



ONEIDA COUNTY  
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For Immediate Release

Sept. 16, 2019

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## **Picente Highlights Car Seat Safety**

### *Awareness Raised as Part of Child Passenger Safety Week*

As part of national Child Passenger Safety Week, Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. is urging parents to make sure their children are in the correct car seat and that it's installed and used properly.

"This week is the perfect opportunity to remind parents to take a moment to ensure their kids are safely secured in any vehicle they ride in," Picente said. "We need to be sure all children are riding as safely as possible, every trip, every time. Their lives could depend on it."

Using a car seat that is age and size-appropriate is the best way to keep a child safe, yet according to the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), two out of three car seats are not used correctly.

According to NHTSA, vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for children. Child restraint systems like car seats and boosters are the best and easiest way to keep a child safe, and when installed correctly, car seats can reduce the risk of fatal injury in a crash by 71 percent for infants and by 54 percent for toddlers.

New York State law requires an appropriate child safety restraint system for all children until their eighth birthday, using a child safety seat, a harness, a vest or a booster seat attached with the vehicle seat belt system. The law requires the safety seat must meet the size and weight requirements for the child based on the federal requirements and the recommendations of the manufacturer, and should not be used in the front seat of the vehicle. The penalty for a car seat violation for a person under the age of 16 is a maximum fine of \$100 and three driver violation points upon conviction for the driver.

"The safest place for all kids is in the back seat and in the right type of seat," said Oneida County Director of Health Phyllis D. Ellis, BSN, MS, F.A.C.H.E. "All too often, parents move their children to the front seat before they should, or they are unaware their car seat is not installed properly, which significantly increases the risk of injury and death. Using a child safety seat, and using it the right way, is critical."

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NHTA recommends the following child passenger safety guidelines:

- Infant seats are used for infants that weigh approximately 22 pounds or less, are 25 inches or less in length. Always place the seat in the back seat of the vehicle and make sure the child safety seat faces rear of the vehicle. Never put an infant in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger-side air bag.
- Convertible child safety seats are typically for infants or toddlers that weigh approximately 40 pounds or less. For infants, face these seats toward the rear of the vehicle. Follow manufacturer instructions to adjust the seat as the child grows. For the best possible protection, NHTSA recommends a child continue to face the rear for as long as possible up to the weight and height limits specified by the seat manufacturer. For toddlers, a convertible seat can be adjusted to face the front of the vehicle.
- Booster seats are for children who have outgrown convertible or toddler seats, and are generally for children who are four to eight years old, weigh 40 to 80 pounds, and are less than four feet, nine inches in height. Booster seats can be used until an adult seat belt correctly fits the child without use of the booster seat. Both the shoulder and lap belts should always be used with a booster seat.
- Any child under 13 years old should always sit in the back seat. Parents and caregivers should register their car seat or booster seat with the seat manufacturer so they can be notified in the event of a recall.

Parents and caregivers can find a listing by county of child safety seat inspection stations by visiting: <http://safeny.ny.gov/seat-per.htm> and <https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-boosters>.

The County Health Department and Sheriff's Office will be offering a car seat safety event from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Oct. 16 at the Deerfield Fire House in Utica. Car seats will be available to income-qualified candidates. Please call 315-798-6400 for eligibility and registration.