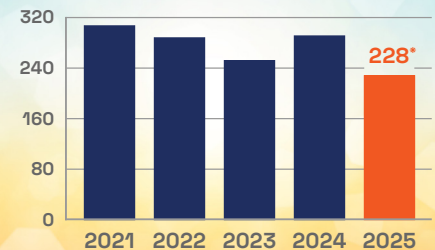


## School's in Session — Drive Smart & Safe

The back-to-school shopping is done and the kids are headed off but there's one more thing to put on your September list — a traffic safety refresher. In this month's [blog](#), Lisa Kons reminds us that while many professions have continuing education requirements, Minnesota drivers do not need coursework beyond their initial driver's ed training.

Instead, we rely on our dedicated traffic safety professionals to make sure drivers know the law and best practices for keeping themselves and their passengers safe on the road. Your efforts are having a direct impact in 2025. After several years of rising fatalities, Minnesota's year-to-date crash deaths are down 20%. Speaking of traffic safety education, later this month we mark National Child Passenger Safety Week — focusing on making sure every child is correctly buckled in, every time, every ride. You'll find more information and tools in this issue. Remember, keeping kids safe begins with their very first ride!

MINNESOTA TRAFFIC FATALITIES  
January 1 – August 31



Source: MN Dept. of Public Safety

\*Preliminary

## Child Passenger Safety Week

September 21 – 27, 2025

Help raise awareness about the life-saving importance of properly selecting and using car seats, booster seats and seatbelts for children.



## The Facts: Car Seats Save Lives

This story could begin and end with one sentence: Car seats — used correctly every time, every ride — save children's lives. Here are supporting facts as you elevate this message during September:

- Car crashes are a leading cause of death for children nationwide.
- In Minnesota, **11 children** died in a motor vehicle crash in 2024. From 2016 – 2024, **one-third of children** killed or seriously injured in a car crash were not properly restrained.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that child restraints have saved the lives of **11,606 children** under the age of 5 since 1975.
- In passenger cars, car seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by **71%** for infants and by **54%** for toddlers 1 to 4 years old. For light trucks, the reductions are **58%** for infants and **59%** for toddlers.
- Children model what they see: in 2023, **64%** of child passengers killed in crashes while riding with an unbuckled driver were also unbuckled.
- A NHTSA study found that **46%** of parents/caregivers have installed their child's car seat incorrectly.



- [NHTSA's CPS Week Materials](#) include a news release, talking points, advertisements, videos, and graphics. Available in both English and Spanish.
- [The National Child Passenger Safety Board](#) offers an extensive resource page with tools from AAA, the National Safety Council and more.
- [Safe Kids Worldwide](#) has a Family Safety Activity Book (English/Spanish) plus tools and videos for CPS Week.
- [BuckleUpMN.org](#) has a wealth of information for educators, parents and caregivers — not only for this high-focus week but every day of the year!





## Buckle Up and Stay Safe on ATVs

Looking for some four-wheel fun? As of July 1, Minnesota law requires that ALL operators and passengers of Class 2 ATVs with factory-equipped seat belts **MUST** wear them at all times when on or within the right-of-way of a public road. That includes the shoulder and lap belt if so equipped.

What is the right-of-way? Driving the ATV either directly on a public road or within the area that is legally designated as part of the road, is known as the right-of-way — it includes the road itself, shoulder, ditches, sidewalks, etc.

ALL riders under age 18 on Class 1 and Class 2 ATVs **MUST** wear a helmet approved by the Commissioner of Public Safety when riding on public land, public waters or on private property.



### New ATV Flyer

## 2025 TZD Statewide Conference



Minnesota's traffic safety community will gather on **October 21-22 at Mystic Lake Center in Prior Lake** to share best practices and new approaches to help **reduce traffic fatalities and injuries on our roads.**

The **2025 TZD Conference** features 40 concurrent sessions with topics including data analytics, distracted and impaired driving, child passenger safety, first responder safety, safe-driving programs and more. View the [Preliminary Conference Program](#) for complete session and speaker information and make sure to [Register](#) by September 26.

## Car Seat Check Saturday



Whether drivers are bringing their first little one home, sizing up a car seat for a growing child or serving as a child care provider, safety for young passengers begins with correctly installing devices and knowing how to buckle properly.

Minnesota's certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) are available to assist drivers year-round and will be participating in special events for CPS Week and Car Seat Check Saturday on September 27.

- [Find a CPST Near You](#)
- [Find a Car Seat Checkup Event](#)

## Honoring a Mom's Commitment

In 2024, Morgan Grunewald lost her life in a tragic crash. Her three young daughters survived uninjured as a result of her unwavering dedication to buckling them in correctly every ride, every time.



Morgan was just 24 years old when she was killed but her legacy of commitment to correct car seat use lives on. Her mother, Jennifer Starkson, recorded this [Video](#) sharing Morgan's story. Starkson is scheduled to participate in this year's Child Passenger Safety Week events.



**NETWORK OF  
EMPLOYERS FOR  
TRAFFIC SAFETY**  
MINNESOTA

Lisa Kons, NETS Coordinator  
651-228-7330/800-444-9150  
lisa.kons@mnsco.org  
474 Concordia Ave, St. Paul, MN 55103

Connect With Us!  
[drivesafemn.org](#)



MN NETS is a partnership with the MN Safety Council, funded by the MN Department of Public Safety/Office of Traffic Safety.