



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Child Passenger Safety

National Child Passenger Safety Week — September 18–24, 2016

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Proper installation and use of car seats and booster seats for child passengers can save their lives. Drivers should make sure children are always buckled up.

Bethany West is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. She's joining us today to discuss how to keep young passengers as safe as possible. Welcome to the show, Bethany.

[Ms. West] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Bethany, how many children in the U.S. are killed or injured in motor-vehicle crashes?

[Ms. West] Well, each year, about 600 child passengers aged 12 and under die in crashes, and more than 121,000 are injured.

[Dr. Gaynes] What can drivers do to make sure child passengers are as safe as possible?

[Ms. West] Well, first, buckle up. Make sure child passengers are always buckled. And drivers should use their seat belts on every trip, as this sets a good example. Also, drivers should know how to use age- and size-appropriate car seats, booster seats, and seat belts. And for the best possible protection, always keep children under age 13 in the back seat.

[Dr. Gaynes] Why the back seat?

[Ms. West] The back seat is safer as children in the front seat have a 40 to 70 percent increased risk of injury when compared to children in the back seat.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the child age and size recommendations for different types of car seats?

[Ms. West] Infants from birth until age two should use rear facing car seats. Children that are age two years to at least age five years should use forward facing car seats. After age five, booster seats should be used until seat belts fit properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs, not the stomach, and the shoulder belt lays across the chest, not the neck or face.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can parents go in the community to make sure that car seats are properly installed?

[Ms. West] Child safety seat inspection stations are available in most communities. At the inspection stations, a certified technician will inspect the car seat for proper installation and proper use, free of charge. To find an inspection station in your area, go to safercar.gov/parents and, in the search box, type 'seat inspection'.

[Dr. Gaynes] Bethany, where can listeners get more information about child passenger safety?

[Ms. West] More child passenger safety information can be found at cdc.gov. In the search box, type 'child passenger safety'.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Bethany. I've been talking today with CDC's Bethany West about keeping children safe while riding in motor vehicles.

Remember, rear-facing and forward-facing car seats and booster seats will protect children until adult seat belts fit them properly. Protect your young passengers by buckling them up every time, at every age, on every trip.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.