

Buckle Up for Life Releases New Holiday Traditions for Child Passenger Safety

November 23, 2015

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New York, Nov. 23, 2015 – Every family has their own holiday traditions – it’s one of the reasons this time of year is so special. On the cusp of the busiest travel season of the year, [*Buckle Up for Life*](#), the national injury prevention program from Cincinnati Children’s and Toyota, is releasing “New Holiday Traditions for Child Passenger Safety” to help keep kids safe this holiday season and beyond.

According to AAA, nearly 42 million Americans will take a holiday road trip this Thanksgiving. Millions more will hit the road between then and the New Year. While cars and trucks are safer than ever, crashes are still the leading cause of death for children. Car seats can prevent or greatly reduce injuries in the event of a crash, but they must be installed properly – an alarming three out of four are not.

“Whether you’re traveling far this holiday season or staying local, no trip with small children is complete without a properly installed car seat,” said Gloria Del Castillo, child passenger safety expert at Cincinnati Children’s and senior outreach specialist for *Buckle Up for Life*. “Our goal with these traditions is to offer simple ways to make child passenger safety a part of every family’s routine – during the holidays and throughout the year.”

Buckle Up for Life’s New Holiday Traditions for Child Passenger Safety

1. **Make it a family affair.** The holidays are a wonderful time to gather with family near and far. However, older generations may have had different approaches to keeping kids safe in cars. If relatives help chauffeur children, make sure everyone understands the latest practices for car seats, booster seats and seat belts.
2. **Ban re-gifting.** It may be tempting to accept a used car seat, but this is one item that should never be re-gifted. It’s not bad manners – it’s safety. You can’t necessarily know the history of the seat and a past crash or even normal wear-and-tear may have compromised its ability to protect your little one.
3. **Remember that car seats expire, just like Thanksgiving leftovers.** Many families are surprised to learn that car seats – like food – have a shelf life and must be replaced. Establish a new habit this year: when you clean out your refrigerator after Thanksgiving, check the expiration date on your car seat too.
4. **Booster seats – they aren’t just for the holiday table.** We all know booster seats can help young children enjoy special meals this time of year with the rest of the family. But don’t forget about booster seats for your car – all year round. Children under 4’9” should always sit in these special seats, which raise them up so that seat belts can protect them correctly.
5. **Look forward to the New Year, but make sure young children look back.** This is one of the most common questions that perplexes parents and caregivers – when do I turn the car seat around to face forward? The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children remain in rear-facing car seats until age two, or until they exceed the height or weight limit for the car seat.

“We know the holidays are a happy – and hectic – time, especially when traveling with children,” said Jennifer Pelky, vehicle safety engineer at Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing North America and certified child passenger safety technician. “We want all families to embrace these traditions and make child passenger

safety a habit this holiday season and year-round.”

For additional child passenger safety tips and advice, including animated car seat installation videos, visit BuckleUpforLife.org or follow us on Facebook or Twitter (@BuckleUpforLife).