

Jesse White joins Chicago Fire and Police Departments to encourage proper car seat usage

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CHICAGO - Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White joined the Chicago Fire Department Commissioner Richard C. Ford III and the Chicago Police Department Chief Dwayne Betts as well as Dr. Michelle Macy from Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital

of Chicago to remind parents and caregivers about new safety requirements. Beginning next year, state law will require children under age 2 to ride in rear-facing safety seats. This week marks National Child Passenger Safety Week, observed from Sept. 23-29.

“Starting Jan. 1, 2019, parents and caregivers will be required to secure children in rear-facing safety seats until they are 2-years-old, unless they weigh more than 40 pounds or are more than 40 inches tall,” said White. “Children are five times safer riding in a rear-facing seat because their head, neck and spine are better protected in a crash. Let’s make sure we keep our children safe by putting them in an appropriate car seat that is properly installed.”

- Car crashes are a leading cause of death for children ages 1-13, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
- The Illinois Child Passenger Protection Act states that children under age 8 must be secured in an appropriate child restraint system, including booster seats.
- Car seats have been shown to reduce fatal injury by 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers, according to NHTSA.
- Four out of five car seats are not used properly, according to NHTSA.
- Parents should never place rear-facing car seats in front of an active airbag.
- Parents are encouraged to keep children under age 13 in the back seat, where they are the safest.



Car seat check events are scheduled throughout Illinois during National Child Passenger Safety Week. The Secretary of State's office, through its Keep Me in a Safe Seat program, provides child safety seat inspections by certified child safety seat technicians at 10 Driver Services facilities throughout the state.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to contact the office to schedule a visit to one of the fitting stations or to locate a NHTSA certified child passenger safety technician who can educate them on the appropriate car seat and proper installation in their vehicle.

"I'm pleased to partner with agencies such as the Chicago Fire and Police Departments and Lurie Children's Hospital and IDOT to raise awareness about how to keep our children safe," White said.

For additional information or to schedule an appointment, please call 866-247-0213 or visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com.