Dear Safety Advocate:

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY WEEK, September 17-23, 2017 highlights the importance of all children being correctly secured in the right occupant restraint for the child’s age, weight, height, and developmental needs. The campaign is dedicated to helping parents and caregivers make sure their children ride as safely as possible—every trip, every time. Each day, too many children are secured in the wrong car seats, ride in car seats that have been installed incorrectly, or ride completely unbuckled. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), motor vehicle crashes are a leading killer of children. Car seats, booster seats and seat belts can make all the difference during a crash.

Child Passenger Safety Week promotes the education of families to select the right car seat for a child and ensure it is used correctly. In 2015, every 33 seconds a child under 13 years was involved in a crash. Children secured in the right car seat, booster seat, or seat belt installed and used the right way is critical. Two hundred forty-eight (248) children under the age of 5 were saved in 2015 because they were riding in car seats. It is also important for parents to register the car seat and booster seat with the car seat manufacturer to receive recall notifications to ensure their car seat will be free of defects. During Child Passenger Safety Week many communities plan educational programs and community car seat check events staffed with certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians to provide education on how to use car seats, booster seats, and seat belts. The week concludes with National Seat Check Saturday on September 23rd.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reported the following percentage of child fatalities who were unrestrained in passenger vehicles:
- 20% of children less than 1 year of age;
- 28% of children who were 1 to 3 years of age;
- 36% of children who were 4 to 7 years of age;
- 43% of children who were 8 to 12 years of age; and
- 60% of children who were 13 to 14 years of age. (NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts Children 2015 Data)

The Pennsylvania Traffic Injury Prevention Project and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation are providing this planner to assist you in coordinating community safety events throughout the State. Every parent wants to protect their children and keep them safe. The Child Passenger Safety Week theme, “The Right Car Seat, Used the Right Way” highlights the best way to protect children in a car is to secure them in the right car seat, at the right time, and to use it the right way, every time they travel.

Materials included in this planner provide evidence-based best practice recommendations for the use of car seats, booster seats, and seat belts for children of all ages, birth through teenage drivers. Child Passenger Safety Week provides the opportunity to teach parents to make the tough choices to keep the entire family safe. The educational resources can be used to promote child passenger safety in your community.

Please contact us if there is anything we can do to support your efforts in promoting Child Passenger Safety Week. The PA Traffic Injury Prevention Project (PA TIPP) will compile a list of all events and activities for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and NHTSA. To have your event included on the statewide event list, complete the event registration form provided on the back page or use the link provided to register your event on-line. Events will be submitted to NHTSA and posted on the NHTSA and PA TIPP websites.

Thank you for your dedication to protect children in your community. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

PA Traffic Injury Prevention Project Staff

Angela Osterhuber, Project Director
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Car Seats, Booster Seats, and Seat Belts Save Lives

Lives Lost and Injuries
- Car crashes are a leading cause of death for children.
- Every 33 seconds, one child under the age of 13 is involved in a crash.
- On average, 2 children under age 13 were killed and 319 were injured everyday in 2015 while riding in cars, SUVs, pickups, and vans.
- Three out of four crashes occur within 25 miles of home.

Car Seats, Booster Seats, and Seat Belts Save Lives
- In 2015, among children younger than age 5, occupant restraints saved an estimated 266 lives.
- An additional 50 children could have survived if car seat use was at 100 percent.
- In Pennsylvania from 2012 — 2016, 82 percent of the children under age 4 who were involved in crashes and restrained in a car seat sustained no injury. (2016 Pennsylvania Crash Facts and Statistics)
- Pennsylvania seat belt usage rate was 85.2 percent in 2016. National statistics show that for every one percent increase in seat belt usage, eight to twelve lives can be saved on the highways.

Resources on Child Passenger Safety:
- There are approximately 1,500 nationally certified child passenger safety technicians in Pennsylvania who teach parents and caregivers how to properly use their child’s car seat.
- There are 171 car seat fitting stations across the state that provide an opportunity for families to have their car seats evaluated to make sure they accommodate the child’s size and fit securely in the vehicle.
- Visit www.pakidstravelsafe.org or call 1-800 CAR BELT for a listing of child safety seat events and safety information for car seats.
- Visit safercar.gov/therightseat, NHTSA’s parent resource website, for information on making sure you are using the correct seat for your child’s age and size.
- Visit www.penndot.gov/TravelInPA/Safety/TrafficSafetyAndDriverTopics/Pages/Child-Passenger-Safety.aspx or www.penndot.gov/TravelInPA/Safety/Pages/default.aspx, PennDOT’s highway safety website, for Pennsylvania information on seat belt use, safe driving tips and other highway safety information.

Sample Press Release

News for Immediate Release
Sept. 17, 2017

(Sponsoring Organization) to Participate in National Child Passenger Safety Week

Town, City, Borough – Every day, too many children are secured in the wrong car seats, ride in car seats that have been installed incorrectly, or ride completely unbuckled. Car crashes, a leading cause of death for children, are misused 59 percent of the time according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (List in a series participating organizations,) announced today their participation in National Child Passenger Safety Week and are encouraging families to attend one of the free car seat checkup events being held throughout Pennsylvania during from Sept. 17 to 23.

