



# BROOME COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD

## NEWSLETTER *Aug/Sept '09 Issue*

Broome County Health Department 225 Front St. / Binghamton, NY 13905

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### *It's that time of year again!* *Back to School Safety*

Believe it or not, in another month, summer vacation will be over and the kids will be slowly but surely making their way back into the classroom. This means more children riding their bikes or walking to and from school. This also means our roadways will be filled with the big, yellow buses and their flashing red lights. It is driving this time of year that drivers need to be extra careful. Watch carefully for children who are waiting for buses on the sidewalks and for children who are near schools. If you are in a school zone, follow the posted speed limit. Children can be unpredictable. Young children do not deal with traffic in the same manner as adults. They have a field of vision 1/3 narrower than adults, they are unable to determine the direction of sounds, they cannot accurately judge speed or distance of moving vehicles, they overestimate their own abilities, are easily distracted, and tend to focus on one thing at a time. Not to mention they are short so it is harder for drivers to see them. So go slow! And remember to teach your children to be safe too. Teach them to stand well back from the curb when waiting for the bus and to make sure that they are visible to the bus driver when crossing in front. This means they should be able to see the bus driver's eyes. For children who may walk or bike, be sure to teach them the rules of the road. Bikers should be riding with traffic on the roadways and walkers should be on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, pedestrians should walk facing traffic on the left. Bikers and pedestrians need to obey all traffic signals and signs and should be extra cautious when crossing busy intersections. Teach them to look left, right then left again and behind them before crossing. Back to school safety is everyone's responsibility so drivers, children and parents need to work together to keep our roadways clear from mishaps. And one more reminder to drivers – follow the traffic rules when driving near school buses. An estimated 50,000 motor vehicles illegally pass our New York school buses on a daily basis. Please refer to the information below for the appropriate driving practices around school buses. For more information about school bus safety and laws please visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website at [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov).



#### **School Bus Rules and Regulations**

- If you are approaching a school bus from either the front or behind, and its yellow lights are flashing, the bus is preparing to stop.
- If the buses red lights are flashing, **YOU MUST STOP. It's the law!**
  - This **includes** school buses that are on the opposite sides of divided highways, on multiple lane roadways, in parking lots, and on school grounds.

The **only** exception to this law is if the bus driver or a police officer signals that you may pass the bus.

# National Child Passenger Safety Week

September 12 - 18

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among children ages 2 to 14, due in large part to the nonuse or improper use of child seats and seat belts. Using a child safety seat properly can significantly reduce the risk of injury or death to your child in a motor vehicle crash. New York State child restraint laws, best practice guidelines, child safety seat instructions and vehicle manuals can be overwhelming and confusing. Nationally the misuse rate ranges anywhere from 73% to 90%. In Broome County, the misuse rate observed by certified child passenger safety technicians is well over 50%. However Broome County is fortunate to have two free child passenger safety programs in the area to offer support and guidance on child safety seats. Not sure if you have the right seat? Not sure if the seat you have is installed correctly? No problem. Simply call either the Broome County Health Department at (607) 778-2807 or the Endicott Police Station at (607) 757-2471 to schedule an appointment at the next available Fitting Station or find out when the next child safety seat event is. Certified child passenger safety technicians will be available to assist you in any of your car seat needs.

## Growing Up Safe: It's a four-step process.

As children grow, how they sit in your car, truck or SUV should change. Save your child from injury or death by observing all four steps.

1

### Rear – Facing Seats:

For the best possible protection keep infants rear-facing in the back seat for as long as possible, up to the height and weight limit of the seat. At a minimum, keep infants rear-facing until at least age 1 and at least 20 pounds.

2

### Forward – Facing Seats:

When children outgrow their rear-facing seats, they should ride forward-facing, in the back seat, until they reach the upper weight or height limit of that particular seat (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds).

3

### Booster Seats:

Once children outgrow their forward-facing seat, they should ride in a booster seat, in the back seat until the vehicle seat belt fits properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall).

4

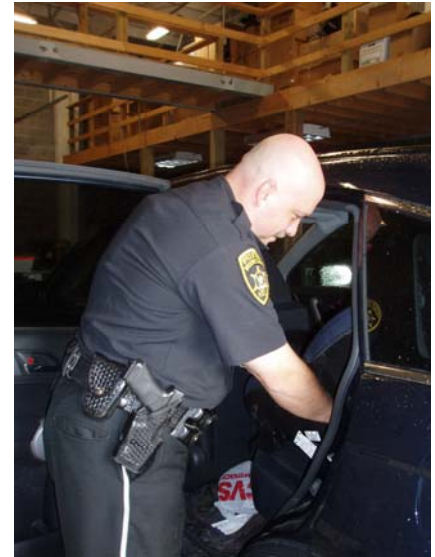
### Seat Belts:

When children outgrow their booster seats, they can use an adult seat belt in the back seat, if it fits properly (lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest).

