

Ohio Department of Health

246 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
www.odh.ohio.gov

Ted Strickland, Governor
Alvin D. Jackson, M.D., Director



N E W S

Office of Public Affairs
Robert Jennings, Director

For immediate release – Oct. 1, 2009

OHIO’S CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY LAW CHANGING

Every child younger than 8 or less than 4 feet 9 inches must use booster seats effective Oct. 7

COLUMBUS – Ohio’s roadways are about to become safer for children.

Effective Oct. 7, children younger than 8, unless they are at least 4 feet 9 inches tall, must use a booster seat. This new law – combined with existing law requiring children younger than 4 years and less than 40 pounds to use a child safety seat; and children 8 to 15 to use a safety seat or seat belt – will make traveling safer for Ohio’s children, said Ohio Department of Health Director Alvin D. Jackson, M.D.

“Seat belts were designed for adults – not children,” he said. “Now, children in vehicles will be better protected from the hazards of the road.”

At least 34 Ohio children between 4 and 7 died in motor vehicle traffic crashes between 1999 and 2006 and traffic is the leading cause of death for this age group. And, in 2007, only 18 percent of Ohio children ages 4 to 8 used a booster, according to Partners for Child Passenger Safety.

Law enforcement will issue warnings only beginning Oct. 7. Full enforcement will begin April 7, 2010, with fines ranging from \$25 to \$75 per violation.

“This has helped Ohio take a significant step toward ensuring all of our young motor vehicle passengers are safe on our roads,” said Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Cathy Collins-Taylor. “The six-month warning period is a critical time for education regarding this new law and we are encouraging all of our safety partners to help educate the public about the law, where to purchase a booster seat and what to do if you are unsure.”

“Don’t wait for a warning or a ticket,” Jackson said. “Help protect your children today by buying a booster seat.”

NOTE: The Ohio Buckles Buckeyes (OBB) program provides child safety seats to eligible low-income Ohioans and has distributed more than 20,000 child safety and booster seats in the past five years. Call 1-800-755-GROW (4769) to find the OBB program nearest you. In October, some 2,300 high-back, belt-positioning booster seats will be available for distribution to eligible low-income families.

Ohio’s child restraint law is defined in Ohio Revised Code 4511.81 <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4511.81>.

OHIO'S CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY LAW HAS CHANGED

(Effective October 7, 2009)⁺

- **Every child*** under 8 years old must ride in a booster seat or other appropriate child safety seat unless the child is 4'9" or taller.**

Follow the seat manufacturer's instructions for weight limits and proper use.

- **Every child*** from 8 to 15 years old who is not secured in a car seat must be secured in the vehicle's seat belt.

* Unless there is a life-threatening situation, the parent has an affidavit signed by a licensed physician exempting the child from the law due to a physical impairment, or the vehicle is a taxicab, a public safety vehicle, is regulated under Ohio Revised Code 5104.011 or was manufactured without seat belts.

**"Child safety seat" includes infant seats, convertible seats, forward-facing seats, booster seats or other federally approved safety devices.

⁺ A six month warning period starts on 10/7/09. Full enforcement starts 4/7/10.

PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN AS THEY RIDE!

The back seat is the safest. Children under 13 years old should ride in the back seat.

Ohio's Child Passenger Safety Law is defined in Ohio Revised Code 4511.81.

Ohio Department of Health
Violence and Injury Prevention Program



Healthy  **hio**
The State of Living Well.

QUESTIONS?

Call 1-866-CAR-SEAT or
1-800-755-GROW (4769)
for information on a Child Passenger
Safety Program near you.