Every parent wants to protect their children and keep them safe. This year's theme, “The Right Car Seat, Used the Right Way”, highlights the best way to protect children in a car is to secure them in the right car seat, at the right time, and to use it the right way, every time they travel. Using car seats that are age and size appropriate is the best way to keep children safe. On an average day in Pennsylvania, there are about 355 reportable crashes on state highways. Research found that using the correct car seat reduces the chance of fatal injury by 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers. In Pennsylvania from 2012 to 2016, 82 percent of the children under age 4 who were involved in crashes and restrained in a car seat sustained no injury. (2016 Pennsylvania Crash Facts and Statistics)

Children who are correctly buckled in a car seat, booster seat or seat belt benefit from the single most effective way to protect motor vehicle occupants and reduce fatalities in a crash. Research shows that children, from birth to age seven are likely to be buckled 91.6 percent of the time when adults are buckled and only 69.7 percent of the time when adults are not buckled. (Occupant Restraint Use in 2015: Results From the NOPUS Controlled Intersection Study) Make certain that everyone in the car is buckled, that your car seat is installed correctly, that every child is in the right car seat, and that the car seat is used correctly. Even if you think your child is safe, check again, so you can be sure that your child is safe while traveling.

Under Pennsylvania’s child passenger safety law, all drivers are responsible for securing children in the appropriate child restraint system. All children from birth up to age 4 must be secured in an approved child safety seat anywhere in the vehicle. A child younger than two years of age shall be secured in a rear-facing car seat, to be used until the child outgrows the maximum weight and height limits designated by the car seat manufacturer. All children age 4 up to age 8 must be in a booster seat and secured with a lap and shoulder belt anywhere in the vehicle.

All children age 8 up to age 18 must be secured in a seat belt system anywhere in the vehicle. Under Pennsylvania’s seat belt law, all drivers are responsible for the front seat passengers to wear a properly adjusted and fastened seat belt. All drivers under 18 years of age may not operate a motor vehicle in which the number of passengers exceeds the number of available seat belts in the vehicle.

For more information on how to keep passengers safe visit www.pakidstravelsafe.org or call 1-800-CAR-BELT.

Media contact: Insert agency name and phone number here

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If you are unable to afford a car seat, call 1-800-CAR-BELT or visit www.pakidstravelsafe.org to find the nearest car seat loan program.

Child Safety Seat Inspection Stations and Community Car Seat Checkup Events are provided on the website.
Keeping Children Safe in a Car Seat

- Car seat manufacturers recommend replacing car seats that have been in a crash.
  - Check the car seat instructions for guidance on when a car seat needs to be replaced.
  - Check with insurance companies regarding their crash replacement policy.
- Check the car seat label or the instructions for an expiration date. Car seats used beyond their life span are not considered safe.
- If you are unsure of how to use or install your car seat, contact the Pennsylvania Traffic Injury Prevent Project at 1-800-CAR-BELT or www.pakidstravelsafe.org for information on fitting station locations.

The American Academy of Pediatrics Guidelines:

- All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car seat until they are 2 years of age or until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by the car seat’s manufacturer.
- All children should be secured in the rear seat of the vehicle.

WHY?

- Children younger than age 2 are 75 percent less likely to die or to be severely injured in a crash if they are rear-facing.
- Children in the second year of life are 5 times less likely to die or be seriously injured in a crash if restrained rear-facing compared to forward-facing.
- A rear-facing car seat supports the head, neck and spine of infants and toddlers in a crash and distributes the crash force over the entire body.
- In a frontal crash, the rear-facing car seat cradles and moves with the child. It is the shell of the car seat that absorbs the crash forces.
- Twenty-one percent (21%) of the children in the U.S., who are less than one year of age or 20 pounds, are incorrectly seated forward-facing.

Pennsylvania Child Passenger Safety Law

All drivers are responsible for securing children in the appropriate child restraint system.

All children from birth up to age 4 must be secured in an approved child passenger restraint system anywhere in the vehicle.

- A child younger than two years of age shall be secured in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system, to be used until the child outgrows the maximum weight and height limits designated by the car seat manufacturer.

(Effective August 12, 2016)

Violators are subject to a fine of $75.00, plus Court Costs, $45.00 Surcharge, $10.00 EMS, and $10.00 Administrative Costs. Total cost: $140.00 + Court Costs.

Tips to Achieve Correct Use of a Rear-Facing Car Seat

Car Seat Selection
- Confirm the car seat is in good condition and has not been recalled.
- Confirm the car seat has not met the manufacturer’s designated expiration date.
- Read the car seat instructions and/or label to make sure the car seat is appropriate for the child’s age, weight and height.

Correct Direction
- Keep the child in a rear-facing car seat until age 2 or until they reach the maximum weight or height of the car seat. When the child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, secure the child in a forward-facing car seat.

Seating Location
- Secure all children younger than 13 years in the back seat of vehicles for best protection.

Tight Installation
- Thread and tighten the seat belt or lower connectors through the correct rear-facing belt path.
- Confirm the car seat does NOT move side-to-side or front-to-back more than 1-inch when tested at the belt path.

