

NHTSA Highlights Importance of Car Seats and Child Passenger Safety

Many Communities Now Offering Virtual Child Seat Checks and Inspections

September 21, 2020 | Washington, DC

Child Passenger Safety Week is September 20-26, 2020

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration today urged all parents and caregivers to make sure child car seats are chosen correctly and installed properly. The agency also warned the public about the dangers of leaving a child alone in a hot car. The reminders come in time for this year's Child Passenger Safety Week, September 20-26.

"Safety is the Department's top priority, and we urge drivers to ensure their child passenger is riding in the appropriate car seat and never leave a child in a hot car," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

While most parents and caregivers are confident that they have correctly installed their child's car seat, almost half (46%), have been installed incorrectly.

During Child Passenger Safety Week, many communities will have certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians on hand to provide free education on how to use car seats, booster seats, and seat belts. Technicians will help educate families on choosing the right car seat for a child, installing the seat correctly, and using the seat correctly every time. They can also discuss the importance of registering car seats with manufacturers, and what to expect if the seat is subject to a safety recall. During the current public health emergency, more technicians are offering virtual seat checks this year. A list of sites that will conduct virtual seat checks can be [found here](#).

"We are dedicated to keeping children safe in our vehicles and on our roads," said NHTSA Deputy Administrator James Owens. "Not only is the proper seat for age and size important, it's also critical for parents and caregivers to be aware of the danger of heatstroke for children left in, or sneaking into, a hot car. Remember our campaign – Park. Look. Lock."

Children dying from [heatstroke](#) in cars, either because they were left or became trapped, has increased in recent years. Most hot car deaths — 54 percent — happen when someone forgets a child in a car. So far this year, 20 children have died from pediatric vehicular heatstroke. In 2019, 52 children died, the second most deadly year for pediatric vehicular heatstroke on record, because children were forgotten in or gained access to an unlocked vehicle. Parents and caregivers should get in the habit of always checking the back seat of their vehicle and always locking the doors.

Bystanders can also play an important role in saving a life – if you see a child alone in a vehicle, call 911 and get help immediately.

Child Passenger Safety Week concludes with National Seat Check Saturday on September 26, when certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians across the country will be available at car seat safety check events to offer advice and instruction to parents and caregivers.

For the past 30 years, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and all U.S. territories have had laws requiring children to be secured in the appropriate car seats or booster seats for their ages and sizes

while riding in vehicles. States now require children to ride in appropriate car seats or booster seats until as old as age nine.

For more information on choosing the correct car seat, [click here](#).

Contact:

NHTSA

NHTSA Media NHTSAmedia@dot.gov 202-366-9550