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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Ensure Proper Child Car-Seat Fitting During  
Child Passenger Safety Week**

*Proper Car-Seat Usage Reduces Vehicle Fatalities by 71 Percent in Infants  
and 54 Percent in Toddlers*

**SACRAMENTO, CA** – The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) is urging parents and caregivers to have their children’s car seats checked for proper installation during National Child Passenger Safety Week, September 15-21.

“Two facts stand out when considering the safety of our children traveling in cars and trucks: motor vehicle crashes are the leading killer of children under 13 and at least 70 percent of child safety seats are improperly installed,” said Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety. “Even if you believe you’ve correctly installed the right car seat, come to a seat-check event during Child Passenger Safety Week—or at any time—to gain the peace of mind of confirming your child is properly protected.”

When used correctly, child safety car-seats can reduce fatal injury by up to 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers. The best way to protect children traveling in vehicles is to ensure they have the correct car seat for the child’s age and size and that the seat is fitted correctly for the car.

Parents and caregivers can always visit their local Child Car Seat Inspection Station where a certified technician will inspect the child car seat and can show correct installation and use. To find a local inspection station, use the Child Car Seat Inspection Station Locator at <http://www.safercar.gov/parents/CarSeats.htm> or contact your local California Highway Patrol Area Office <http://www.chp.ca.gov/community/safeseat.html>.

In addition to this ongoing assistance, many communities are planning special events on Saturday, September 21, 2013—“National Seat Check Saturday”—to raise awareness about the importance of proper car-seat fitting and to educate people on how to protect children by correctly installing child safety seats. For information about these events visit:

[http://www.safekids.org/events/field\\_coalition/safe-kids-california/field\\_type/check-event](http://www.safekids.org/events/field_coalition/safe-kids-california/field_type/check-event)

Here are important tips for proper car-seat selection and installation:

- Select a car seat based on your child's age and size, choose a seat that fits in your vehicle, and use it every time.
- Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions; read the vehicle owner's manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or LATCH system and check height and weight limits.
- To maximize safety, keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.
- Keep your child in the back seat at least through age 12.
- Visit your local Child Car Seat Inspection Station where a certified technician will inspect your child car seat and can show correct installation and use. To find your local inspection station, contact the California Highway Patrol or use the Child Car Seat Inspection Station Locator at: <http://www.safercar.gov/parents/CarSeats.htm>

California law requires that children be properly secured in the back seat in a child restraint system until they are at least eight years old or 4'9" tall. Additionally, all children under age 16 must be properly secured in either a child restraint system or seat belt.

Law enforcement issues thousands of citations annually for child safety seat violations throughout California. According to the Office of Traffic Safety, a first car seat or seat belt violation for a child under age 16 will cost a minimum of \$490 with penalty assessments. A second or subsequent offense carries a cost of \$1,105. If the parent is not in the vehicle, the driver gets the ticket.

For more information on child passenger safety go to [www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov) and click the "Child Passenger Safety" button.

To find a local car seat event or to get help with choosing and installing the right car seat visit:

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration "Child Car Seat Inspection Station Locator": <http://www.safercar.gov/parents/CarSeats.htm>
- "Safe Kids Worldwide" Car Seat Check-Up Events: [http://www.safekids.org/events/field\\_coalition/safe-kids-california/field\\_type/check-event](http://www.safekids.org/events/field_coalition/safe-kids-california/field_type/check-event)
- California Highway Patrol Information About "Child Safety Seats" <http://www.chp.ca.gov/community/safeseat.html>

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