Snug Harness
- Place the harness through the correct harness slots at or below the child’s shoulders following the car seat manufacturer’s instructions.
- Secure the child with a snug harness. A snug harness does not permit excess webbing to be pinched at the shoulder or hips once the harness is buckled.
- Place the harness retainer clip at armpit level.
Harnessing: Place the Child Correctly in the Car Seat

• Always read the car seat instructions and the vehicle owner’s manual.
• Always check the minimum and maximum weight allowed for a car seat. Select a car seat that is correct for the child’s weight and height.
• Select a car seat with an adjustable harness height to offer options for children as they grow.
• Select a car seat that allows the child’s head to be at least one-inch (1”) from the top of the back of the car seat.

Direction: Face the Car Seat the Right Way

• Secure a child rear-facing as long as possible, until the child outgrows the weight or height of the car seat.
• Transfer a child who has outgrown a rear-facing only car seat to a rear-facing convertible car seat until the maximum weight or height is reached.

Location: Install the Car Seat in the Right Spot in the Vehicle

• Never place a rear-facing car seat in the front seat with an active passenger-side air bag.
• Read and follow car seat manufacturer’s instructions and the vehicle owner’s manual to determine the effect of side-impact airbags.

Installation: Secure the Car Seat to the Vehicle in the Right Way

• Read and follow the car seat manufacturer’s instructions for an acceptable rear-facing recline angle.
• When checking the recline angle, the vehicle must be on a level surface.
• Use the recline angle adjuster in the base, as needed to correct the angle.
• For car seats that do not have an adjustable base, use a tightly rolled towel or pool noodle placed at the seat bight, if needed to correct the angle.
• Secure the car seat rear-facing with the vehicle seat belt or lower connectors of the LATCH system.
• Place the car seat on the vehicle seat and route the seat belt/lower anchor connectors through the correct belt path following the manufacturer’s instructions.
• Buckle the seat belt or attach the lower connectors to the anchors and tighten.
• Pull at the belt path to be certain there is no more than one-inch of side-to-side movement.
• Check the installation each time the car seat is used.

Harnessing: Place the Child Correctly in the Car Seat

• Harness straps are positioned at or below the shoulder.
• Harness straps are snugly secured to hold the child in the car seat during a crash.
  
  “A snug strap should not allow any slack. It lies in a relatively straight line without sagging. It does not press on the child’s flesh or push the child’s body into an un-natural position.”
• Harness retainer clip is positioned at armpit level.
American Academy of Pediatrics
Best Practice Recommendations for Transporting Children

(Published in the April 2011 issue of Pediatrics)

The American Academy of Pediatrics Guidelines:

- All children 2 years or older, or those who have outgrown the rear facing weight or height limit for their car safety seat, should use a forward facing car safety seat with a harness for as long as possible, up to the highest weight or height allowed by their car safety seat's manufacturer.
- All children should be secured in the rear seat of the vehicle.

Forward-Facing Seat Best Practice

While all children and car seats are different, there are some basic guidelines to help make sure that a child is being transported in the safest possible way.

Keep a child in a forward-facing seat with a harness until:

- The child reaches the maximum forward-facing weight limit.
- The top of the child's ears reach the top of the car seat shell.
- The child's shoulders are above the top harness slot.

Tips to Achieve Correct Use of a Forward-Facing Car Seat

Selection

- Read the car seat instructions and/or label to make sure the car seat is appropriate for the child's age, weight and height.
- Be aware of height and weight limits as a child grows.
- Confirm that the child's ears are not above the top of the car seat shell.
- Seat the child in the car seat with their back and bottom in contact with the back of the car seat.

Correct Direction

- Keep the child in a forward-facing car seat with a harness until the maximum forward-facing weight or height is reached.

Seating Location

- Determine whether the seat belt or lower connectors will be used to secure the car seat.
- Choose a seating location with seat belts that can be locked or approved for LATCH, (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children).
- Secure all children younger than 13 years in the back seat of vehicles for best protection.

Tight Installation

- Read and follow the car seat manufacturer's instructions to determine the appropriate upright or semi-upright angle when installing the car seat in the forward-facing position.
- Thread and tighten the seat belt or lower connectors through the correct forward-facing belt path.
- Secure the tether with the seat belt or lower anchors, whenever possible.
- Confirm the car seat does NOT move side-to-side or front-to-back more than 1-inch when tested at the belt path.

Snug Harness

- Place the harness through the correct reinforced harness slots at or above the shoulder following the car seat manufacturer's instructions.
- Secure the child with a snug harness. A snug harness does not permit excess webbing to be pinched at the shoulder or hips once the harness is buckled.
- Place the harness retainer clip at armpit level.

Harness Slots:
Select and use the reinforced harness slots that are at or above the child's shoulder, following the car seat manufacturer's instructions.

Harness Retainer Clip:
Positioned at armpit or mid-chest level.

Snug Harness:
A snug harness does not allow the harness webbing to be folded between your thumb and forefinger when pinched at the shoulder.

Keeping Children Safe in a Car Seat

The right car seat fits the child and the car and will be used correctly every trip - every time.

