

# PARTNERSHIP ALERT (2026-2027)

Applicant Region: North America

Apply through May 25, 2026, 8:00 p.m. ET



## Executive Summary

### About Buckle Up for Life:

Buckle Up for Life is an international child passenger safety education program, created in 2004 by Cincinnati Children's and Toyota to empower all people to buckle up and go safely—one family, one car seat, one lesson at a time.

### Opportunities:

Buckle Up for Life is accepting applications throughout North America for two flagship opportunities, to help reduce the risk of motor vehicle-related injury and death during the 2026-2027 program year, as summarized in the table, below, and as described in further detail on the following pages.

	Community Grant	Gift of Safety
<b>Key Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$20,000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50 Free Convertible Car Seats</li> </ul>
<b>Key Deliverables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute at least 150 car seats, for free, with education and installation assistance, to families in need</li> <li>Educate at least 225 people on child passenger safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute all 50 car seats, for free, with education and installation assistance, to families in need</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rolling/Real-Time Reporting</li> <li>Mid-Year Report</li> <li>Final Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rolling/Real-Time Reporting</li> </ul>
<b>General Eligibility*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must operate in North America, anywhere <b>except</b> the following eight (8) counties that comprise the Cincinnati Children's primary service area: Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, or Warren counties in Ohio; Boone, Campbell, or Kenton counties in Kentucky; or Dearborn County in Indiana.</li> <li>Must be one of the following, operating under its own unique EIN/TIN or equivalent:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>501(c)(3) or 509(a).</li> <li>Public service agency or governmental entity (E.g., fire/police department, local health department, public school, Etc.) and, as such, is tax-exempt under Section 115(1) of the IRS Code.</li> <li>Tribal nation that is a sovereign government recognized by the United States under federal law and is treated as a state for certain tax purposes under Section 7871 of the IRS Code.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Must have at least one certified child passenger safety technician (CPST) on staff, at the time of application.</li> <li>Must serve families in the community. <i>Buckle Up for Life does not fund or resource hospital-based in-patient programs.</i></li> <li>Must not apply on behalf of a coalition that does not operate under its own unique EIN/TIN. <i>Organizations who manage local safety coalition chapters (E.g., Safe Kids, Injury Free, Etc.) should apply on their own organization's behalf.</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Program Period</b>	August 1, 2026 – July 31, 2027	
<b>Application Period</b>	April 20, 2026 – May 25, 2026 (8:00 p.m. ET)	
<b>How to Apply</b>	<p>First, complete a Buckle Up for Life <i>Partner Registration</i> (<a href="http://www.buckleupforlife.org/register">www.buckleupforlife.org/register</a>) for your organization. This one-time registration comes with free, optional benefits, and has no associated obligations.</p> <p><i>After you have registered, you may proceed to our Common Partnership Application</i> (<a href="http://www.buckleupforlife.org/apply">www.buckleupforlife.org/apply</a>) during the submission period, to apply for either opportunity (or both), based on interest and eligibility.</p> <p>Please visit <a href="http://www.buckleupforlife.org/become-a-partner">www.buckleupforlife.org/become-a-partner</a> to learn more about our partnerships.</p>	
<b>Review &amp; Notification</b>	<p>All organizations will be considered for each opportunity for which they apply, and each will be assessed for best fit. <i>Note that an organization cannot be simultaneously awarded both partnerships during the same program year.</i></p> <p>Applicants that are not offered a <i>Community Grant</i> or <i>Gift of Safety</i> partnership may still take advantage of the limited free benefits awarded to all Buckle Up for Life <i>Registered Partners</i>.</p> <p>Notifications will be sent to all applicants, via email, on or around July 1, 2026.</p>	

*Note: Buckle Up for Life partnerships are designed as community interventions and have been exempted by the Institutional Review Board at Cincinnati Children's. Neither Cincinnati Children's nor Toyota provide liability insurance coverage for Buckle Up for Life partners and affiliates.*



## Program Period:

August 1, 2026 – July 31, 2027

## Overview:

Buckle Up for Life's *Community Grant* is a highly competitive opportunity that provides seasoned child passenger safety programs across North America with financial support to either sustain or grow their community-based programs. While there are limits on certain spending categories, budgets are generally flexible and are applicant designed and proposed.

