



## PKS Police Dept...

### Zero Tolerance For Drivers With Unbuckled Children

It is time for zero tolerance for drivers with unbuckled children. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for American children of all races. It's the law in North Carolina and in all states that children must be restrained. But because adults are breaking the law, children are being crippled and killed in car crashes every day. In fact, six out of ten children who die in crashes are not buckled up at all! Of those, nearly half would be alive today if they had just been buckled up. We should be using every means possible to make sure every child in Pine Knoll Shores is buckled up.

Beginning the week of May 24, 1999 the Pine Knoll Shores Police Department is joining with thousands of law enforcement agencies in all 50 states in the next nationwide *Operation ABC Mobilization*, and is declaring ZERO tolerance for drivers unbuckled and drivers who are endangering children by neglecting to buckle them up properly. Drivers who do not obey North Carolina's adult and child passenger safety law will be stopped and enforcement action will be taken.

We know that these nationwide crackdowns are making a difference and saving lives. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that the *Mobilizations* conducted in 1998 played a key role in prompting 19 million more Americans to buckle up-- the largest, single-year increase in seat belt use in eight years. It's estimated that this increase will result in 1500 lives saved each year.

Nothing is more devastating to an officer than breaking the news to parents that their child has been killed or critically injured. And, knowing that enforcement not only works but also will spare families a lifetime of pain and regret, we must declare a ZERO TOLERANCE for drivers with unbuckled children.

Our officers will also be stepping up enforcement of adult seat belt laws, because it's a proven fact that most adults, who don't buckle up themselves, don't buckle up kids. Recent studies have found that a buckled driver is three times more likely to buckle up a child.

The Pine Knoll Shores Police Department can no longer tolerate so many preventable tragedies--hurt children and despairing families. Too many of these deaths and injuries could have been prevented if only the adults had done their job to protect vulnerable children.

We must stop drivers who don't buckle up themselves and their children. Our lives and our children's lives depend on it.

North Carolina's Seat Belt Laws: All adults must have seatbelts buckled (if the passenger is unbuckled and is an adult (16 years old) that person will receive the citation, for any unbuckled child or child under 4 not in car seat the driver will be cited. The fine/cost is currently \$25.

Congratulations to Officer Donald Collins who earned his Associates Degree in Criminal Justice on May 12, 1999. Don graduated with honors from Carteret Community College.

Congratulations to Officers Donald Collins and Tyron Mann with the Pine Knoll Shores Police Department who will receive the "Governor's Award for Bravery and Heroism" on June 24, 1999 in Raleigh. This award provides statewide recognition for those individuals who have, through some act of extreme heroism, distinguished themselves among North Carolinians. This honor and award will be presented by our Governor, James B. Hunt, Jr. The Pine Knoll Shores Police Department and I'm certain the community are proud of our officers!

Submitted by: Police Chief Mary Muhlig