



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **\*Media Release\***

### **BOONE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

1905 Indianapolis Ave.

Lebanon, IN 46052

*Sheriff Michael T. Nielsen*



May 18, 2022

## **Police Remind Motorists to “Click It or Ticket”**

**Boone County, Indiana — The Boone County Traffic Safety Partnership (BCTSP)**, along with other agencies across Indiana, will be increasing patrols as part of the national “Click It or Ticket” enforcement campaign ahead of Memorial Day weekend. For the next three weeks, officers will be out in full force making sure drivers and passengers are buckled up and children are properly secure.

Their goal is to reduce the number of traffic injuries and fatalities from lack of seat belt use, a continuing concern. Data from the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) shows that unbuckled motorists make up almost 40% of all passenger vehicle deaths in the state.

The overtime patrols are funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with grants administered by ICJI.

“Our focus is not on writing tickets but to encourage people to buckle up in order to save lives,” said Boone County Sheriff, Michael Nielsen. “Seat belts are your best form of protection in a crash and against dangerous drivers. At the end of the day, we want everyone to reach their destination safely.”

Since the “Click It or Ticket” initiative began more than 20 years ago, seat belt use has gone up 30% in Indiana to 92.9%, which is slightly higher than the national average of 90.3%.

Despite making progress and advances in vehicle safety, in 2020, 226 unbuckled vehicle occupants lost their lives on Indiana roads – the second highest in the past decade. Young drivers, especially males, were the least likely to be buckled during a crash.

“We cannot tolerate another deadly year like the one we just had on our roads,” said Devon McDonald, ICJI Executive Director. “Many of the people we lost would still be alive today had they made the decision to buckle up. Seat belts make a difference. They save lives.”

Research has repeatedly demonstrated the safety benefits of seat belts and the dangerous consequences when people choose not to use them. Buckling up can reduce the risk of injury or death in a crash by 50%. Without a seat belt fastened, people can be ejected from a vehicle and killed, and that risk increases if the driver is speeding or impaired.

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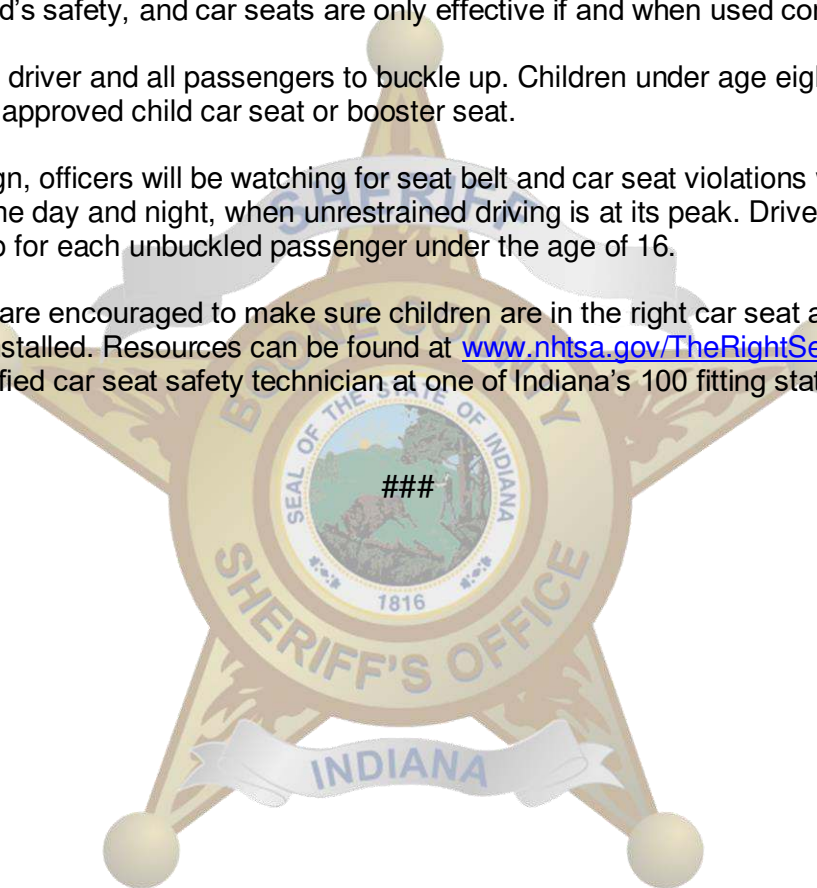
Tragically, vehicle collisions continue to be a leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 13, and NHTSA data shows that approximately 46% of all car seats are being used incorrectly. Parents and caregivers who do not buckle up are more likely to have kids who are improperly restrained.

“There’s nothing more tragic than reading the news about a child who was injured or killed because they weren’t properly secure in a vehicle,” said Robert Duckworth, ICJI Traffic Safety Director. “Parents are responsible for their child’s safety, and car seats are only effective if and when used correctly.”

Indiana law requires the driver and all passengers to buckle up. Children under age eight must be properly restrained in a federally approved child car seat or booster seat.

Throughout the campaign, officers will be watching for seat belt and car seat violations while conducting high-visibility patrols during the day and night, when unrestrained driving is at its peak. Drivers can be cited for lack of seat belt use, but also for each unbuckled passenger under the age of 16.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to make sure children are in the right car seat and that it’s used correctly and properly installed. Resources can be found at [www.nhtsa.gov/TheRightSeat](http://www.nhtsa.gov/TheRightSeat). To schedule an appointment with a certified car seat safety technician at one of Indiana’s 100 fitting stations, visit [on.in.gov/SafeKids](http://on.in.gov/SafeKids).



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