



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Knowledge Saves Lives: Cathedral City Police Department Highlights Car Seat Safety for Parents & Caregivers

Sept. 23-29 is Child Passenger Safety Week

Children are our future, and the Cathedral City Police Department is supporting efforts by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to help parents and caregivers make sure their children ride as safely as possible every time they get in the car.

Child Passenger Safety week is from Sept. 23-29, 2018. During this time, the Cathedral City Police Department will have Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians available to show parents and caregivers how to install car seats correctly, provide guidance on choosing the right car seat for a child, and what to do if the seat is subject to a safety recall. Please contact the Cathedral City Police Department and ask for Traffic Sergeant Nick Chapman or Officer Garin Smith to arrange an appointment.

The week concludes with National Seat Check Saturday on Sept. 29, when Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians across the country will be on hand at car seat check events to offer advice to parents and caregivers.

“Using car seats properly is the best way to keep your children safe,” according to Police Chief Travis Walker. “They will not work properly if they are installed incorrectly or do not fit the child’s age or size. Car seats save lives when used the right way.”

In passenger cars, car seats reduce the risk of an infant being killed in a crash by 71 percent, and toddlers by 54 percent. While many children are buckled in properly in the correct car seats for their age and size, more than half (59 percent) are not.

Sadly, car crashes are the leading cause of death for children. In 2016, 35 percent of children under 13 killed in crashes were not restrained in car seats, booster seats or with seat belts.

Chief Walker advises, “Even if you think your child’s car seat is installed correctly, take the opportunity

to verify it and get it checked. Car seats can be tricky, and we are here to help.” The Cathedral City Police Department is offering the following tips and resources for parents and caregivers:

- **Get the right car seat:** Rear-facing, forward-facing or booster seat depending on your child’s age, weight and height, and the manufacturer’s recommendations on the seat: <http://bit.ly/carboosterseats>
- **Know the Law:** California law requires specific child restraint system based on child’s age, weight and height: <https://www.chp.ca.gov/programs-services/programs/child-safety-seats>
- **Read the manufacturer’s instructions and vehicle owner’s manual:** Pay attention to how you adjust the car seat’s harness for a proper fit.
- **Register your seat right away:** Mail in the registration card that came with the seat, or go to <https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats#car-seat-registration> so the manufacturer can notify you in the event of a safety recall.
- **Rear-facing as long as possible:** Keep a child in a rear-facing seat up to the top height or weight allowed by the car seat’s manufacturer. Research shows that children are safest when rear-facing.
- **Forward-facing car seats:** Once your child outgrows a rear-facing seat, keep your child in a forward-facing seat with a harness and tether. Tethers should always be used for forward-facing car seats. Children are encouraged to stay in forward-facing seats as long as possible before moving to a booster seat.
- **Back Seat Safety:** Children under 13 should always ride in the back seat.

Parents and caregivers can find a car seat education program in their area here:

https://www.ots.ca.gov/docs/WGCS_2017_Final.pdf, or on the NHTSA website under “car seat inspection”: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats>.

Car seat safety checks are also available at every local California Highway Patrol (CHP) Office. To locate the one closest to you, visit www.chp.ca.gov and Click “Find an Office”.