Not only will the child ride as safely as possible, a child who is secured during every ride will begin a lifelong habit of being secured in the vehicle every time the child travels.

- Select a car seat with an adjustable harness height to offer options for rapidly growing children.
- Many car seats are available with harnesses that accommodate children from 65 - 90 pounds.
- Avoid bulky clothing or padding behind the child.

Car seat manufacturers recommend replacing car seats that have been in a crash.

- Check the car seat instructions for guidance on when a car seat needs to be replaced.
- Check with insurance companies regarding their crash replacement policy.
- Check the car seat label or the instructions for an expiration date. Car seats used beyond their life span are not considered safe.
- If you are unsure of how to use or install your car seat, contact the Pennsylvania Traffic Injury Prevent Project at 1-800-CAR-BELT or www.pakidstravelsafe.org for information on fitting station locations.
Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children

- Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) is designed to install car seats in the vehicle using two lower anchors and one tether, in place of the seat belt.
- Always look in the vehicle owner's manual to locate the lower anchors and tether anchors in the vehicle, and to determine which seating positions have the LATCH system or only a tether anchor.
- Only seating positions that have a standard LATCH system, as defined by the vehicle owner's manual, should be used for lower anchor installation.
- Read and follow the LATCH use instructions provided by the car seat manufacturer instructions and vehicle owner's manual.
  - Do not exceed the maximum weight limit of the lower anchors.
  - If the vehicle manufacturer does not state a weight limit, do not use the lower anchors if the child + the car seat combined weight is greater than 65 pounds.

- The tether is located on the upper part of the back of the car seat.
  - The tether hook attaches to the tether anchor in the vehicle.
  - The lower anchor connectors are located on the lower part of the car seat.
  - The lower anchor connectors on the car seat attach onto the lower anchors in the vehicle.

- Thread the lower anchor connector through the correct belt path, attach to the lower anchors and tighten.
- Use a tether when installing forward-facing car seats whenever possible. A tether may be used with the lower anchors or a seat belt. A tether holds the forward-facing car seat against the vehicle seat reducing the distance that the child’s head moves forward in a crash by 4 to 6 inches. This reduces the risk of head injuries.
- A car seat can be installed with LATCH in a non-standard LATCH seating position if both the vehicle and car seat manufacturers allow.
- Never install a car seat using lower anchors and the seat belt at the same time unless specifically allowed by both the car seat and vehicle manufacturer.
- Using Lower Anchor Connectors with Booster Seats: Some booster seats have lower anchor connectors to secure and properly position the booster seat in the vehicle. The vehicle seat belt secures the child in the booster seat. In this situation, both the lower anchor connectors and vehicle seat belt may be used at the same time and the vehicle lower anchor weight limits do not apply.
- Unused seat belts may be within reach of a child when a car seat is installed with lower connectors. Reduce the risk of entanglement from unused seat belts by securing unused seat belts as directed by the vehicle manufacturer.

Forw ard-Facing: Position the Shoulder Harness At or Above Child's Shoulders

When a child is forward-facing the harness straps should be coming out of a slot AT or ABOVE shoulder level.

The correct position of the shoulder harness is at or above your child’s shoulders. Correct shoulder harness height is critical to optimally securing the child and reducing the child’s movement in the event of a sudden stop or impact.

Harness Positioning For Forward-Facing

In a frontal collision, a child will move forward with sudden force against the car seat harness. The correct positioning of the harness, placed at or above the child's shoulders when forward-facing most effectively decreases the distance the child will travel when propelled forward in a crash, (see illustration to the right). The proper positioning of the harness reduces the amount of forward movement resulting in the child experiencing less violent forces.

Selecting the Correct Harness Slot

Read the car seat instructions to learn how to adjust the harness height for the child. On many car seats, harness height is adjusted by threading the webbing through slots at different heights on the back of the car seat. Some car seats have a no-rethread harness that adjust the harness height by pulling on levers, pushing buttons, or turning knobs to raise and lower the harness.

Convertible car seats with a rethread harness may require the use of the top slots or allow only certain slots be used for forward-facing. Use only the reinforced harness slots permitted in the instructions to keep the harness secure in a crash. All harness slots are reinforced on combination car seats and forward-facing-only car seats. Use the harness slots that are closest to the child and located at or above the child’s shoulders.

Correct Installation

The harness straps are anchored snugly at or above a forward-facing child's shoulders, and better restrain the child from moving forward.
Child Passenger Safety: What You Should Know

How Belt-Positioning Booster Seats Protect Children

Children who have outgrown their forward-facing car seat by height or weight, but are still too small to ride safely in the vehicle’s lap and shoulder belt, should be properly restrained in a belt-positioning booster seat. A belt-positioning booster seat raises and positions the child so the vehicle’s lap and shoulder belt fit properly over the strong bones of the child’s body. A belt-positioning booster seat helps to position the vehicle’s lap and shoulder belt across the center of the child’s shoulder and chest, and the lap belt low and snug across the hips/upper thighs providing a safe transition between the car seat with a harness and the vehicle’s seat belt. There are 2 types of belt-positioning booster seats.

