

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday February 13, 2015

BUCKLE UP, BABY!

KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

Today, more parents and caregivers than ever before secure their kids in child safety seats. But amid this good news is an alarming fact: too many parents still don't use the full range of child safety seats, especially booster seats. Safety experts strongly recommend that children should not be moved into regular seat belts until they are at least four feet, nine inches (4' 9") tall, weigh about 80 pounds, and are approximately eight years old. And DC law now requires booster seats for children up to age 8.

The MPD encourages all parents and caregivers to know about and follow the law, to acquire and use age-appropriate child safety restraints, to have their child safety seats inspected, and to follow the four essential steps to protecting children in motor vehicles.

The four steps to protect your children as they grow older are listed

in the steps below. Remember to have safety seats inspected on a regular basis. Seat belts can seriously injure or kill small children who are not properly placed in child safety seats.

Protect your children as they grow older. Remember to have your children's safety seats inspected on a regular basis. Seat belts can seriously injure or kill small children who are not properly placed in child safety seats.



» Learn more about child passenger safety and the laws in the District of Columbia at:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/carseat>

» For information on keeping kids safe from car seats to car keys, check out "Parents Central" at:

<http://www.safercar.gov/parents/index.htm>

» Find the right car seat to fit your child using the simple tool on Parents Central. Just enter their age, weight and height and they'll do the rest:

<http://www.safercar.gov/cpsApp/crs/index.htm>

Car Seat Safety

Birth – 12 Months (REAR FACING CAR SEAT)

Your child under age 1 should always ride in a rear-facing car seat. There are different types of rear-facing car seats:

- o Infant-only seats can only be used rear-facing
- o Convertible and all-in-one car seats typically have higher height and weight limits for the rear-facing position, allowing you to keep your child rear-facing for a longer period of time.

1 - 3 Years (REAR FACING CAR SEAT/FORWARD FACING CAR SEAT)

Keep your child rear-facing as long as possible. It's the best way to keep him or her safe. Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by the car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, your child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and tether.

4 - 7 Years (FORWARD FACING CAR SEAT/BOOSTER SEAT)

Keep your child in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and tether until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by the car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat with a harness, it's time to travel in a booster seat, but still in the back seat.

8 - 12 Years (BOOSTER SEAT/SEAT BELT)

Keep your child in a booster seat until he or she is big enough to fit in a seat belt properly. For a seat belt to fit properly, the lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should lie snugly across the shoulder and chest and not cross the neck or face. Remember: your child should still ride in the back seat because it's safer there.

REDUCE YOUR RISK OF BECOMING A ROBBERY VICTIM

Robbery and assault are serious crimes. While money is often the motivation, these incidents are considered crimes of violence because they involve the threat or actual use of physical violence. Year to date, robberies are down 14 percent, but there are still precautions one should take to reduce the risk of becoming a robbery victim. The basic rules of robbery prevention are to be sensible and to be alert. The following tips will also help reduce the risk of robbery or assault.

Personal Safety Tips on the Street

- If possible, don't walk alone during late-night hours. Walk in groups whenever you can—there is always safety in numbers.
- Let a family member or friend know your destination and your estimated time of arrival or return. That way, the police can be notified as quickly as possible if there is a problem.
- Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible. Avoid alleys, vacant lots, wooded areas, and other short-cuts or secluded areas. They are usually not well-lit or heavily traveled.
- Walk on the sidewalk whenever possible. Walk close to the curb, avoiding doorways, bushes, and other potential hiding places.
- Walk confidently, directly, and at a steady pace. Don't stop to talk to strangers.
- Don't burden yourself with too many packages or items.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. If you are wearing headphones, don't turn up the volume so high that you cannot hear outside noises.
- Avoid carrying large sums of cash, or displaying expensive jewelry in public.

Basic Street Smarts

- Wherever you are—on the street, in an office building or shopping mall, driving, waiting for a bus or subway—stay alert and tuned in to your surroundings.
- Send the message that you're calm, confident, and know where you're going.
- Trust your instincts. If something or someone makes you uneasy, avoid the person or leave.
- Know the neighborhoods where you live and work.
- Check out the locations of police and fire stations, public telephones, hospitals, and restaurants, or stores that are open late.

If Someone Tries to Rob You

- Don't resist. Give up your property—don't give up your life.
- Report the crime to the police. Try to describe the attacker accurately. Your actions can help prevent others from becoming victims.

Self-defense measures are most effective when applied as preventive steps—avoiding the crime in the first place. These measures include running away, hiding, screaming, and raising an alarm—remember, more people will respond to someone yelling “Fire” than they will to “Help!”

Anyone who is the victim of a crime or witnesses a crime in progress should call 911 immediately. Individuals who have information regarding crimes should call police at 202-727-9099. Additionally information may be submitted to the TEXT TIP LINE by text messaging 50411. The Metropolitan Police Department currently offers a reward of up to \$10,000 to anyone who provides information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for any robbery committed in the District of Columbia.

» Get more tips on guarding against robbery and assault at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/robbery>

» The MPD encourages members of the public to visit our YouTube page, view videos of cases, and contact police if they recognize persons of interest at:
<http://www.youtube.com/OfficialDCPolice>

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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