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With New Recommendations, West Tennessee Child Passenger Safety Center Urges Parents and Caregivers to Get Their Car Seats Inspected

[Memphis, TN] – [West Tennessee Child Passenger Safety Center] urges parents and caregivers to have their children's car seats checked on National Seat Check Saturday on September 24. As part of Child Passenger Safety Week, September 18-24, certified child passenger safety technicians from **Collierville PD, Germantown PD and SafeKids** will host the following check-up events **1.) Latino Memphis, 2838 Hickory Hill Rd. Memphis, TN 38115 September 24, 2011 10-2pm, 2.) Hobby Lobby 1991 Exeter Rd. Germantown, TN 38138, September 24, 2011 9-1pm, 3.) Lowe's Home Improvement, 425 New Byhalia Rd., Collierville, TN, September 24, 2011 10-2pm**

"The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recently released updated car seat recommendations for children through age 12," said Glenetta Dave "We want to help you do all you can to best protect your child when traveling. During Child Passenger Safety Week, we urge all parents and caregivers to have your car seat checked by a certified technician. When it comes to the safety of your child, there is no room for mistakes."

In motor vehicle crashes, car seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 71 percent for children younger than 1 and by 54 percent for children 1 to 4 in passenger cars, according to data collected by NHTSA. In 2009 alone, 754 children 12 or younger were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes while riding in passenger cars or light trucks. And among those who were fatally injured where restraint use was known, 42 percent were unrestrained. Many of these tragedies could have been prevented if the children were in the right restraint for their age and size.

The updated recommendations emphasize how important it is to keep children in each restraint type for as long as possible before moving them to the next type. For maximum child passenger safety, parents and caregivers should visit their local inspection station to ensure their children's car seats are used properly:

Birth – 12 months

For the best possible protection, your child under age 1 should always ride in a rear-facing car seat. There are different types of rear-facing car seats: infant-only seats can only be used rear-facing. Convertible and 3-in-1 car seats typically have higher height and weight limits for the rear-facing position, allowing you to keep your child rear-facing for a longer period of time.

2 – 3 years

Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. This may result in many children riding rear-facing to age 2 or older. Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, your child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness.

4 – 7 years

Keep your child in a forward-facing car seat with a harness until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat with a harness, it's time to travel in a booster seat, but still in the back seat.

8 – 12 years

Keep your child in a booster seat until he or she is big enough to fit in a seat belt properly. For a seat belt to fit properly the lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should lie snugly across the shoulder and chest and not cross the neck or face.

Remember:

- Select a car seat based on your child's age and size, and choose a seat that fits in your vehicle and use it every time.
- Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions; read the vehicle owner's manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or LATCH system; and check height and weight limits.
- To maximize safety, keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.
- Keep your child in the back seat at least through age 12.

For more information on Child Passenger Safety Week or to find your local car seat event, visit www.nhtsa.gov.

For live updates follow [@childseatsafety on Twitter](https://twitter.com/childseatsafety) or join the community of parents, advocates and safety experts on <http://www.facebook.com/childpassengersafety>.