Citrus Heights Police Department
6315 Fountain Square Drive | Citrus Heights, CA 95621 | (916) 727-5500
**Alexander A. Turcotte, Chief of Police**

***~ Office of the Chief ~***
MEDIA RELEASE

***Release Date:***
September 21, 2025

# *September 21 – 27, 2025 is Child Passenger Safety Week*

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is reminding parents and caregivers that child passengers are best protected in a crash when they are correctly buckled in the right seats for their ages and sizes. Car seats and booster seats have height and weight limits, and children should stay in each seat until they outgrow those limits. The safest place for all children under 13 is the back seat, as air bags are designed for adult passengers in the front seat.

Vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for children, and the latest research from NHTSA shows that 46 percent of car seats are misused. Common issues include children being in the wrong type of car seat for their age and size, and car seats being installed incorrectly — both of which leave children vulnerable to injury in a crash. Every day in 2023, two children under 14 were killed in traffic crashes and another 345 were injured in traffic crashes while riding in passenger vehicles.

"You don't want to be overconfident when it comes to your child's safety," said Sergeant Kane Kissam. "Caregivers need to know for sure that their children are in the right seats and that those seats are installed correctly."

Keeping a child in the right seat for their age and size can make all the difference in a crash. Of the child passengers killed in crashes in 2023, more than a third (43 percent) were unrestrained. Car seats have been shown to reduce fatal injury by 71 percent for infants under one year old and by 54 percent for toddlers one to four years old in passenger cars.

Infants have the highest rate of car seat use among children who survived fatal crashes in 2023: For those under one year old, 95 percent of those infants were buckled. Once a child outgrows a rear-facing car seat, he or she is ready for a forward-facing car seat with a harness. Only after reaching the maximum height or weight limits of a forward-facing car seat — which takes longer than most parents think — a child should be buckled in a booster seat until large enough to fit in an adult seat belt correctly.

Booster seats are a critical step between harnessed car seats and adult seat belts. If the seat belt doesn't fit a child correctly, it won't offer them the optimal protection in a crash. In 2023, the number of children killed in passenger vehicle crashes was highest for

children ages eight to 12. Once a child is ready to use a seat belt, parents should ensure that it fits correctly — that the seat belt lies across the upper thighs and is snug across the shoulder and chest, away from the face and neck.

NHTSA.gov has free resources available to answer parents' and caregivers' questions and point them in the right direction. Across the country, there are certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians who can help caregivers pick the right car seat, learn how to install it correctly, and know how to use it the right way on every trip. Learn about the different car seat types, read NHTSA's research-based recommendations, and find and compare car seats.

For more information on child passenger safety, go to NHTSA.gov/therightseat.