- **Backless Belt-Positioning Booster Seat**
  - Use only with a lap and shoulder belt in a vehicle seating position with a tall seat back or head restraint so the child’s head can be supported, up to the top of the ears.

- **High-Back Belt-Positioning Booster Seat**
  - Recommended for vehicles that do not provide head restraint or support for the child’s head to provide head, neck, and back support.
  - Many designed with large side “wings” that provide head protection during an impact. They help to contain the head during an impact, and often contain foam designed to absorb energy in a crash.

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**Belt-Positioning Booster Seats (Booster Seats)**

- Booster seats are a middle step to protect children who are too big for a car seat and too small for just the seat belt. Booster seats are more than twice as effective in reducing the risk of injury when compared to seat belts alone.
- Booster seats are held in place by the child’s weight and the vehicle’s lap and shoulder belt.

- **Backless Booster Seats:**
  - The child’s ears should not be above the back of the vehicle seat or top of the head restraint.
  - Most backless booster seats come with a positioner to adjust the shoulder belt height on the child.

- **High-Back Booster Seats:**
  - Provide head, neck, and back support for the child.
  - Recommended for vehicle seats that do not provide support for the child’s head; such as those with a low seat back or no head restraint.
  - Some high-back booster seats can only be used with a vehicle seat or head restraints behind them.
  - Use only shoulder belt positioners provided with the booster seat.
  - Some high-back booster seats can be used as backless booster seats by removing the booster seat back.

- **Booster Seats and Lower Anchor Weight Limits**
  - Some booster seats have lower anchor connectors to hold the seat in place.
  - Lower anchors can be used to the maximum child weight allowed by the car seat manufacturer.
  - When a child is secured in a booster seat, the seat belt absorbs the crash forces and a small amount of force is applied to the lower anchors.
  - Lower anchor weight limits do not apply to booster seats.
  - The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s mandated labels are not intended to apply to booster seats.

- **Lower Anchors Used to Secure a Booster Seat**
  - Lower anchor connectors are not required on booster seats. If the booster seat and vehicle manufacturer both allow, the lower anchor connectors can be used if there is no interference with proper use of the seat belt.
  - If the booster seat is installed properly and the seat belt cannot be placed in proper position on the child’s body, discontinue use of the lower anchor connectors.
  - Lower anchor connectors hold the booster seat in place on the vehicle seat.
  - Read and follow the car seat manufacturer’s instructions on tightness of the lower anchor connectors. Some car seat manufacturers require a tight installation, while others prefer the lower anchor connectors remain slack.

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**Tips to Achieve Correct Use of a Belt-Positioning Booster Seat**

- **Car Seat Selection**
  - Select a belt-positioning booster seat only when the child has outgrown a forward-facing car seat with a harness.
  - Read the booster seat instructions and/or label for the weight ranges and guidance on correct use.

- **Correct Direction**
  - Place the belt-positioning booster seat forward-facing and flat on the vehicle seat.

- **Seating Location**
  - Select a seating position with a lap and shoulder belt.
  - Confirm the child has appropriate head support from either the vehicle seat/head restraint or the belt-positioning booster seat back.
  - Move the front seat back as far as possible if a booster seat is used in the front seat.
  - Secure all children younger than 13 years in the back seat of vehicles for best protection.

- **Tight Installation**
  - Use only with a lap and shoulder belt.
  - Thread the vehicle’s lap and shoulder belts through the correct belt path and buckle.

- **Snug Harness**
  - Confirm the lap and shoulder belts are laying flat against the child’s body, positioned across the center of the chest and low and snug across the hips.
Recommendations for Children in Seat Belts

Seat belts can be safely used to secure children who are big enough for the seat belt to fit correctly. Seat belts are designed so that the strongest areas of the body, the bones of the hips and shoulder, absorb the forces in a crash. Seat belts prevent occupants from being thrown inside the vehicle, into each other, or from being ejected from the vehicle.

When you can answer ‘yes’ to all of the following questions, your child is ready to safely sit on a vehicle seat using a lap and shoulder belt without a booster seat:
1. Can your child sit with their lower back against the vehicle seat back?
2. Do your child’s knees bend comfortably at the front edge of the vehicle seat and do their feet touch the floor?
3. Does the vehicle shoulder belt cross the center of your child’s chest and shoulder?
4. Does the lap belt stay low and snug across the hips near the top of the thighs?
5. Can your child stay comfortably seated with the lap and shoulder belt correctly positioned for the entire trip?

Tips to Achieve Correct Use of a Seat Belt

- **Selection**
  - Use both a lap and shoulder belt.
  - Select a lap belt only seating position if necessary. A lap belt provides no upper body protection, but is better than no restraint.

- **Correct Direction**
  - Secure the child seated forward-facing on the vehicle seat.

- **Seating Location**
  - Select a seating position with a lap and shoulder belt.
  - Confirm the child has appropriate head support from the vehicle seat/head restraint.
  - Secure all children younger than 13 years in the back seat of vehicle.
  - Move the front seat back as far as possible if a front seat is used.

- **Tight Installation**
  - Use a lap and shoulder belt that is buckled.
  - Confirm that a child is seated in the proper position for the length of travel.

