

Ollie Otter Booster Seat & Seat Belt Safety Program



It's not every day that you get to meet a six-foot tall river otter. Around the BusinessMedia Center, it's a common occurrence. The center has redefined safety education through the Ollie Otter Booster Seat and Seat Belt Safety Program. The center has over 20 years of marketing experience that was all cultivated to bring this program to life. Through intricate detailing, flawless planning, and trailblazing marketing techniques, Ollie the Otter has visited over 500,000 elementary-school children in the state of Tennessee. With its continued success, the program has crossed state borders.

The program started when Carol Coleman, chairman of the Tennessee Transportation Development Foundation, felt a strong drive to make Tennessee's beautiful roads the safest in the nation. The BMC marketing analysis identified that an educational campaign targeted at elementary-age students would help them to develop good decision-making skills that would remain with them as they turned into drivers themselves.

"The BMC was chosen for this campaign because of their proven track record of implementing and marketing other

high-visibility programs, like Dolly Parton's Imagination Library," said Coleman.

The BusinessMedia Center has taken marketing to the next level with its work on the Ollie Otter program. Bringing together a comprehensive content management system, a newly redesigned website, a sophisticated print material campaign, and classic email marketing, the center is able to maintain this statewide program.

"Tennessee Tech University BusinessMedia is truly helping to make children, parents, and grandparents aware of the importance of booster and seat belt usage. Ollie not only has been to all 95 counties but is getting requests to go nationwide. God has been so good to put people in my life that want to give back, and I have never seen more of that than at Tennessee Tech and the BusinessMedia Center. I am so thankful to each and every one that has given so much and asked for so little in return. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."
— Carol Coleman, chairman of the Tennessee Transportation Development Foundation



"We are able to maximize our potential through our commitment to utilize resources to their fullest. We don't just meet objectives, we exceed them," said Julie Brewer, program manager. "In this case, our commitment has been documented as saving lives.

"I am proud of all the different aspects of education that we have incorporated into the program. We now have service learning opportunities so high-school and college-age students can volunteer with the program. As we receive letters and artwork from the children we visit, we are seeing that days or weeks after we've left the school they are still able to illustrate what was taught to them by drawing a seat belt, or a road barrel, or writing "Under 4'9" - Booster Time!"

Testimonials from area communities prove that the program is having a positive effect, and booster-seat usage across the state of Tennessee has increased from 15 to 42 percent since the program's launch. The program is conducted by a citizen army – now over 800 volunteers strong. *"No program has done so much, so fast, with so little,"* said Kendell Poole, director, Governor's Highway Safety Office.

Aspects of the program have been chronicled in five published academic journal articles. The website was a recipient of the Nonprofit Bronze Horizon Award. The program also received the Director's Award from the Tennessee Governor's Highway Safety Office and the American Road & Transportation Builders Association National Award for Private Outreach.



www.seatbeltvolunteer.org



"A quick search of 'booster seat education' on Google is a testament to one of the BMC's core competencies – search engine optimization. Today's Internet makes this lifesaving project accessible nationwide, and several states are being motivated to adopt spin-off campaigns," said Kevin Liska, BMC director.

Ollie Otter Alex Cassetty Scholarship

Carol Coleman was one person with a dream to make a difference after her family was affected by the loss of their loved one. Along with her husband, Johnny Coleman, Carol honored the memory of her nephew by creating a scholarship in his name through the College of Business at Tennessee Tech University. Each semester, one student is awarded the Alex Cassetty Scholarship and in return receives an opportunity to work for the Ollie Otter program at the BusinessMedia Center to make a difference in the lives of children.



Ollie Otter Sharing the Booster Seat & Seat Belt Safety Message With More Than 100,000 Children Each Year

