

?A seat belt saved my life?

A young woman is crediting an OPP officer for saving her life after surviving a motor vehicle collision that could have potentially ended it had she not received a seat belt warning days before the crash.

Jennifer Walker, a 19 year-old university student was driving her car in Exeter, Ontario, on May 23, when OPP Constable Ron Young, on bicycle patrol, pulled her over when he observed her talking on her cell phone and not wearing her seat belt.

Const. Young issued Jennifer a \$155 ticket for driving while using her cell phone but used police discretion and let her off with a warning and education about not wearing her seat belt. At the time, Jennifer had no idea how pivotal that moment would be in the days ahead, but she made a decision to change her driving behaviour to enhance personal safety.

Just two days later, on May 25, Jennifer's car was struck broadside by a vehicle that failed to stop at a stop sign. Jennifer sustained minor breaks and bruises in the incident and, according to the OPP, the crash was serious enough to have killed her had she not been wearing her seat belt. A few weeks after her traumatic ordeal, Jennifer contacted Const. Young to thank him for issuing her a ticket and for saving her life.

?Jennifer's story is a perfect example of how wearing a seat belt can dramatically change the outcome of a collision and may have actually saved someone's life. Sadly, people continue to die on our roads because, unlike Jennifer, they continue to ignore our messages about the important role seat belts play in saving the lives of men, women and children involved in road crashes,? said Chief Superintendent Don Bell, Commander of the OPP Highway Safety Division.

?With the OPP Fall Seat Belt Campaign set to get underway across the province, I encourage all Ontarians to listen to Jennifer's story. The OPP would like to see every road user make the same commitment that Jennifer made to change her driving behaviour because there is no question that fewer people would die needlessly on our roads,? said OPP Deputy Commissioner Larry Beechey, Provincial Commander, Traffic Safety and Operational Support.

To view or download a short video about Jennifer's story, go to YouTube Video: [YouTube.com/watch?v=6oyH0UexsHc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6oyH0UexsHc)

The OPP Fall Seat Belt Campaign runs from September 26 to October 13, 2013. During that time, OPP officers across the province will be highly visible enforcing and raising awareness of seat belt laws in an effort to change driving behaviour and save lives.