Buckle Up for Life aims to provide up to twenty (20) *Community Grants* during the 2026-2027 program year, as prime award funding allows.

## Eligibility:

To qualify, *Community Grant* applicants:

- Must operate in North America, anywhere **except** the following eight (8) counties that comprise the Cincinnati Children's primary service area: Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, or Warren counties in Ohio; Boone, Campbell, or Kenton counties in Kentucky; or Dearborn County in Indiana.
- Must be one of the following, operating under its own unique EIN/TIN or equivalent:
  - 501(c)(3) or 509(a).
  - Public service agency or governmental entity (e.g., fire/police department, local health department, public school, etc.) and, as such, is tax-exempt under Section 115(1) of the IRS Code.
  - Tribal nation that is a sovereign government recognized by the United States under federal law and is treated as a state for certain tax purposes under Section 7871 of the IRS Code.
- Must have a pre-existing child passenger safety program, with intent to sustain or expand. Note: organizations aiming to launch a new child passenger safety program should instead consider applying for *Gift of Safety*.
- Must have at least one certified child passenger safety technician (CPST) on staff at the time of application.
- Must serve families in the community. *Buckle Up for Life does not fund or resource hospital-based in-patient programs.*
- Must not already be in their second year of consecutive *Community Grant* funding. After two consecutive years, organizations must wait one year before applying again. During the interim, they may still apply for *Gift of Safety* and/or other Buckle Up for Life partnerships.
- Must not apply on behalf of a coalition that does not operate under its own unique EIN/TIN. *Organizations who manage local safety coalition chapters (E.g., Safe Kids, Injury Free, Etc.) should apply on their own organization's behalf.*
- Must have organizational capacity (self-attestation) to meet all deliverables and reporting expectations.

## Partner Benefits:

Each *Community Grant* partner will receive \$20,000.

*Community Grant* partners also receive program training and support, and access to online tools (including an optional, personalized *Virtual Safety Station* microsite), as well as Buckle Up for Life's educational resources and curricula.

Additionally, *Community Grant* partners will have access to Buckle Up for Life's online Swag Shop where they can select a limited supply of branded materials (E.g., tablecloths, banners, safety vests, jackets, shirts, giveaways, literature, Etc.) to enhance their program. These items are provided in-kind and are not paid from grant funds.

*Note: No in-kind car seats are provided directly to Community Grant partners. Car seats to be distributed, and credited toward program deliverables must be purchased by the grantee, using grant funds.*

## Budget:

Applying institutions must submit a budget with their application, to be approved by Buckle Up for Life. Acceptable program expenditures include salary support, supplies, marketing, and administrative costs. *Note that some budget sections, including salary and administrative costs are each capped at 25% (\$5000) of the total grant amount.*

Budget instructions must be followed exactly and fully to avoid application disqualification. See full budget instructions and access budget template by visiting [www.buckleupforlife.org/apply](http://www.buckleupforlife.org/apply).

## Minimum Expectations:

*Community Grant* partners are expected to meet and report the following deliverables:

- Distribute at least 150 car seats, for free, with education and installation assistance, to families in need
- Educate at least 225 people on child passenger safety



Ideal grant partners will surpass these minimums, by providing multiple educational sessions and outreach opportunities to serve as many people as possible, in accordance with the guidelines outlined below.

**Car Seat Distribution Guidelines:**

- Car seats should be purchased directly by the grantee using subaward funding.
- Buckle Up for Life does not mandate make, model, or type of car seats to be distributed; grantees should consider cost, value, and expected output goals when purchasing seats.
- Car seats may be distributed at the organization's discretion—although the focus should be on at-risk populations. Each partner may assess and determine local need.
- Car seats must be installed with the assistance of a CPST.
- Car seats provided by Buckle Up for Life must be given away to selected families for FREE. Partners may not sell or solicit donations for Buckle Up for Life-funded car seats.

