

Child Safety Network™ Announces Dr. Michael C. Hout as Featured Speaker at STN EXPO West 2026

CSN Board Member Dr. Michael Hout brings behavioral science to the conversation on illegal school bus passing at STN EXPO West.

NEW MEXICO, NV, UNITED STATES, June 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Child Safety Network™ ([CSN](#)) is proud to announce that Board Member Dr. Michael C. Hout, Ph.D., Associate Dean (Research) Cognitive Science at New Mexico State University, will be a featured speaker at [STN EXPO](#) West on July 12, 2026. Presented by School Transportation News (STN), STN EXPO West is one of the nation's premier conferences dedicated to advancing student transportation safety, operational excellence, emerging technology, and industry leadership. This year's EXPO will take place in Reno, NV from July 9th-15th.

During the average 180-day school year, America's 26 million students get on and off school buses approximately 9 billion times. Studies estimate that tens of millions of motorists illegally and dangerously pass stopped school buses each year, placing students at risk during the transportation segment, the most dangerous part of their school day. We encourage corporations and foundations to help underwrite CSN's investigations and the development of evidence-based countermeasures backed by university experts to reduce these preventable tragedies and save lives.

To help address this ongoing safety challenge, CSN recently appointed [Dr. Hout](#) as its Chief Scientific Investigator. A nationally recognized expert in visual cognition, attention, perception, and memory, Dr. Hout brings decades of research experience to the study of human behavior and decision-making. His work focuses on how individuals interpret complex visual environments, process information under pressure, and make rapid decisions in real-world situations—precisely the cognitive processes involved when drivers encounter a stopped school



Dr. Michael C. Hout, Ph.D

bus.

During his STN EXPO West session, Dr. Hout will explore not only the scope of the illegal passing problem but also how the student transportation industry can better understand and address it. Rather than viewing all violations through a single lens, his presentation will examine the potential differences among drivers who illegally pass school buses. Are violations primarily caused by distraction, misperception, misunderstanding of traffic laws, cognitive overload, or deliberate risk-taking? What can science tell us about the individuals behind these incidents, and how can those insights help create more effective prevention strategies?

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Understanding attention and perception is essential to preventing tragedy. If we can identify the mechanisms behind a failure to stop, CSN and NMSU can design interventions and save lives.”

Dr. Michael C. Hout, Ph.D

USING SCIENCE TO PUT THE BRAKES ON STOP ARM RUNNERS.



Dr. Michael C. Hout, Ph.D.
Cognitive Scientist
Associate Dean, NMSU
CSN Senior Advisor

NM STATE UNIVERSITY

child safety network
csn.org

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Drawing from research methods that include eye-tracking analysis, behavioral science, and controlled simulation studies, Dr. Hout will discuss how data-driven approaches can help identify patterns among illegal passers and inform future safety initiatives. His session is designed to encourage industry leaders, transportation directors, law enforcement professionals, safety advocates, and policymakers to think beyond enforcement alone and consider how education, engineering, technology, and behavioral science can work together to improve student safety.

Attendees can expect practical takeaways, thought-provoking discussion, and a framework for future research that may help shape the next generation of school bus safety campaigns. Dr. Hout will also address opportunities to develop targeted public awareness efforts that improve compliance with stop-arm laws and foster a greater understanding of the risks students face in the school bus loading zone.

“Protecting children requires more than identifying a problem—it requires understanding why the problem exists,” said Ward Leber, Founder and Chairman of Child Safety Network™. “Dr. Hout’s expertise gives us an opportunity to apply science to one of the most pressing safety issues in student transportation. At Child Safety Network™, we believe that effective safety solutions should be grounded in evidence, informed by research, and measured by outcomes.

His presentation will challenge attendees to think differently about illegal passing violations and how data-driven, evidence-based interventions can be developed, evaluated, and implemented to reduce risk and better protect children.”

CSN is honored to support STN EXPO West and its mission of bringing together transportation professionals, industry partners, technology innovators, and safety advocates to improve outcomes for students nationwide. The conference continues to serve as a leading forum for collaboration, education, and the exchange of ideas that help shape the future of student transportation.

CSN Official Logo



For transportation professionals seeking a deeper understanding of illegal passing violations and the role behavioral science can play in preventing them, Dr. Hout’s session promises to be one of the conference’s most timely and insightful discussions.

Join Child Safety Network™ and School Transportation News at STN EXPO West on July 12 as Dr. Michael C. Hout shares a scientific perspective on one of the most important challenges facing student transportation safety today.

About Child Safety Network (CSN™)

Founded in 1989, the Child Safety Network (CSN™) is a national, non for profit organization dedicated to making America a safer place for children to live, learn, and thrive. For more than three decades, CSN has partnered with federal, state, tribal, and local leaders, and national associations to protect millions of students and teach parents how to raise safer, healthier families . CSN produces and promotes National School Bus Safety Month, unanimously endorsed by all 100 U.S. Senators, each year and delivers no-cost tools, training, and technology to schools, parents, and first responders nationwide. Visit www.CSN.org

About STN

School Transportation News (STN) is the leading media brand serving the student transportation industry, providing news, research, conferences, and professional development resources to transportation directors, fleet managers, contractors, and industry partners throughout North

America. STN Expo West is the organization's premier annual conference, bringing together school transportation professionals to share best practices, explore emerging technologies, and advance student safety. Learn more at <https://stnonline.com/>

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