

NATIONAL
**Child Passenger
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Renée St. Louis Joins National Child Passenger Safety Board

UMTRI Researcher Brings More Than Two Decades of Expertise to the Fold

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

St. Louis, an assistant research scientist and head of the Behavioral Sciences Group at the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI), will serve as the Board's Public Health and Research Representative. She steps into a role previously held by Kristel Robison, the current Board Chair.

St. Louis, in her role at UMTRI, leads interdisciplinary research focused on human behavior, safety and mobility, with an emphasis on occupant protection, child passenger safety and the real-world application of transportation policies and technologies. She has been actively engaged in child passenger safety for more than two decades.

"We're thrilled to bring Renée into our ranks and look forward to working with her on a variety of Board projects," Robison said. "This work includes regular updates to the Child Passenger Safety Technician Certification Training, a standardized curriculum that continues to evolve to reflect principles of adult learning and evidence-based guidelines for the correct use of car seats, booster seats and seat belts."

Career Grounded in Research and Evaluation

In 2004, St. Louis conducted her first study of child restraint use in Michigan. Since then, she has participated in numerous studies examining child passenger safety across the age spectrum – from newborns to teens – with a particular focus on evaluating programs and policies designed to improve safety outcomes.

In 2012, while completing her Master of Public Health degree at the University of Michigan, she was accepted as an intern at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital and became certified as a Child Passenger Safety Technician.

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“Up to that point, my experience had been primarily on the research side,” St. Louis said. “Engaging directly with families and community members and seeing the impact brought a new and meaningful perspective to my work. From that point, I was hooked.”

Bridging Research, Practice and Equity

In 2017, St. Louis became a CPST-Instructor and has remained actively involved in training and supporting others in the child passenger safety field. Her work spans both community-facing practice and systems-level research, including:

- Training and mentoring CPS Technicians and Instructors
- Meeting hundreds of families through car seat check events and community programs
- Leading research to inform policies and evidence-based best practices

“My passion for child passenger safety is grounded in a commitment to equity and systems-level change,” St. Louis said. “I’ve worked extensively with populations facing barriers to safety resources, including underserved families, rural community members and non-English speaking populations. My approach emphasizes community engagement and the application of systems-thinking to ensure all families have access to tools and knowledge to keep children safe.”

Beyond the Research Lab

St. Louis lives in Pittsfield Township, Mich., with her partner, Carl, and their black cat, Little Penny. When she is not at work, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling and attending live music performances. She earned her PhD from the Monash University Accident Research Centre in Melbourne, Australia.

St. Louis reflects on her years in Australia as a formative period. She playfully adds: “I’m still searching for a cup of coffee that lives up to the lattes I had every day while living there.”

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