**Remember: All children under age 13 should ride in the back seat.**

# ***Interested in becoming a Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician?***

The New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee and the Chenango County Council, Inc. are pleased to announce the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's "National Child Passenger Safety Certification Training Course" will be offered in your area. The course will be held at 24 Conkey Avenue, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Norwich, NY, on August 19 – 22, 2009 from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The course is intended to provide students with a basic level of understanding in the challenging field of child passenger safety. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to explain installation procedures to parents/caregivers and help them to safely transport their child based on the child's age, weight, height, physical development and needs.



The course fee is \$60, payable to Safe Kids Worldwide. To register for the course, go to [www.cpsboard.org](http://www.cpsboard.org), click on "Class Registration and CPS Certification," then "Find a Course," New Signup," select Course ID **NY20090415433** and complete the registration process. Certified technicians will be expected to follow the mandates set forth in the "NYS CPS Standards of Performance," which can be viewed at [www.safeny.com/cops-standards.htm](http://www.safeny.com/cops-standards.htm). For more information, please contact Donna Adams at (607) 336-2809.

## **Fact:**

In the US, from 2001-2003 approximately 2,500 children per year ages 1-14 reported to the ER and an average 229 children per year died after being struck by a vehicle in a driveway or parking area. Close to half of children injured in these incidents were ages 1 – 4.



Danger can come from any direction. Children can be injured or killed in "backover" or "frontover" accidents. Many of these preventable injuries and deaths occur in driveways or parking lots when drivers do not see children near their vehicles. Tragically, these drivers are often loving family members or friends. Parents, caregivers, drivers and kids can all do their part to make sure that children do not share the same space as vehicles. A five-second walk around the car before you get in could save a child's life.

## **Tips:**

- **Walk all the way around your parked vehicle to check for children, pets or toys before getting in the car and starting the engine.**
- **Use a Spot the Tot window sticker as a reminder to walk around the vehicle before every trip.**
- **Make sure young children are always accompanied by an adult when getting in and out of a vehicle.**
- **Identify and use safe play areas for children away from parked or moving vehicles.**
- **Designate a safe spot for children to go when nearby vehicles are about to move.**
- **Firmly hold the hand of each child when walking near moving vehicles and when in driveways, in parking lots or on sidewalks.**

# Broome County Traffic Safety Events

## Child Passenger Safety Activities

The Broome County Fitting Station provides free child safety seat inspections for families and caregivers as well as provides education and guidance on child passenger safety.

### **Fitting Station Dates (by appointment only)**

*Dates and times of Fitting Station are subject to change.*

August 4 <sup>th</sup>	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
August 18 <sup>th</sup>	1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
September 15 <sup>th</sup>	1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Located at the Broome County Sheriff's Office  
155 Lt. Van Winkle Drive, Binghamton  
Please call the Broome County Health Department at  
(607) 778-2807 to schedule an appointment.

### **Child Safety Seat Check Events**

- Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>
  - Town of Maine Park  
Route 26, behind Maine Memorial School  
6 p.m. – 9 p.m.
- Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>
  - Mothers and Babies Street Fair  
457 State Street, Binghamton  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Saturday, September 19<sup>th</sup>
  - Empower Federal Credit Union  
760 Harry L Drive, Johnson City  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

***No appointment necessary!***

Parents and caregivers should:

- Bring the child safety seat manual
- Bring the vehicle manual
- Bring the child/children
- Have the back seat cleared out as much as possible.

## Other Traffic Safety Activities

### **Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup> – Megan Memorial Golf Tournament**

Located at Belden Hill Golf Course, Harpursville  
Registration at 12:30 p.m., Tee off at 1:00 p.m.  
Please call Joel Dunham at 772-1896 for more information.

### **Tuesday, August 11<sup>th</sup> – Senior Drive, a Driving Wellness Checklist ©**

Seniors will drive safer longer by participating in this privately performed checklist.  
Located at the Broome West Senior Center during their Senior Meal (2801 Wayne Street, Endwell)  
3 p.m. – 7 p.m. Dinner \$3.50 for people 60+, and \$4.50 for people 60 and under.  
Please call (607) 785-1777 by noon the day before to make dinner reservations.

### **Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup> – Bike Rodeo at Family Fun Day**

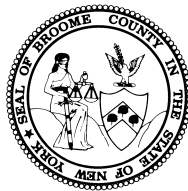
Come to receive a free bike and helmet inspection and practice your bike riding skills. All participants receive a certificate and prize!  
Located at Columbus Park, Carroll Street,  
12 p.m. – 2 p.m.  
Children should bring a parent, a bicycle and an appropriate helmet.

### **Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup> – Broome County Traffic Safety Board Meeting**

Located at the Broome County Health Department Conference Room A, 4 p.m.

### **September 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> - The 8th Annual Regional Child Passenger Safety Technical Conference**

Willow Valley Conference Center in Lancaster, Pennsylvania  
Please visit [www.safeny.com](http://www.safeny.com) for more information.



**Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive**

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[www.safeny.com](http://www.safeny.com), Safe Kids Worldwide at [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org) and the National Highway Traffic Safety  
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