

MDOT MVA kicks off Child Passenger Safety Week

Posted by [Alan Van Wormer](#) On 09/21/2018

GLEN BURNIE, Md. – Each year in Maryland, millions of parents and caregivers travel with children in their vehicles. Most believe that their children are buckled properly in the correct car seat or booster seat, yet the harsh reality is that most are not—and shockingly some children are not buckled at all. To combat this inconsistency, from September 23-29, the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) will join child passenger safety partners across the state to recognize Child Passenger Safety Week.

The purpose of this important week is to highlight resources and educate parents and caregivers about proper car seat and booster seat usage. Free car seat check events will also occur throughout Maryland.

“Using a car seat that is age- and size-appropriate is the best way to keep children safe while traveling,” said Christine Nizer, MDOT MVA Administrator and Governor Hogan’s Highway Safety Representative. “Car seats, booster seats, and seat belts make a lifesaving difference.”

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that car seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 71% for infants (younger than 1 year old) and by 54% for toddlers (1 to 4 years old) in passenger cars. Additionally, NHTSA recommends keeping children rear-facing for as long as possible, up to the top height or weight allowed by their seat.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to remember that once a child outgrows the rear-facing-only “infant” car seat, he/she should travel in a rear-facing “convertible” or all-in-one car seat. Once your child outgrows the rear-facing size limits, the child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness (always use the tether). After outgrowing the forward-facing car seat with harness, children should be placed in booster seats until they’re the right size to use seat belts safely. And if children are under 13 years old, they should always sit in the back seat.

“Having the correct car seat installed and used the right way is critical,” said Fran Phillips, Deputy Secretary of Public Health Services at the Maryland Department of Health. “You may think you have the right seat, or believe that it’s installed properly, but please get it checked with a Child Passenger Safety Technician to be sure.”

For a list of Maryland’s child passenger safety resources, please visit Kids in Safety Seats at <http://www.mdkiss.org>.

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