CHILD SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH
WEEK FOUR: SAFETY BELTS AND CHILD RESTRAINTS
~Buckle Up Every Time You Get Into Your Vehicle~

This week we focus on promoting safety belt use and car seats.

➢ **Safety Belts**
- A seat belt is your vehicle's best safety feature. But, it only works if you use it.
- Florida's Safety Belt Law requires that the driver, all passengers in the front seat, and all children under the age of 18 wear a seat belt (or child restraint device).
- Florida's Safety Belt Law is a primary enforcement law, meaning that an officer can stop a vehicle and issue a citation simply for observing a seat belt violation.
- According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, seat belts saved an estimated 12,174 lives in 2012. For drivers and front-seat passengers, using a lap and shoulder belt reduces the risk of fatal injury by 60% in an SUV, van or pickup and by 45% in the car.
- Encourage everyone in the vehicle to buckle up, including those in the back seat.

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➢ **Child Car Seats**
- Florida law requires that children 5 years of age and under to be secured by properly using a crash-tested, federally approved child restraint device.
- Current law allows children aged 4 and 5 to be secured in a separate carrier, an integrated child seat, or a safety belt. Beginning January 1, 2015 children aged 4 and 5 will have to be secured in a car seat or booster seat.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, restraint use among young children often depends upon the driver's seat belt use. Almost 40% of children riding with unbelted drivers were themselves unrestrained.
- Follow your car seat manufacturer's instructions and your vehicle owner's manual on how to install and properly use the car seat.
- Make sure the car seat is the right fit for the child and the vehicle and that it can be installed and used correctly every time.