



MACPS Child Passenger Safety  
2020 Hall of Fame Inductee  
Thelma Kuska, BSN, RN, CEN FAEN

22 YEARS IN CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

Thelma Kuska retired from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Region 5 Office, after 15 years of service. The Region 5 Office oversees the traffic safety issues and programs in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. In her position as a Regional Program Manager, she was responsible for the Child Passenger Safety programs, EMS, Medical Outreach and the Alcohol Screening and Brief Intervention piece of the Alcohol Program. Thelma was assigned to the State of Michigan for the last 6 years prior to her retirement in December 2011, where she worked with the State Highway Safety Office with the management of their traffic safety programs.



Thelma is a board-certified emergency nurse. She spent 20 years as an emergency nurse at Advocate Christ Medical Center, a level 1 trauma center before she joined NHTSA in 1997. She served as the 2015 Chairperson of the ENA Foundation. She is the Chair of the IL ENA Government Affairs and the Injury Prevention Committee, Fundraising Committee and a member of the Spring Symposium Committee that provides annual educational conference for emergency nurses. She is also one of the First Aid nurses at the Guaranteed Rate Ball Park and the United Center. In 2008, she was inducted to the Emergency Nurses Association Academy of Emergency Nursing. It honors emergency nurses who have made enduring, substantial contributions to emergency nursing.

Thelma is a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician- Instructor and was the first NHTSA Region representative to the National Child Passenger Safety Board (NCPSB). She served a second term to the NCPSB as a volunteer from 2014-2016

and on the Illinois Child Passenger Safety Board. She continues to teach the child passenger safety certification course in the greater Chicagoland area supported by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Thelma is also responsible for all the injury prevention activities of the IL ENA State Council. She has published numerous articles on child passenger safety and other traffic safety topics in the Journal of Emergency Nursing. With her injury prevention activities, she collaborates with the IL Department of Transportation, State Police and the Secretary of State Offices to bring the teen driver safety program to the high schools in northern Illinois. State Farm recognized her efforts and commitment to teen driver safety and provided the Illinois Emergency Nurses Association with a driving simulator. She has added teaching the Stop the Bleed course to her volunteer activities.

Thelma has received numerous awards throughout her professional career. She was the 1989 Christ Medical Center and Evangelical Health Systems Nurse of the Year, recipient of the US DOT Secretary of Transportation Award for Volunteer Service in 1997, the 2007 recipient of the ENA Barbara Foley Injury Prevention Leadership Award, recipient of the IDPH Ron Lee Pediatric Care Lifetime Achievement award in 2014, the NHTSA Public Service Award in 2017 and the 2018 Merry Kay Joyce Lifetime Achievement award, the highest award given out by the Illinois Emergency Nurses Association. One of Thelma's CPS career highlight is when the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Safety created the Kuska Lifetime Achievement Award, the highest individual child passenger safety award in Illinois, in honor of the thousands of volunteer hours she dedicated to child passenger safety. Thelma received her nursing diploma from St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing in the Philippines and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, IL.

A native of the Philippines, she emigrated here in 1967, married Dan and she is the proud mother of two successful children, Tina, JD, CPA, and Alan, CPA, mother-in-law of Mark, CPA and proud grandmother of twin boys, Timothy and Robert.

## **LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATIONS**

1967- Present Current Illinois State License - 041125900  
1987-Present Certified Emergency Nurse, Board Certification for Emergency Nursing  
1998-Present Certified National Child Passenger Safety Technician/Instructor #I 0145

## **PUBLICATIONS**

March 2020 Traffic Safety and Older Driver - *Journal of Emergency Nursing*  
December 2018 Author, Emergency Nurses Association Position Statement: *Child Passenger Safety in the United States*. Approved by the ENA Board of Directors, December 14,2018.  
May 2018 Protecting Our Necks, *Journal of Emergency Nursing*  
May 2017 Research Paper: Child Passenger Safety: An Assessment of Emergency Nurses' Knowledge Online  
June 2016 Air Bag Safety: An Update. *Journal of Emergency Nursing*  
March 2013 Taking Care of Children: Rear Facing Up to Two Years Old, *Journal of Emergency Nursing*  
May 2012 Hyperthermia and Children Left in Cars, *Journal of Emergency Nursing*  
November 2011 Taking Care of Children: The Case for Booster Seats, *Journal of Emergency Nursing*  
June 2003 Airbag Safety, *Journal of Emergency Nursing*  
February 2002 Child Passenger Safety: Then and Now, *Journal of Emergency Nursing*  
December 2001 Issues and Trends in Child Passenger Safety, *International Journal of Trauma Nursing*

## List of CPS articles authored

- Emergency Nurses Association Position Statement: Child Passenger Safety in the United States. Approved by the ENA Board of Directors, December 2018.
- Research Paper: Child Passenger Safety: An Assessment of Emergency Nurses' Knowledge and Provision of Information in the Emergency Department. Journal of Emergency. May 2017.
- Taking Care of Children: Car-Facing Up to Two Years Old. Journal of Emergency Nursing. March 2013.
- Hyperthermia and Children Left in Cars. Journal of Emergency Nursing. May 2012.
- Taking Care of Children: The Case of Booster Seats. Journal of Emergency Nursing. November 2011.
- Child Passenger Safety: Then and Now. Journal of Emergency Nursing. February 2002.
- Issues and Trends in Child Passenger Safety. International Journal of Trauma Nursing. December 2001.