- **Snug Harness**
  - Confirm the lap and shoulder belt are laying flat against the child’s body, positioned across the center of the chest and low and snug across the hips.
  - Confirm the shoulder belt is not placed under the arm or behind the back.

Properly Adjusting a Head Restraint

Head restraints are designed to restrict head movement during a rear-impact collision and reduce the chance of neck and shoulder injury. The properly adjusted head restraint provides support to the head in a crash helping to prevent whiplash. Reducing the distance between the back of the head and head restraint will prevent the neck from bending back. It will also reduce the amount of time it takes the head to contact the head restraint, and increase the amount of time that the head is supported during a crash. Whiplash is a term used to describe neck pain following an injury to the soft tissues of the neck (specifically ligaments, tendons, and muscles). It is caused by an abnormal motion or force applied to the neck that causes movement beyond the neck’s normal range of motion.

Correct head restraint adjustment:
- Adjustable restraints are the most common type. They can be raised or lowered to the proper height, and many can be tilted toward or away from the head. However, they’re only effective if adjusted properly.
- Position the top of a head restraint to reach at least as high as the top of the ears, and preferably the top of the head.
- Position the head restraint as close to the back of the head as is comfortable. The distance between the back of the head and the head restraint should be no more than 3 inches.

Remember:
- Always wear a properly fitted lap and shoulder belt in the back seat.
  - The lap belt must be snug over the hips/upper thighs.
  - The shoulder belt must be snug across the center of the chest and shoulder.
- Correctly position the head restraint behind the head at least as high as the top of the ears and as close to the back of the head as is comfortable.
Five Steps for Correct Use & Common Car Seat Misuse

**Selection**

Select the car seat, booster seat, or seat belt that is right for the child’s age, weight, height, and developmental needs. The right car seat or booster seat fits the child and the car, and will be used correctly every trip - every time. Not only will the child ride as safely as possible, a child who is secured during every ride will establish a foundation for a lifelong habit of seat belt use every time the child travels.

- Select a car seat with an adjustable harness height to offer options for rapidly growing children.
- Some car seats have adjustable positions for crotch straps for a better fit as the child grows.
- Booster seats keep the lap belt from causing injury to a child’s abdomen and keeps the shoulder belt in the proper position to provide upper body protection.
- Seat belts can be used to safely secure children when the lap belt stays low and snug across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt crosses the center of the chest and shoulder.

Selecting the correct child restraint type is the first step in making sure a child is safe in the vehicle. Be aware of height and weight limits as a child grows. When in doubt, contact a child passenger safety technician in your community.

**Car Seat & Booster Seats that Have Been Involved in a Crash**

- Always follow the car seat manufacturer’s instructions for guidelines on when the car seat or booster seat must be replaced.
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recommends that child safety seats be replaced following a moderate or severe crash. Replacement after a minor crash is not always necessary.
- Minor crashes meet all of the following criteria:
  - The vehicle was able to be driven away from the crash site.
  - The vehicle door nearest the safety seat was undamaged.
  - There were no injuries to any of the vehicle occupants.
  - The air bags, if present, did not deploy.
  - There is no visible damage to the safety seat.

**Car Seat and Booster Seat Selection Errors**

- A car seat or booster seat that the child is too small for or has outgrown.
- A household carrier or other product that does not meet federal car seat design and testing standards.
- A car seat or booster seat used beyond the car seat manufacturer’s expiration date. The expiration date provides guidance on the expected “useful” life span.
- A second-hand car seat or booster seat that is missing instructions, parts, and/or has an unknown history.
- A car seat that has been recalled and has not been repaired.
- A car seat or booster seat that has been involved in a moderate to severe crash.

**Misuse: Moving a child out of a booster seat too soon:**

Seat belts are designed to fit adults, not children. Injuries to the abdomen or chest can occur from improper seat belt fit during a crash or abrupt stop.

- Keep children in a booster seat until the seat belt fits properly: the lap belt is positioned low across the hips and upper thighs and the shoulder belt crosses the center of the chest and collarbone. Children must remain in the correct seating position for the entire trip.
- Booster seats are more than twice as effective in reducing the risk of injury for children when compared to children using the seat belt alone.

**Direction**

For the best possible protection, secure children in a rear-facing car seat until 2 years of age or until the maximum weight or height allowed by the manufacturer of the car seat.

**Rear-facing:**

Always secure children younger than 1 year of age in a rear-facing car seat.

- The child should remain in a rear-facing car seat to the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer’s instructions.
- If a child outgrows a rear-facing only car seat before age 2, use a rear-facing convertible car seat to the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer.

**Forward-Facing:**

When children outgrow a rear-facing car seat, secure them in a forward-facing car seat with a harness for as long as possible, up to the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer of the car seat.

**Rear-facing:** the shell of the car seat absorbs the forces of the crash across the entire head, neck and back.

**Forward-facing:** the harness absorbs the forces of a crash and holds the child in the vehicle.

**Misuse: Turning your child forward-facing too soon:**

Turning a child forward-facing before age two can result in head, neck or spinal cord injury in a crash due to their undeveloped bodies.

