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PRESS RELEASE

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National Child Passenger Safety Week September 12-19, 2009

During Child Passenger Safety Week, September 12-19, the Eastern Pike Regional Police Department and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation want to remind families to buckle up. The Eastern Pike Regional Police Department works within the community to effectively promote adult seat belt use, as well as child passenger safety. As part of the child passenger safety week, the Pennsylvania Department of transportation recognizes the ongoing efforts of enforcement agencies, medical professionals, and child safety seat fitting stations, car seat loan programs and community organizations that work to save lives by advocating child passenger safety. Together these numbers of "Pennsylvania's Life-saving Team" work to educate and protect child passengers.

The theme for Child Passenger Safety Week 2009, "Pennsylvania's Life-saving Team", reminds caregivers that there are resources available to help them learn how to safely transport children. There are currently approximately 1,000 nationally-certified child passenger safety technicians in Pennsylvania who work to teach parents and caregivers how to properly use their child's car seat. In addition, there are over 150 child safety seat fitting stations across the State that offer opportunities to have car seats evaluated to make sure the car seat is a correct selection for the child's size and securely installed in the vehicle. Throughout the year, police departments are working hard to enforce occupant protection laws with both children and adults. All of these lifesavers are working hard everyday to keep Pennsylvania families buckled and safe.

According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among children 3 to 14, due in large part to the nonuse or improper use of child seats and seat belts. Research shows an estimated 8,709 lives have been saved by child restraints from 1975 to 2007.

In 2007 among children under 5, an estimated 382 lives were saved by child restraint use. Research shows that child restraints provide the best protection for all children up to age 8; after age 8, seat belts provide the best protection.

Fortunately, the collective efforts of "Pennsylvania's Life-Saving Team" are making a difference. Research on the effectiveness of child safety seats has found them to reduce fatal injury by 71 percent for infants (younger than 1 year old) and by 54 percent for toddlers (1 to 4 years old) in passenger cars.

Nationally, 30 percent of the children under 4 who died in motor vehicle crashes were unprotected by any type of child restraint. These tragedies were avoidable. As part of PennDot's "Click It or Ticket" campaign, the Eastern Pike Regional Police Department officers will be on the lookout for families and motorists who need reminders to buckle their children and remind other passengers to use their seat belt.

Under Pennsylvania's child passenger safety law, all drivers are responsible for securing children in the appropriate child restraint system. All children from birth up to age four must be secured in an approved child safety seat anywhere in the vehicle. Violators of this primary law are subject to a fine of up to \$100.00 plus Court Costs, EMS, Cat Fund and administrative fees, bringing the ticket up to \$184.50. All children age 8 up to age 18 must be secured in a seat belt system anywhere in the vehicle. Violators of this secondary law are subject to a \$10 fine plus costs bringing the ticket total to \$60.

If you are unable to afford a car seat, call 1-800-CAR-BELT to find the nearest car seat loaner program. Child Passenger Safety Week is also a good time to check your car seat. For more information on child passenger safety call the Eastern Pike Regional Police Department at 570-491-4040.