

Media Advisory:
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**Jesse White Joins CPD Supt. Eddie Johnson, IDOT, NHTSA & State Police to Encourage Proper
Car Seat Usage**

Child Safety Seat Check to follow; National Child Passenger Safety Week is Sept. 15-21

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White is reminding parents and caregivers to secure children in the correct safety seat as Sept. 15-21 marks National Child Passenger Safety Week. As partners in this important message, White joined Chicago Police Department Superintendent Eddie Johnson, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Illinois State Police, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), a doctor from Northwestern Memorial Hospital and a father, whose daughter survived a serious car crash without any injury because she was secured properly in a child safety seat.

“State law requires children under 8-years-old to be secured in the appropriate safety seat and that children remain in rear-facing safety seats until they are 2-years-old, unless they weigh more than 40 pounds or are more than 40 inches tall,” said Secretary White. “My goal is to make sure our roads are as safe as possible. We can do that by ensuring our children are secured in properly-installed safety seats and that we set a good example as adults by always wearing our safety belts.”

“There is nothing more important to a parent or guardian than the safety of their children,” said Superintendent Johnson. “The Chicago Police Department shares that responsibility by emphasizing the importance of utilizing child safety seats. Every state in the nation requires that an infant or small child be restrained. All 22 Chicago Police districts have trained technicians available to educate drivers who transport children about the proper method of installing a child seat. Together, let’s protect our precious cargo---our children.”

- Car crashes are a leading cause of death for children ages 1-13, according to the NHTSA.
- The Illinois Child Passenger Protection Act states that children under age 8 must be secured in an appropriate child restraint system, including booster seats.
- Car seats have been shown to reduce fatal injury by 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers, according to NHTSA.
- Forty-six percent of car seats and booster seats are not used properly, according to NHTSA.
- Parents should never place rear-facing car seats in front of an active airbag.
- Parents are encouraged to keep children under age 13 in the back seat, where they are the safest.

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Car seat check events are scheduled throughout Illinois during National Child Passenger Safety Week. The Secretary of State’s office, through its Keep Me in a Safe Seat program, provides child safety seat inspections by certified child safety seat technicians at 10 Driver Services facilities throughout the state.

John Kurzatkowski and his daughters, Rosie and May, attended the press conference. When Rosie was 2 months old, she was with her mom and sister, when they were struck by another vehicle. Authorities told the family that Rosie was not injured due to the fact she was properly secured in a safety seat.

“The best safety decisions are often made before even getting in a vehicle,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “Parents and caregivers, if you are unsure that you are using the right car seats and installing them correctly, please visit one of the more than 100 events throughout the state this week and during Seat Check Saturday. Give yourself peace of mind. You could save a life.”

IDOT is supporting 101 safety seat checks statewide this week, including 50 on Saturday, Sept. 21. For a schedule and a map of locations, visit www.buckleupillinois.org.

“Statistics show that the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 13 are car crashes,” stated ISP Acting Director Brendan Kelly. “The Illinois State Police encourages drivers to ensure the proper use of car seats and seat belts to help keep children safe. The best car seat is the one that fits the child’s size, is correctly installed, and is used properly every time you drive,” he concluded.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to contact the office to schedule a visit at a fitting station or to locate a NHTSA certified child passenger safety technician who can educate them on the appropriate car seat installation and proper installation in their vehicle. For additional information or to schedule an appointment, please call 866-247-0213 or visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

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