- Keep children in a rear-facing car seat until they reach age 2 or the maximum weight or height limit recommended by the car seat manufacturer.
- Rear-facing car seats distribute the forces of a crash across the entire head and body of the child. The shell of the car seat absorbs the crash forces.
- Rear-facing car seats support the head, neck and back. Traveling rear-facing is 5 times safer than forward-facing.
- Children in the second year of life are five times less likely to die or be seriously injured in a crash if secured rear-facing compared to forward-facing.
Five Steps for Correct Use & Common Car Seat Misuse

Location
All children younger than age 13 should ride in a back seat.

- Never place a rear-facing car seat in the front vehicle seat if the passenger-side front air bag is turned on.
- Read and follow car seat manufacturer’s instructions and the vehicle owner’s manual to determine the effect of side-impact airbags.

Install the Car Seat in the Right Seating Position in the Car
- There may be many seating positions in a vehicle, not all are suitable to secure a car seat.
- The car seat manufacturer instructions and/or the vehicle owner’s manual may not permit securing a car seat in certain seating positions.
- Some vehicle manufacturers do not allow a car seat to be secured in the center seating position in a back seat.
- Select a seating position that allows for correct use of the car seat following the car seat and vehicle manufacturer’s instructions.
- Weight limits on lower anchors and tether anchor locations may affect the seating position choice.

Misuse: Securing a child in the front seat prematurely:
- Never place a rear-facing car seat in front of an active front seat air bag.
- If it is necessary to secure a forward-facing car seat in the front seat, be sure to turn the air bag off or move the vehicle seat back as far as possible, away from the air bag.

Installation
Always read and follow the car seat instructions and vehicle owner’s manual.

Seat Belt/LATCH
- Car seat should be secured with the vehicle seat belt or lower anchor connector routed through the correct belt path.
- Seat belt/anchor connector is tight and locked in place allowing no more than 1-inch of side-to-side movement when pulled at the belt path.
- The installation should be checked for tightness each time the car seat is used.
- Always use the tether when installing a car seat forward-facing with the seat belt or lower anchors.

Install the Car Seat in the Right Way
- Read and follow the car seat manufacturer’s instructions for the correct rear-facing or forward-facing angle position; reclined, semi-reclined, or upright angle.
- Secure the rear-facing car seat with the vehicle seat belt or lower anchors.
- Secure the forward-facing car seat with the seat belt or lower anchors and the tether, following manufacturer’s instructions.
- Secure a booster seat with a lap and shoulder belt.

General Method to Obtain a Tight Installation
- Place the car seat on the vehicle seat in the correct direction.
- Thread and tighten the seat belt or lower anchor connectors through the correct belt path.
- Buckle and lock the seat belt or attach the connectors to the lower anchors in the vehicle. Tighten to ensure the car seat does not move more than one-inch when checked at the belt path.
- Attach and tighten the tether with the seat belt or lower anchor connector routed through the correct belt path.

Harnessing
Always read and follow the car seat instructions.

Harness
- Harness straps are snugly secured to hold the child in the car seat during a crash.
- “A snug strap should not allow any slack. It lies in a relatively straight line without sagging. It does not press on the child’s flesh or push the child’s body into an un-natural position.”
- Harness retainer clip is positioned at armpit level.

Correct shoulder harness height is critical to being fully secured and reducing the child’s movement in the event of a sudden stop or crash. The less movement that occurs, the less violent forces the child feels in the collision. The harness:
- Keeps the child in the car seat during a crash.
- Contacts the strongest parts of the child’s body.
- Spreads the crash forces.
- Manages the crash forces when correctly positioned.
- Protects the head, brain and spinal cord.

Always follow the car seat instructions on correct harness position.

Four steps to correctly place a child in a car seat.
1. Child is seated all the way back in a car seat. The child’s back and bottom should be in contact with the back and bottom of the car seat.
2. Place the harness straps in the correct harness slots for the child.
- Rear-Facing: The harness is placed AT OR BELOW the child’s shoulders.
- Forward-Facing: The harness is placed AT OR ABOVE the child’s shoulders.
3. Buckle and tighten the harness straps snugly.
4. Place the harness retainer clip at armpit level.

Misuse: Harness not positioned correctly:

 Loose harness straps do not properly secure a child in a crash and increases the child’s forward movement and possible ejection from the car seat. Harness straps lay flat, without any twists, and are snug enough that you cannot pinch any extra webbing at the child’s shoulder.

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Misuse: Car seat not installed tightly enough:

Car seats will not stay in place if the seat belt or lower anchor connection is too loose. A loose car seat increases movement in a crash and the likelihood a child will be injured in a crash.

- Make sure the car seat does not move from side-to-side or front-to-back more than 1-inch when pulled at the belt path.

Harness retainer (chest clip) not at armpit level can allow the child to slip out of the harness.

The harness retainer clip holds the shoulder straps together in the proper position over the child’s shoulders and chest, which keeps the child secure during a crash or sudden stop.
All drivers operating a passenger car, Class I and Class II truck, classic motor vehicle, antique motor vehicle or motor home shall securely fasten infants and children under 8 years of age in an approved child restraint/booster when the child is riding anywhere in the motor vehicle, including the cargo area. The car seat/booster seat may be in any seating position in the vehicle that is equipped with a seat belt. (However, for maximum protection, a back seat is preferable.)

