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**NEWS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Three Out of Four Children Riding at Risk!**  
***Enforcement and car seat check events planned for National Child  
Passenger Safety Week (Sept. 12 – 19)***

**Dover** – In July, three young children ages 11 months, two years, and three years old were injured in a single car motor vehicle crash in Laurel – police report none of the three were properly restrained in child safety seats. This crash highlights a disturbing situation that continues to exist in this country...that three out of four child children are riding at risk because their car seats are not installed properly.

That's why the Delaware Office of Highway Safety (OHS) is coordinating both enforcement and awareness activities for National Child Passenger Safety Week (September 12 – 19). National CPS Week is an annual campaign to bring public attention to the importance of properly securing all children in appropriate child safety seats, booster seats, or seat belts – every trip, every time.

“We are urging everyone to see this special week as an opportunity and a call to action, to get their child safety seats checked for correct installation,” said Andrea Summers, a Certified Child Passenger Safety Instructor for OHS. “When it comes to the safety of a child, there is no room for mistakes.”

The campaign kicks off on September 12, 2009, with “National Seat Check Saturday,” where certified child passenger safety technicians nationwide will provide free child safety seat inspections that educate parents and caregivers on how to install their child's safety seats properly in their vehicles. In Delaware the “Seat Check Saturday” event will be at the **Burlington Coat Factory, in the Tri State Mall on Naamans Rd, in NcCo from noon to 3 p.m.**

OHS has four additional car seat check events planned for the week of September 12 – 19<sup>th</sup>:

- 1) Monday September 14<sup>th</sup> – Lewes Auto Mall, Rt. 1 NB in Lewes, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., live remote by Eagle 97
- 2) Monday September 14<sup>th</sup> - Cozy Critters Child Care (for center's parents), Ocean View, 4 – 6 p.m.
- 3) Tuesday September 15<sup>th</sup> – Closic's Children's Store, 4201 Miller Rd., Wilmington, 10 a.m. – 2 pm.
- 4) Thursday September 17<sup>th</sup> - Milford Avenue Methodist Church, Milford, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

In addition to the enforcement efforts, 12 State and local police agencies will conduct 16 checkpoints and nearly 200 patrols during the week, looking for unrestrained children, as well as other occupants, in vehicles. Participating agencies include Clayton Police, Dagsboro Police, Delaware State Police, Felton Police, Georgetown Police, Harrington Police, Laurel Police, Millsboro Police, New Castle City Police, Ocean View Police, Seaford Police and Smyrna Police.

Delaware law states that all children up to age 8 or 65 pounds in weight must be properly secured in a child safety seat. All children from age 8 (or more than 65 pounds in weight – whichever comes first) up to age 16, must be properly secured in a seat belt. And no child under age 12 or 5'5" may sit in the front seat when the vehicle is equipped with an airbag in front of the passenger seating position. Violations will result in a \$25.00 citation, plus court fees.

In 2008 child passenger safety technicians in Delaware installed 1,802 seats for parents and inspected another 1,561 that were already installed. Of those, 1,089 (or 70%) showed some form of misuse. The most common examples of misuse are seats not being installed tightly in the vehicle, children who are placed forward facing too early and children not being secured tightly enough in the child safety seats.

Also last year, six children under the age of 9 were killed in Delaware motor vehicle crashes and 151 others were injured. One of the six killed was not in a child safety seat, neither were 25 of the injured.

If you cannot make one of the scheduled child safety seat check events, please visit the OHS website at [www.ohs.delaware.gov](http://www.ohs.delaware.gov) and click on the "Child Passengers" link on the left side of the page to find a year round Fitting Station in Delaware near you. To locate a Fitting Station outside of Delaware, visit [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov) and click on the Seat Check Saturday icon on the right side of the page.

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