



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2024

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Child Passenger Safety Week Highlights Importance of Making Sure Your Child is in the Right Seat

Santa Cruz, Calif. – During Child Passenger Safety Week, Santa Cruz Police Department encourages all parents and caregivers to make sure their children are riding safely by using the correct car seats, booster seats and properly fitted seat belts. This annual campaign takes place from September 15-21 and aims to raise awareness about the importance of car seat safety and proper installation.

“Every child deserves to travel safely,” Santa Cruz Police Lieutenant Wes Morey said. “During Child Passenger Safety Week, we urge all parents and caregivers to take a few minutes to double-check their child’s car seat. Keeping a child in the right seat for their age and size can make all the difference in a crash.”

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), nearly half of car seats (46%) are misused. Properly installed car seats have been shown to reduce fatal injury crashes by 71% for infants under a year old and by 54% for toddlers ages 1 through 4.

[Santa Cruz County Child Passenger Safety Outreach and Education](#)

No-Cost Car Seats

Car seats are available on a limited basis for low-income families. Proof of low-income status or a referral from a community agency is required.

For more information or an appointment call:

- Santa Cruz/North County: **831-454-5477**
- Watsonville/South County: **831-454-4317**

[California law](#) requires all children under 2 years old to ride in a rear-facing car seat, unless the child is 40 or more pounds or is 40 or more inches tall. Once a child reaches these milestones, all children under the age of 8 years are still required to be secured in a car seat or booster seat. Children under the age of 8 may not ride in the front seat unless the vehicle is not equipped with a rear, forward-facing seat. Children 8 and older, or who are at least 4 feet 9 inches tall, may be secured by a booster seat, but at a minimum must be wearing a properly fitted safety belt.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to keep children in the proper rear or forward-facing seat as long as possible and use the “[Five-Step Test](#)” to determine if their child is big enough to safely use a seat belt without a booster seat.

To schedule a free child safety seat inspection, contact your [local CHP Area Office](#).

In Santa Cruz County Child Seat Safety Inspection Sites (by appointment only)

- AAA Watsonville 831-768-4570 (se habla Español)
- California Highway Patrol 831-662-0511
- Scotts Valley Fire Protection District 831-438-0211
- Watsonville Fire Department 831-768-3209 (se habla Español)

Funding for this program is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



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