All drivers transporting children under 4 years of age are responsible to securely restrain those children in an approved child passenger restraint system.

◆ A child younger than two years of age shall be secured in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system, to be used until the child outgrows the maximum weight and height limits designated by the car seat manufacturer. (Primary Law)
  ◆ Violators may be stopped as a primary offense for non-compliance with the Child Passenger Protection Law for children birth to age 4. Violators will be fined $75.00, plus Court Costs (adjusted annually); $45.00 Surcharge; $10.00 EMS Fund and $10.00 Administrative Costs.
  ◆ The fine shall be dismissed if the person prior to or at his hearing displays evidence of acquisition of a child passenger restraint system/booster. Evidence shall include a receipt mailed to the appropriate court officer, which evidences purchase, rental, transferal from another child seat owner (by notarized letter) or bailment from a bona fide child seat loaner program.

All drivers transporting children 4 years of age or older but under 8 years of age are responsible to securely restrain those children in a seat belt system and an appropriately fitting child booster seat. (Primary Law)

◆ Violators may be stopped as a primary offense for non-compliance of the Child Passenger Protection Law for children age 4 to age 8. Violators will be fined $75.00, plus Court Costs (adjusted annually); $45.00 Surcharge; $10.00 EMS Fund and $10.00 Administrative Costs.
◆ The fine shall be dismissed if the person prior to or at his hearing displays evidence of acquisition of a child passenger restraint system/booster. Evidence shall include a receipt mailed to the appropriate court officer, which evidences purchase, rental, transferal from another child seat owner (by notarized letter) or bailment from a bona fide child seat loaner program.

An approved child passenger restraint system is labeled indicating that the child restraint conforms to all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

Fines collected are placed in a fund and used to purchase car seats for loaner programs.

Civil immunity for child passenger safety technicians and lenders of car seats has been granted. No certified child passenger safety technician or organization acting in good faith, within the scope of the national standardized child passenger safety training, and without a fee or charge to the owner or operator of the vehicle, shall be liable for an act of omission that occurs in giving advice or assistance regarding the inspection, installation or adjustment of a car seat. No person or organization who lends child restraints shall be liable for any civil damages resulting from any acts or omission, except any act or omission intentionally designed to harm or any grossly negligent act or omission resulting in harm to another.

Hospitals are required to notify parents of the location of car seat loan programs in the community. It is recommended that hospitals also provide information on the Pennsylvania's Child Passenger Safety law. Providing educational materials about the law and correct selection and use of car seats will assist families in keeping their children safe during travel.
CPS Week Event Registration
September 17 - 23, 2017

Pennsylvania will be joining the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and other states in the nation in celebrating **Child Passenger Safety Week** and **NHTSA’s Annual “Seat Check Saturday”** on Saturday, September 23th. The goal of the program is to educate parents on the correct selection and use of their child restraints. Join Pennsylvania in observing Child Passenger Safety Week and help us to get the word out about car seat checks and educational efforts being conducted. **Please register your event.** Event registration can be completed at [www.pakidstravelsafe.org](http://www.pakidstravelsafe.org) on the “2017 CPS Week” page, or submitted by FAX at 484-446-3036, or by email to aosterhuber@paaap.org. All registered events will be sent to PennDOT and NHTSA and posted on the PA TIPP and NHTSA websites. The events will also be shared through local media releases to help advertise them in communities. The compiled statewide list will be available upon request to community partners and child passenger safety advocates.

NHTSA requests the list of events held during CPS Week and also requests data from the events. Share the success of your event by completing the data collection form. The information requested by NHTSA is provided below. The data collection form can be completed at [www.pakidstravelsafe.org](http://www.pakidstravelsafe.org) on the “2017 CPS Week” page or submitted by FAX or email. Please submit the Follow-Up Data Collection form by September 29th. The data from each event will be compiled and submitted to PennDOT and NHTSA.

Thank you in advance for your effort to protect the children in your community and cooperation in providing information about your event for Child Passenger Safety Week.

CPS Week & Seat Check Saturday - Car Seat Check EVENT REGISTRATION

| DATE of EVENT: ____________________ | START TIME: ____________________ | END TIME: ____________________ | COUNTY: ____________________ |
| EVENT LOCATION: ________________________________________________________________________ | ADDRESS: _________________________ |
| CITY: _______________________________________________________________________________ | ZIP CODE: ________________________ |
| NAME OF ORGANIZATION: __________________________________________________________________________________________________________ |
| CONTACT NAME: _________________________________________________________________________________________________________________ |
| PHONE: ____________________ | EMAIL: __________________________________________________________________________ |

**CPS WEEK EVENT(S) — Follow-Up Data Collection Form:**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Check Event Location</th>
<th>Safe Kids Event (Y or N)</th>
<th>Techs Assisting</th>
<th>Seats Checked</th>
<th>Seats Distributed</th>
<th># of Car Seats Registered on Site</th>
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Data collected will be included in the Pennsylvania report submitted by PennDOT to NHTSA

FAX to 484-446-3036 or email to aosterhuber@paaap.org