

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Child Ejected from Vehicle; Driver Impairment Suspected

California City, CA (May 9, 2018) – Authorities have released more information about a rollover crash that killed a toddler on April 27th. Four-year old Keandre Zayah Lewis Taylor of Lancaster was killed after being ejected during the crash. Police now say the child was not strapped into his safety seat. His father, 31-year-old Keith Taylor of Palmdale, was arrested for driving under the influence. Taylor's vehicle allegedly sideswiped an ambulance, causing both vehicles to roll over during the 3:15 a.m. crash. The two ambulance crew members, one with serious injuries, were transported to the hospital. There were no passengers in the ambulance.

Officers at the scene of the crash reported smelling alcohol on Taylor's breath. In addition, 40 grams of marijuana were found inside Taylor's Tahoe. A meth pipe was also found among the crash debris. Authorities are still trying to determine whether a cell phone found at the scene belongs to Taylor and if so, what role it may have played in the crash.

According to Stephanie Tombrello, Executive Director of *SafetyBeltSafe* U.S.A., children being injured or dying in DUI crashes is a little-recognized problem – especially when the driver is the parent. “Of the 1,132 traffic deaths among children ages birth to 14 years in 2015, 209, or 16 percent, involved an alcohol-impaired driver, the majority of whom were transporting the child who died. Impaired drivers are 48% less likely to properly restrain their child passengers. This case, if the allegations are borne out, is just another tragic example of that. Correct use of safety seats is paramount and could have saved this child's life had the car seat been properly installed and used.”

Children cannot refuse to ride with adults in their lives, making them especially vulnerable to being driven by caregivers under the influence. Moreover, even more kids also are put at risk by parents who think they are buckling up their children correctly when in fact they are not. Research shows that 9 out of 10 kids ride in safety seats or belts that are not being used correctly, even though 85% of caregivers think their children are properly restrained. “These tragic cases should serve as a reminder to all parents that children need to be protected in the car. Don’t take a chance on your child’s safety – get your safety seat properly checked by a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician,” Tombrello recommended. “It’s particularly sad and ironic that this crash occurred during Special Enforcement Week and just one week before Safety Seat Checkup Week. Law enforcement and SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. work especially closely during this time to ensure that tragedies such as this one don’t occur.”

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