

Child Passenger Safety Week September 2008

- **Child Passenger Safety Week runs Sept. 21-27, 2008.**
- **Radio and television ads will run statewide during this week.**
- **For more information regarding safety seats, visit www.saveMOlives.com**

Missouri Child Restraint Usage Statistics

- In 2007, 15 children less than eight years of age were killed and 1,866 were injured as occupants in motor vehicle crashes in Missouri.
- The 2007 data from 21 survey sites revealed a child safety seat usage rate of 88.2% for children under age four.
- Ninety-two percent of surveyed children under age four were located in the back seat of the vehicle.
- Missouri's child safety seat survey observed that when drivers were wearing their safety belt, only 3 percent of their children were not buckled in. But when the driver wasn't buckled up, 34 percent of the children were not buckled up.
- There are nine Safe Kids Coalitions in Missouri that are active in promoting child passenger safety, including safety seat check events. To contact a coalition in your area, call Missouri's Safe Kids Coordinator, Imtiaz Mahmood, at 573-751-6210.

From National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

- When used correctly, child safety seats are 71% effective in preventing fatalities for infants and 54% for toddlers.
- The use of belt-positioning booster seats lowers the risk of injury to children in crashes by 59% compared to the use of vehicle safety belts alone.
- According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration research, 8,325 lives of children under age 5 have been saved by the proper use of child restraints during the past 30 years.
- People may check www.nhtsa.dot.gov (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) to find a fitting station or technician in their area.

Four Steps:

- **Parents and caregivers should refer to the following *4 Steps for Kids* guidelines for determining which restraint system is best suited to protect children based on age and size:**
 1. For the best possible protection keep infants in the back seat, in rear-facing child safety seats, as long as possible up to the height or weight limit of the particular seat. At a minimum, keep infants rear-facing until at least age 1 and at least 20 pounds.
 2. When children outgrow their rear-facing seats (at least age 1 and at least 20 pounds) they should ride in forward-facing child safety seats, in the back seat, until they reach the upper weight or height limit of the particular seat (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds).
 3. Once children outgrow their forward-facing seats (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds), they should ride in booster seats, in the back seat, until the vehicle seat belts fit properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall).

4. When children outgrow their booster seats, (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall) they can use the adult seat belts in the back seat, if they fit properly (lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest).

Current Missouri Law for Transporting Children under 16:

- A new Missouri law (307.178 & 307.179 RSMo) effective August 2006 made drivers responsible to assure all children under the age of sixteen are properly secured in a motor vehicle.
- One of the main points of the law says that children ages 4 through 7, who weigh at least 40 pounds, must be in an appropriate child safety seat or booster seat (unless they weigh 80 pounds or more or are 4'9" tall or greater)
- Other points regarding Missouri's child passenger law:
 - Children less than 4 years old or less than 40 pounds must be in an appropriate child safety seat;
 - Children age 8 and over, or who weigh at least 80 pounds or are at least 4'9" tall, are required to be secured by a safety belt or booster seat appropriate for that child.
 - The law applies to cars, pickup trucks, sport utility vehicles, and vans. The law allows for primary enforcement, which means that a law enforcement officer can stop a driver for no other reason than non-compliance with this law – the fine is \$50.