



UNION COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

BEHIND THE STAR

SHERIFF MALCUM J. "JAMIE" PATTON



SEAT BELTS AND CAR SETS

Annually the Sheriff's Office receives calls regarding the proper use of seat belts, car seats and booster seats. We are asked, "when is the proper time to switch from a car set to a booster seat?," these are important questions, says Sheriff Patton.

In the United States, car crashes are the #1 cause of death among children. Depending on age, weight and height, children need to be in car seats, or booster seats, or seat belts whenever they are in a moving vehicle. There is an average of 5 children killed and nearly 600 are injured everyday from vehicle accidents. Using a child safety seat can reduce the risk of death by up to 70%.

Ohio Laws require infants and children to ride in a child safety seat until they are 4 years old **AND** weigh at least 40 pounds.

Every child, ages 4 to 8 years of age, who are no longer in a car seat must use a booster seat until they reach 4'9" tall.

Children who are ages 8 to 15 years old and reach 4'9" in height must wear an adult seat belt.

Safety tips to think about:

- Have children under the age of 13 years old ride in the back seat of the vehicle.
- Before installing a child safety seat, read the instructions and your owner's manual.
- Check that you have used the correct belt path for the seat belt or the lower anchors.
- Make sure the car seat is tightly installed it should not move more than one inch in either direction.
- Replace any child safety seat that has cracks, missing pieces or worn straps, or that has reached the manufacturer's expiration date.

- For the best protection, infants and toddlers should be in safety seats facing the back of the vehicle until 2 years old, or reaching the maximum height or weight for their convertible car seat.
- Infants must not face forward until they are at least 1 year old and weigh at least 20 pounds.

The proper use of a seat belt is important; the lap belt should go over the hips not the abdomen, the shoulder belt should lay over your chest and shoulder. The seat belt should be close-fitting in addition to preventing passengers from being ejected during a crash, seat belts reduce the risk of collision with the steering wheel, dashboard, windshield or other passengers.

“It’s our goal to keep the motorists of Union County educated and safe,” says Sheriff Patton. If you have any question or need assistance with safety seats or seat belts, please contact Deputy Rich Crabtree at 937-645-4100, ext. 4310 or by email at rcrabtree@co.union.oh.us.