

NATIONAL
**Child Passenger
Safety** BOARD
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Janet Werst Named to National Child Passenger Safety Board

South Carolina Safety Advocate Brings Decades of CPS Leadership to New Role

ITASCA, IL – The National Child Passenger Safety Board is proud to announce the selection of new member Janet Werst.

Werst, an Injury Prevention and Outreach Coordinator at Grand Strand Medical Center in Myrtle Beach, S.C., will serve the Board as a Child Passenger Safety Advocate Representative. She assumes a role filled by Liz Perez from May 2023 to May 2026.

At Grand Strand Medical, Werst views her job as one of putting trauma out of business.

“I implement evidence-based programming to try to keep people out of the hospital from injuries,” she said. “Falls and motor vehicle crashes are the top two trauma admissions for all ages in our area.”

“We’re excited to work with Janet,” Board Chair Kristel Robison said. “She brings experience and passion for child passenger safety that dates from when her own children were infants riding in car seats. She is experienced in a wide variety of injury prevention topics and well-suited to helping us advance our mission.”

Commitment Rooted in Personal Experience

Werst’s dedication to child passenger safety began more than two decades ago. Pregnant with her second child – now 22 – she was living in Colorado when members of a local Safe Kids coalition approached her about becoming a Child Passenger Safety Technician.

While she recognized the importance of transportation safety, a hands-on car seat check proved eye-opening.

“When we checked my older daughter’s car seat and found I had installed it incorrectly, I was mortified,” Werst said. “I realized if I didn’t know what I didn’t know, there were many other parents who were probably in the same boat.”

Motivated to make a difference, Werst quickly became the Safe Kids Coordinator's right-hand and went on to become a CPST Instructor. For more than six years, she taught with a Colorado-based team, training hundreds of firefighters, law enforcement officers, hospital staff members, parents and caregivers. During that time, she also:

- Implemented Colorado's first car seat consultation service on a mother-baby hospital unit, providing education to new parents before a child's first ride home
- Was named Colorado CPS Instructor of the Year in 2013

Continuing Leadership

After relocating to South Carolina in December 2023, Werst joined the Grand Strand Medical Center team, renewed her Instructor certification and began teaching with the Safe Kids South Carolina CPS team.

Her impact was quickly recognized. In 2024, Werst was named HCA Injury Prevention Rookie of the Year for her work mentoring new Instructors, training Technicians and educating parents and caregivers.

A brief list of her contributions looks like this:

- Serving on the Safe Kids South Carolina CPS Coalition and helping plan and deliver Instructor development activities and the annual South Carolina CPS Summit
- Presenting nationally on injury prevention, coalition building and evaluation at conferences such as Lifesavers and Safe States
- Completing training in Safe Transportation for All Children

Family and Fun

Originally from Dayton, Ohio, Werst and her husband, Brian, moved to Colorado in 1998, where they embraced outdoor pursuits including skiing, hiking, dogsledding, snowmobiling and snowshoeing. Today, they travel at every opportunity and have visited more than 17 countries.

Their daughters, Gabrielle, 24, and Kaya, 22, have grown and flown the coop. Brian enjoys golf, while Janet prefers time at the beach.

Werst also dedicates her time to volunteer service, supporting three Kiwanis Clubs, serving on the American Red Cross Board of Directors as a disaster volunteer and volunteering with two kitten rescue organizations.

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 works with key partners, including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Safety Council and Safe Kids Worldwide. For more information about child passenger safety or the National CPS Board, please visit the Board's website: cpsboard.org