**Child Passenger Safety Education Guidelines:**

- Reported totals should only reflect the true number of individuals that received high-quality passenger safety education, provided by a CPST. *Only include meaningful interactions like classroom instruction, demonstrations, or carside assistance. Do not include activities like handing out fliers at a health fair. Do not include social media likes or website clicks, Etc.*
- As a resource, Buckle Up for Life provides the curricula and supporting materials necessary for a CPST to deliver age-appropriate education as follows:
  - Children: seat belts, where to sit in a car, and proper passenger behavior.
  - Teens: crash dynamics, seat belts, and sound decision-making.
  - Adults: crash dynamics, seat belts, distracted driving, and child-passenger safety.
- Education can be provided in-person or virtually; and in any language as needed to accommodate the learner(s).

*Community Grant* partners are also expected to fully participate in brief, monthly status calls with Buckle Up for Life, as well as all-partner, quarterly webinars.

**Reporting:**

*Community Grant* partners will submit regular reports to Buckle Up for Life summarizing their outputs and finances in real time throughout the program year. Mid-Year and/or Year-End Reports; and/or Action Plans may also be required.

**How to Apply:**

First, complete a Buckle Up for Life *Partner Registration* for your organization ([www.buckleupforlife.org/register](http://www.buckleupforlife.org/register)). This one-time registration comes with free, optional benefits, and has no associated obligations.

*After you have registered*, you may proceed to our *Common Partnership Application* ([www.buckleupforlife.org/apply](http://www.buckleupforlife.org/apply)) during the submission period. The smart, web-based application utilizes branching logic questioning to route applicants to relevant sections based on each organization's eligibility and interest.

All applicants will be assessed and considered for each opportunity for which they apply.

Please visit [www.buckleupforlife.org/become-a-partner](http://www.buckleupforlife.org/become-a-partner) to learn more about our partnerships.

**Notification and Acceptance:**

Notifications will be sent to all applicants, via email, on or around July 1, 2026.

If conditionally offered a *Community Grant* partnership, that offer may be contingent upon additional steps, up to and including successful and timely completion of additional forms and complete execution of a standard, non-negotiable sub-award contract between your institution and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center—which requires certain terms, including liability coverage, to be met. No revisions or changes to the standard subaward contract can be accepted. Actual availability and disbursement of funds may also depend on availability of funding from the prime award sponsor, as well as other factors, which can change. Prior to actual funding, any preliminary offer may be rescinded at any time and for any reason.

**Orientation:**

Buckle Up for Life *Community Grant Partner Orientation* will be offered virtually in late summer 2026.

Attendance is mandatory. Only one person from each partner organization is required to attend, but there is no limit to how many additional team members can join.



## Program Period:

August 1, 2026 – July 31, 2027

## Overview:

Buckle Up for Life's *Gift of Safety* is a highly competitive opportunity that provides both new and seasoned child passenger safety programs across North America with free car seats and access to Buckle Up for Life educational resources.

Buckle Up for Life aims to provide up to sixty (60) *Gift of Safety* partnerships during the 2026-2027 program year, as prime award funding allows.

## Eligibility:

To qualify, *Gift of Safety* applicants:

