



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
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Seat Check Saturday in Illinois for Child Passenger Safety Week

IDOT, AAA partner to educate motorists on common #8carseatmistakes

SPRINGFIELD – Recognizing that common car-seat mistakes can have deadly consequences, the Illinois Department of Transportation is partnering with AAA and child safety advocates this week during National Child Passenger Safety Week to educate motorists on what to do—and what to avoid—to keep young passengers safe. At the heart of the effort is “National Seat Check Saturday” on Sept. 23, with nearly 100 free car-seat safety checks planned throughout the state and listed at BuckleUpIllinois.org.

“Children are our most precious cargo, and their parents and other caregivers deserve the peace of mind that comes with knowing their little ones are secured in the right car seat, in the right position and with the right safety features in place,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “We encourage everyone to consider getting their car seats checked and talk with a certified child passenger safety technician about the common mistakes to avoid.”

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in most cases, a child’s car seat is installed incorrectly 59 percent of the time. Additionally, about 26 percent of children 4 to 7 are moved to seat belts too soon, when they should have been riding in booster seats. In Illinois, children are required to be in a car seat or booster seat until at least age 8, and all children younger than 13 should ride in the back seat.

As part of National Child Passenger Safety Week, IDOT and AAA are highlighting eight common car-seat mistakes (#8carseatmistakes) that occur under age 8:

1. Turning the child forward facing too soon.
2. Not adjusting the harness snugly against the child.
3. Not securing the car seat in the vehicle properly.
4. Forgetting to register the car seat for recall notifications.
5. Having toys or other items unsecured in the vehicle.
6. Not using the lower anchors/LATCH system as approved.
7. Not using the top tether on a forward-facing car seat.
8. Moving to the next car seat or booster seat too soon.

“Illinois has made great strides in keeping its children safe on the roadways. Nearly 250 children younger than 5 were saved by a car seat in 2015,” said Beth Mosher, director of public affairs for AAA. “But there are still some parents and caregivers who need assistance to ensure their children are safely buckled up. We encourage all parents to take advantage of the free seat check events this week.”

NHTSA recommends keeping children rear-facing as long as possible up to the top height or weight allowed by their particular seats. Once a child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, he or she is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and top tether. After outgrowing his or her car seat, the child should be placed in a booster seat.

While Illinois law states a child must be in an appropriate car seat or booster seat until their 8th birthday, most 8-year-old children are not tall enough for the seat belt to fit them correctly. These children need to stay in a booster seat until they are at least 4-feet, 9 inches tall.

For more information about the proper use of car seats and booster seats, visit BuckleUpIllinois.org/8carseatmistakes.

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