Carolina and assisted in the management of the state’s CPS program. She was selected not only for her leadership but also because she:

- Worked with Technician Proxies to prepare them for car seat sign-offs
- Helped North Carolina maintain a Technician recertification rate of near 70%
- Promoted and managed a CPS diversion program that enabled individuals who violated state child passenger safety laws to receive education from a Technician

“A strong lead instructor sets the tone for a successful class,” National Child Passenger Safety Board Chair Jennifer Pelky said. “Claudia makes sure class policies and procedures are followed. She sees to it that the curriculum is taught as intended. But the thing that really sets her apart is how she mentors fellow instructors and students.”

Summers often takes her work outside the classroom to meet with Technicians and caregivers. One such interaction remains etched in her memory. She taught a mom she met in a big-box store how to properly install her rear-facing car seat in the parking lot.

“At the car, she worked through a few issues and she eventually installed her daughter’s car seat correctly,” Summers remembers. “She crawled out of her vehicle’s back seat with tears in her eyes. Thinking she was hurt, I made a joke about how difficult it is to work in small spaces. She laughed and said, ‘No, I’m just so thankful you were here. I have worried about my daughter’s car seat since Day 1 but didn’t know who to ask.’ I felt fortunate to have crossed her path that day.”

Summers helped build a Safe Kids Coalition when she lived in western North Carolina. Her ability to adapt her teaching methods enabled her to reach people from all walks during her time as a community risk reduction specialist. She served a diverse constituency spread over 23 counties, including four military bases. More recently, she has joined the National Safety Council as a program manager in charge of online learning and child passenger safety outreach.

Summers now lives with her husband, Jason, in the suburbs of Charlotte. She enjoys traveling, hiking and spending time at the beach.

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

The National Child Passenger Safety Board’s mission is to save lives and prevent injuries by promoting child passenger safety through education, mentorship, engagement and innovation. The Board’s work is managed by the National Safety Council. For more information about child passenger safety or the National CPS Board, please visit the Board’s website at [www.cpsboard.org](http://www.cpsboard.org)