

NEWS RELEASE

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 14, 2009

Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving Announces Child Passenger Safety Week *Protect Your Precious Cargo, Indiana*

Indianapolis, IN. –In an effort to increase awareness about the life saving benefits of child safety seats, the Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving and the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) today announced that September 12-18 is National Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Week. During this time, state and local law enforcement agencies will be out enforcing Indiana's child passenger safety laws to ensure that parents and caregivers are properly restraining all children who are transported in motor vehicles.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), motor vehicle collisions are the leading cause of death for children ages 3 to 6 and 8 to 14 in the United States. More than 6,000 children (ages 0 to 15) were involved in motor vehicle collisions in Indiana during 2008. Of this number, more than 40 percent were under the age of eight.

"It is the responsibility of every parent and caregiver to make sure their children are safely restrained – every seat, every trip, every time," said ICJI Executive Director, Neil Moore. "Anyone that transports a child is urged to have his or her safety seat(s) inspected this week. When it comes to the safety of a child, there is no room for mistakes."

According to ICJI, just over 82 percent of children ages eight to 15 years were properly restrained in Indiana traffic collisions in 2008. This was slightly lower than the overall child restraint usage rate of 86 percent. Children less than one year old who were not properly restrained were 25 times more likely to be killed in a traffic collision during 2008 than those wearing the proper restraint.

Indiana law states that all motor vehicle occupants must be properly restrained. For children age eight and younger, the use of proper child safety restraints is required. Older children and adults must wear a seat belt regardless of where they are seated in the vehicle.

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"Protect Your Precious Cargo: September 12-19, 2009 is Child Passenger Safety Week."
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Dr. T. Neil Moore, executive director
www.in.gov/cji

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“Child Passenger Safety Week is a time for our CPS advocates and technicians to impress upon parents and caregivers that growing up safe is a four step process. As children grow, how they are transported in the vehicle should be determined by their age, height and weight. Parents and caregivers should also remember that properly restraining their children is not an option – it’s the law. Anyone who fails to comply can be cited,” Moore added.

Research has shown that child restraint use (including lap/shoulder safety belts and child safety seats) is the most effective tools in preventing serious and fatal injuries to children who are involved in a crash. NHTSA reports that child safety seats, when used properly, can reduce the risk of fatal injury by 71 percent for children less than one year old and 54 percent for children between the ages of one and four years old.

For more information about child passenger safety in Indiana, including a list of permanent fitting stations in your area, contact the Automotive Safety Program at Riley Hospital at (800) KID-N-CAR or visit www.preventinjury.org.

Led by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), National Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Week is observed in an effort to bring public attention to the importance of safely transporting children.

The Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving serves as the public opinion catalyst for statewide action to reduce death and injury on Indiana roadways. The Council provides ongoing support to state and local traffic safety advocates.

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