



**SOLANO
COUNTY**

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES, PUBLIC HEALTH

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Solano Public Health receives grant funding for car seat safety education program

SOLANO COUNTY – The Solano Department of Health and Social Services, Public Health division, is pleased to announce receipt of a \$145,310 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to expand its life saving child passenger safety efforts in Solano County.

“The OTS grant will help strengthen the great work that we’re currently doing in helping Solano children be safe while being transported in a vehicle,” said Tracy Nachand, Supervising Health Education Specialist with Solano Public Health. “The program will so raise public awareness of the dangers about children being left in hot cars unattended, among other safety concerns.”

The increased funding from the OTS will support vital program services offered by the Solano Car Seat Connection Program, which works closely with parents and caregivers on teaching proper car seat use and safe installation. Grant funds will support car seat safety classes, individual car seat inspection appointments and community-wide car seat checkup events.

According to the CDC in 2022, 599 children 12 years and younger were killed in motor vehicle crashes in the United States, a 6 percent decrease from 2021, but remains far too high. Of the children who were killed in a crash, more than one in three (35 percent) were found unrestrained in the vehicle. The National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration has found that the proper use of car seats reduces the risk of fatal injury for infants by 71 percent and 54 percent for toddlers, respectively. California law requires that children need to utilize a child safety seat or booster until they are at least eight years old, or they are four feet nine inches tall.

Since 1998, more than 960 children have died from vehicular heatstroke—an average of 37 per year—and 53 percent of incidents involved a parent or caregiver forgetting the child was in the vehicle, according to the National Safety Council. Even on mild or cloudy days, temperatures inside vehicles can reach life-threatening levels. Leaving windows slightly open is not enough to prevent life threatening heatstroke. Children should never be left unattended or be able to get inside a vehicle.

The Solano Car Seat Connection Program currently offers virtual car seat safety classes in both live and self-guided formats in English and in Spanish. The classes educate parents and caregivers on current car seat safety laws in California, such as keeping children under the age of two in a rear-facing car seat unless they weigh 40 pounds or more or are 40 inches or taller in height.

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The Solano Car Seat Connection Program also supports the Solano community with individualized car seat inspection appointments conducted by Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians. All the program's services are provided in both English and Spanish.

For information on the Solano Car Seat Connection, please visit www.vibesolano.com and www.vibesolano.com/classes.

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