



PRESS RELEASE

I. DATE/TIME OF PRESS RELEASE: November 3, 2010 at 11:00 a.m.

II. ANNOUNCEMENT:

November is Occupant Protection month, and Livermore PD is once again conducting the "Back Seat Challenge" Traffic Education Program

III. FACTUAL INFORMATION:

The traffic safety topic of the month for the Livermore Police Department is occupant protection. LPD will be working extra enforcement and putting on education programs in an effort to ensure all drivers and passengers using our community's roadways are properly secured in their vehicle.

Did you know children under the age of 13 years old are 40% safer by just riding in the back seat? Since most crashes happen within 10 minutes from home, we often wonder why parents wouldn't want to have their kids always ride in the back seat. All elementary school aged children should be riding in the back seat.

The Livermore Police Department has challenged two neighboring schools, Joe Mitchell and Jackson Avenue Elementary Schools to a "Back Seat Challenge." At the end of the challenge, whichever school had the highest back seat compliance, wins a full pizza lunch for the entire school and staff, a police motorcycle demonstration and music at lunch.

Joe Mitchell School started out with a back seat compliance rate of 61.79% of children seated in the back seat as they arrived at school. Jackson Avenue School started out with a back seat compliance rate of 61.11% of children riding in the back seat as they arrived at school.

In an effort to get students to want to ride in the back seat, LPD staff will be spending time at each school. Students "caught" riding in the back seat at drop off time will be given a crazy rubber band. LPD personnel will be asking students to pledge to always ride in the back seat, and if they do so they have a chance to win a MP3 player. There will be a slogan contest asking students to come up with a catchy name for our next back seat challenge, as well as a poster contest. The poster contest asks students to draw a picture of themselves and their family riding safely in the car or another safety message of being safe in the back seat.

The Livermore Police Department wants the community to travel safely. Simply buckling up and riding in the back seat could save a child's life. Here are some startling facts about why your child should ALWAYS ride properly restrained in the back seat:

- Air bags can deploy at 200 MPH and are designed to protect the average-size male adult
- Air bags increase the risk of death for children younger than 10 years of age by 34%
- If your child is under age 6 the law states they must be properly restrained in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat

In addition to the education efforts to reach our community's youngest passengers, we will also be working enforcement efforts targeting adult drivers and passengers who choose not to wear their seatbelts. There will be extra enforcement efforts during the entire month targeting seatbelt compliance violations.

The "Click It or Ticket" campaign will occur statewide from November 15th through the 28th and all law enforcement agencies will be increasing their seatbelt enforcement efforts.

"The City of Livermore has not had a fatal traffic collision since May of 2009. That last fatal collision was a direct result of a passenger failing to wear a seatbelt. An elderly passenger in a vehicle that collided with a power pole was unbelted and was thrown into the dashboard of the vehicle causing fatal injuries. By concentrating our efforts on occupant protection issues we hope to avoid tragic collisions such as this," said Sergeant John Hurd.

If you have any questions please *call Livermore Police Officer Traci Rebiejo at 371-4858.*

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

IV. DISTRIBUTION:

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