

For immediate release

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## Traffic Safety Program Targets Summer Risk to Kids

**What:** Safety Seat Checkup

**Where:** St Francis Medical Center, 3630 E. Imperial Highway, Lynwood, CA 90262

**When:** Saturday, July 26, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Why:** Car crashes kill hundreds of children each year and injure tens of thousands, with casualties peaking during the summer months. Many die unnecessarily because **9 out of 10 kids aren't buckled up correctly.**

TORRANCE, CA (6/29/14)— School's out for the summer, and many families are making travel plans to enjoy quality time together. Yet few parents will be aware of an additional risk to their kids during the summer months – a significantly higher death rate from traffic crashes.

Reasons for the increase likely involve an increase in traffic during the summer period, increased drinking-driver rates, and fatigue as drivers undertake longer road trips. The situation is made worse by the fact that 9 out of 10 children are not properly buckled up.

St. Francis Medical Center, Lynwood, in partnership with child passenger safety non-profit SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A., is offering parents the chance to ensure that their children are riding safely this summer at a free safety seat checkup to be held on Saturday, July 26. Safety seat inspections will be provided by certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians and other trained staff from 10 am to 2 pm in the parking lot of the Medical Center.

Car crashes are the number 1 killer of children; yet 9 out of 10 safety seats inspected at safety seat checkups are being used incorrectly, putting children at unnecessary risk in a crash. California Highway Patrol estimates that more than 80% of young children killed in car crashes would have

Stephanie Tombrello, Executive Director of SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A., said: “Most Americans think that the winter is the most dangerous time on the road, but in fact it’s the summer period. If every child were properly buckled up, we would see a sharp reduction in the numbers of children killed and seriously injured on our roads. We hope that parents will take the time to make sure that their children are safe in the car.”

To make an appointment for a car seat check, families should call the Safe Ride Helpline: (310) 222-6860 or (800) 745-SAFE. For Spanish: (310) 222-6862 or (800) 747-SANO. Further information on risks to children in crashes is available at [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org).

Tombrello also highlighted the risk to children of being left, usually accidentally, in hot cars during the summer months: “Each year, almost forty children lose their lives after being left in a hot vehicle. Cars can heat up fast enough to kill a child within minutes. Usually the child has been left behind accidentally, often after a change of normal routine. The most dangerous mistake a parent can make is to think it cannot happen to them. Simple steps like buckling a purse, cell phone or briefcase into the back seat can protect your family from this unspeakable tragedy.”

In conjunction with the safety seat checkup, SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. also is offering a free workshop on keeping kids safe in the car to professionals and others who work with children, to be held at St. Francis on Friday, July 25. Call 310-222-6860 to register for a place.

The event is sponsored by California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Pomona Police Department, with support from St. Francis Medical Center, Lynwood and the City of Lynwood.

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