



## NEWS RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

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### **Organizations Across GA Offering Resources For Child Passenger Safety Week**

*A week of events from Sept. 23-29 will culminate with Seat Check Saturday*

**(ATLANTA)** The Governor's Office of Highway Safety and its partners throughout the state recommend parents and caregivers make sure their children are riding safe by having their safety seat checked by a certified technician.

Health departments, sheriff's offices, Safe Kids chapters and other highway safety partners will be holding free safety events and car seat checks around Georgia during National Child Passenger Safety Week Sept. 23-29.

At a time when car crashes are still a leading cause of death for children, Child Passenger Safety Week utilizes activities like community events, training classes and car seat checks to make sure that not only car seats are installed correctly, but that children are buckled correctly.

"It is our job as parents and caregivers to make sure our precious cargo is as safe and secure as possible while we're behind the wheel," Governor's Office of Highway Safety Communications Manager Robert Hydrick said. "Even if you think your child's car seat is installed correctly, use Child Passenger Safety Week to get it double checked by a certified child passenger safety technician."

Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration indicates two-out-of-three car seats are installed incorrectly. In addition, research shows car seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 71 percent with infants and 54 percent with toddlers in passenger vehicles. Unfortunately in Georgia, 388 children age 5 or older were killed in unrestrained traffic fatalities in 2015. State law requires child passengers to be restrained in a car seat or booster seat appropriate for their height and weight until the age of 8.

NHTSA recommends keeping car seats rear-facing as long as possible, up to the maximum height or weight allowed by each seat's manufacturer guidelines. 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 a child

outgrows the rear-facing size limits, the child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness. 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.

"Every 33 seconds in 2015, a child under 13 was involved in a traffic crash," Hydrick said. "Using car seats that are age and size-appropriate is the best way to keep your children safe. Car seats, booster seats and seatbelts can make all the difference."

Parents and caregivers in Georgia can also visit

<https://www.gahighwaysafety.org/fullpanel/uploads/files/copy-of-2018-complete-county-fitting-stations-list-062818.pdf> for a county-by-county list of car seat fitting stations in Georgia.

During Child Passenger Safety Week, many local health departments, sheriff's offices, fire departments and Safe Kids chapters will be holding special events to increase child passenger safety and awareness. Those interested in attending such events can contact their local health department for details.

**\*\*\*\*Media outlets will find video/audio interview, video of past child passenger safety week inspections and photos at the link below. Media have full editorial control in using any of these resources in their coverage of highway safety. We ask outlets who have used this service to please send comments and suggestions to [robert.hydrick@gohs.ga.gov](mailto:robert.hydrick@gohs.ga.gov).\*\*\*\***

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/e3mceewctz7247t/CPSS%202018%20news%20release%20video.mpg?dl=0>

#### **Ed Weaver Cut 1**

"Ninety percent of the seats we find on the road right now are installed incorrectly. There is usually one or more misuse that can be very deadly for that child. As time goes by, technology improves and there are better seats and everything else out there. If you leave your seat buckled up for a long period of time, it may loosen up. If you just sit in there without inspecting it, you may have a problem and not realize it. It is very important to you have your seat inspected. Make sure that you properly installed it and it is installed as safe as can be in your car."

#### **Ed Weaver Cut 2**

"The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that you keep a child rear facing until at least the age of two. A lot of seats are coming out now that is mandatory for the manufacturer's instructions that you keep them rear facing until they are two years old. At that point you can move them facing forward and the seat will tell you the age and weight (guidelines) for that seat. If not there are references on both the NHTSA and the GOHS websites."

#### **Ed Weaver Cut 3**

"It is definitely important to make an appointment because that technician may not be on site when you show up. This way if you make the appointment, they know to be there. They can make sure you are squared away and not have to come back and make a second trip."

For more information on child passenger safety, visit the Governor's Office of Highway Safety website at [www.gahighwaysafety.org](http://www.gahighwaysafety.org) or GOHS social media at [www.facebook.com/gahighwaysafety](https://www.facebook.com/gahighwaysafety) and [@gohsgeorgia](https://twitter.com/gohsgeorgia) on Twitter.

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