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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Child Passenger Safety Week observance to help raise awareness

Parents and caregivers are reminded about the importance of booster seat use during National Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Week, Sept. 20-26. Michigan law requires children to be properly buckled in a car seat or booster seat until they are 8 years old or 4 feet 9 inches tall.

“Traffic crashes remain a leading cause of death nationwide among children. Car seats and boosters can prevent many of those fatalities and injuries,” said Michael L. Prince, director of the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP). “Older children are more at risk as car seat use goes down despite booster seats being less expensive and easier to use than car seats for younger children.”

Booster seats lift the child up so the seat belt fits securely across hips and shoulders, the strongest parts of the body. When children shorter than 4 feet 9 inches tall don’t use a booster seat, the belt does not fit comfortably, and they are more likely to tuck the seat belt behind their back or under their arm which can cause injuries, including internal organ damage or trauma to the neck or head.

During CPS Week, the OHSP is continuing an advertising campaign focusing on booster seat use. Messages are being distributed to parents, caregivers, grandparents and extended family members through social media networks. Here is a link to the “Safe Rides” video shared with those targeted audiences:

www.michigan.gov/carseats

“Every day, parents and caregivers travel with children in their vehicles. While some youngsters are properly buckled in the correct car seats for their ages and sizes, many are not – if they are buckled up at all,” Prince said. “We are working to raise awareness and change behavior. Everyone needs to help keep children safe.”

According to the National Highway Safety Traffic Safety Administration, nearly half of car seats are misused. Statewide inspections of child restraint device (CRD) use in Michigan during 2018 found that only 20 percent of CRDs were correctly utilized.

CPS Week is a national initiative to improve awareness and help educate the public about how to properly install and use car seats.

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