

CHP reminds motorists car seats save lives

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Every day, California Highway Patrol (CHP) officers respond to vehicle crashes involving children. Finding a child who is unharmed thanks to the proper use of a safety seat can be a bright spot in an otherwise grim situation.

Vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for children age 13 and under. The CHP, which works every day to help prevent those deaths, is partnering with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to promote Child Passenger Safety Week, Sept. 20-26. In 2017, NHTSA data showed that 37 percent of the children killed in car crashes were unrestrained.

“The pandemic has heightened the focus on children’s health and safety for many parents and caregivers,” CHP Commissioner Warren Stanley said. “Keeping children safe in your vehicle for every single trip is just as important as ever.”

California law requires that all children under 8 years of age be properly restrained in an appropriate child safety seat in the back seat of a vehicle. Children under 2 years of age must ride in a rear-facing car seat in the back seat. Children who are at least 8 years old or 4 feet 9 inches tall should continue to ride in the back seat in either a safety seat, such as a booster seat, or lap/shoulder belt. Children should be kept in an appropriate child seat until they reach the upper height and weight recommended by the car seat manufacturer.

NHTSA has found almost 60 percent of children’s safety seats are used incorrectly.

Useful information about the proper seat choice and installation tips are available at <https://www.chp.ca.gov/Programs-Services/Programs/Child-Safety-Seats>.