- Must operate in North America, anywhere **except** the following eight (8) counties that comprise the Cincinnati Children's primary service area: Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, or Warren counties in Ohio; Boone, Campbell, or Kenton counties in Kentucky; or Dearborn County in Indiana.
- Must be one of the following, operating under its own unique EIN/TIN or equivalent:
  - 501(c)(3) or 509(a).
  - Public service agency or governmental entity (e.g., fire/police department, local health department, public school, etc.) and, as such, is tax-exempt under Section 115(1) of the IRS Code.
  - Tribal nation that is a sovereign government recognized by the United States under federal law and is treated as a state for certain tax purposes under Section 7871 of the IRS Code.
- Must also have a pre-existing child passenger safety program, with intent to sustain or expand; or, must have an intention to leverage the *Gift of Safety* partnership to help launch a new child passenger safety program.
- Must have at least one certified child passenger safety technician (CPST) on staff at the time of application.
- Must serve families in the community. *Buckle Up for Life does not fund or resource hospital-based in-patient programs.*
- Must not apply on behalf of a coalition that does not operate under its own unique EIN/TIN. *Organizations who manage local safety coalition chapters (E.g., Safe Kids, Injury Free, Etc.) should apply on their own organization's behalf.*
- Must have organizational capacity (self-attestation) to meet all deliverables and reporting expectations.

## Partner Benefits:

Each *Gift of Safety* partner will receive a direct shipment of 50 convertible car seats (shipping and handling included), in-kind.

*Gift of Safety* partners also receive program training and support, and access to online resources (including an optional, personalized *Virtual Safety Station* microsite), as well as Buckle Up for Life's educational tools and curricula.

*Note: No direct funding is provided to *Gift of Safety* partners.*

## Minimum Expectations:

*Gift of Safety* partners are expected to meet and report the following deliverables:

- Distribute at least 50 car seats, for free, with installation assistance, to families in need
- Educate every family that receives a Buckle up for Life car seat on child passenger safety

*Gift of Safety* partners must adhere to the guidelines outlined below.

### Car Seat Distribution Guidelines:

- Car seats may be distributed at the organization's discretion—although the focus should be on at-risk populations. Each organization may assess and determine local need.
- Car seats must be installed with the assistance of a CPST.
- Car seats provided by Buckle Up for Life must be given away to selected families for FREE. Partners may not sell or solicit donations for Buckle Up for Life car seats.



### **Child Passenger Safety Education Guidelines:**

- Reported totals should only reflect the true number of individuals that received high-quality passenger safety education, provided by a CPST. *Only include meaningful interactions like classroom instruction, demonstrations, or carside assistance. Do not include activities like handing out fliers at a health fair. Do not include social media likes or website clicks, Etc.*
- As a resource, Buckle Up for Life provides the curricula and supporting materials necessary for a CPST to deliver age-appropriate education as follows:
  - Children: seat belts, where to sit in a car, and proper passenger behavior.
  - Teens: crash dynamics, seat belts, and sound decision-making.
  - Adults: crash dynamics, seat belts, distracted driving, and child-passenger safety.
- Education can be provided in-person or virtually; and in any language as needed to accommodate the learner(s).

### **Reporting:**

*Gift of Safety* partners will submit regular reports to Buckle Up for Life summarizing their outputs in real time throughout the program year. Additional reporting, including Action Plans, may also be required.

### **How to Apply:**

First, complete a Buckle Up for Life *Partner Registration* for your organization ([www.buckleupforlife.org/register](http://www.buckleupforlife.org/register)). This one-time registration comes with free, optional benefits, and has no associated obligations.

*After you have registered*, you may proceed to our *Common Partnership Application* ([www.buckleupforlife.org/apply](http://www.buckleupforlife.org/apply)) during the submission period. The smart, web-based application utilizes branching logic questioning to route applicants to relevant sections based on each organization's eligibility and interest.

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### **Notification and Acceptance:**

Notifications will be sent to all applicants, via email, on or around July 1, 2026.

If conditionally offered a *Gift of Safety* partnership, that offer may be contingent upon additional steps, up to and including successful and timely completion of additional forms. Actual shipment of free car seats may also depend on availability of funding from the prime award sponsor, as well as other factors, which can change. Prior to final delivery of car seats, any preliminary offer may be rescinded at any time and for any reason.

### **Orientation:**

*Gift of Safety* partners will be required to attend a virtual *Welcome Webinar* in late summer 2026, as a general introduction to the program; and to receive an overview of educational materials and program logistics, including data collection and reporting.

Attendance is mandatory. Only one person from each partner organization is required to attend, but there is no limit to how many additional team members can join.

