

National Child Passenger Safety Week (September 15-21, 2019)

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In the United States, millions of parents and caregivers drive with their children every day. Unfortunately, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that 46% of all child safety seats are misused. To alleviate this issue, NHTSA leads the National Child Passenger Safety campaign every September to inform parents and caregivers of making sure their children ride as safely as possible every time.



According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death in children between the ages of 1 and 13. From 2013 to 2017, 3,313 children under the age of 13 were killed while riding in a passenger vehicle. Additionally, in 2017 alone over one-third of this group of children were not restrained in a car seat, booster seat, or seat belt. This is why it is critical for parents and caregivers to correctly use the right car seat(s) (rear-facing seats, forward-facing seats, and/or booster seats) for their child's age and size.

(Retrieved from the Public Health Image Library)

The Rappahannock Area Health District (RAHD) participates in a Child Passenger Safety Program where parents and legal guardians are able to receive a free convertible seat or booster seat for their child. To qualify for the program, applicants must: 1) be Medicaid, WIC, FAMIS eligible or meet income guidelines; 2) be a resident of Virginia; 3) be a parent, legal guardian, foster parent of a child who is 7 years old or younger, or in the last trimester of pregnancy; 4) attend a car seat installation and use class; and 5) sign a waiver of liability release form.

To learn more about RAHD's child safety seat program, please contact the following participating health departments:

Fredericksburg City Health Department (540) 899-4142

Spotsylvania County Health Department (540) 507-7400

Stafford County Health Department (540) 659-3101

While motor vehicle accidents do happen, a significant portion of injuries and fatalities that occur are due to unsafe practices and insufficient safety preparations. To learn more about what you can do to protect your child while driving, please click and share the links below:

https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/child_passenger_safety/index.html

<https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/child-safety/child-passenger-safetyweek>

<https://www.safekids.org/child-passenger-safety>

<https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats>

DID YOU KNOW?

According to Safekids.org, when a child seat is installed and used correctly, it can decrease the risk of fatal injury by 71% among infants, 54% among toddlers, and 45% among children between the ages of 4 and 8.