Safety Belts & Child Restraints

Safety Belts

• Florida law requires the use of seat belts or child restraint devices by drivers of motor vehicles, all front seat passengers and all children riding in a vehicle under 18.

• 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 safety belt or restraint violation.

• Children should be in the rear seats until at least age 12, since deployed front seat air bags can be dangerous to children.

Child Restraints – Car Seats and Booster Seats

• Florida law requires children age 5 and under to be secured properly in a crash-tested, federally approved child restraint device.

• Children ages 0 to 3 must be in child restraint devices of a separate carrier or a vehicle manufacturer’s integrated child seat.

• Children age 4 and 5 must be in a separate carrier, integrated child seat or booster seat.

• The best child seat is one that fits your child, fits your car and that drivers will use correctly every time.

• Read the car seat’s instruction manual and the portion of your vehicle’s owner manual when you install a car seat.

• Remember to check for car seat and booster seat recalls.

• You can visit a local FHP station to ask a certified trooper to help you install your seat. Call your local FHP troop to set up an appointment.

#ChildSafetyFL #ArriveAliveFL
School Bus & School Zone Safety

CHILD SAFETY TIPS

New Law
On July 1, 2017, the Cameron Mayhew Act took effect in Florida, which increases the minimum penalty for drivers who illegally pass a stopped school bus, resulting in the injury or death of another person. It includes a $1,500 fine and a one-year driver license suspension. Cameron Mayhew was killed by a motorist that failed to stop as he was walking to his stopped school bus in 2016.

School Bus
• All drivers moving in either direction on a two-way street must stop for a school bus displaying a stop signal and must remain stopped until the road is clear of children AND the school bus stop arm is withdrawn.

• On a highway divided by a paved median, all drivers moving in either direction must stop for a school bus displaying a stop signal and must remain stopped until the road is clear of children AND the school bus stop arm is withdrawn.

• On a highway divided by a raised barrier or an unpaved median at least five feet wide, drivers moving in the opposite direction do not have to stop for the bus. Painted lines or pavement markings are not considered barriers. However, motorists should slow down and watch for students loading or unloading from the bus.

• Failure to stop for a school bus comes with a minimum fine of $165 and three points on your driver license. If you pass on the side where children enter and exit, you will receive a minimum fine of $265.

School Zone
• Be alert and watch for children especially near schools, bus stops, school buses and in school parking lots.

• Children on bicycles can be unpredictable and can make sudden changes in direction. Be especially careful when children are present in school zones and residential areas.

• Pay extra attention to the lower speed limits in school zones.

• Watch for and obey signals from school crossing guards.

• Only drive or park in authorized areas to drop off or pick up children at school.
Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety

CHILD SAFETY TIPS

Bicycle Safety for Parents and Children

• Make sure all equipment on the bicycle works.

• All bicycle riders and passengers under age 16 are required by Florida Law to wear a helmet. Always wear a properly fitted helmet and securely fasten the strap.

• Wear appropriate shoes. Avoid wearing flip-flops or riding barefoot.

• Be seen. Wear neon or fluorescent or bright colors when riding and wear something that reflects light.

• Do not wear headphones so that you can hear the traffic and pedestrians around you. Never text and ride.

• Ride in the same direction as traffic and stay as far to the right as possible. Use bike lanes whenever you can.

• Obey all traffic laws, including signs, signals and lane markings, when riding on the roadway.

• Cross at intersections and never pull out into the roadway from between parked cars.

• If riding on the sidewalk or in a crosswalk, yield to pedestrians and give them an audible signal (such as, “passing on your left”) before passing them.

Bicycle Safety for Motorists

• Drivers MUST give bicyclists a minimum of three feet of clearance when driving alongside or passing them.

• When turning, yield to any bicyclist in the bike lane and make your turn behind the cyclist.

Pedestrian Safety for Parents and Children

• Always walk on the sidewalk if there is one. If no sidewalks are present, walk against the direction of traffic so that you can see oncoming vehicles.

• Always cross the roadway where pedestrians are expected, at corners or in crosswalks. Always watch for traffic when crossing the street.

• Never enter the street from between parked cars. If crossing mid-block cannot be avoided, pedestrians must yield the right of way to vehicles on the roadway.

• Wear bright, reflective colors on clothes, shoes, hats and wristbands. Carry a flashlight when walking at night.

• Pay attention. Avoid wearing headphones so that you can hear the traffic and pedestrians around you. Never text or look at your cell phone when crossing the street.

• Obey pedestrian signs and signals. Yield the right of way to vehicles if the crosswalk signal is red or “Don’t Walk.”

• Refer to the official Florida Driver License Handbook (www.flsmv.gov/handbook) for more information on bicyclist and pedestrian safety.

#ChildSafetyFL
#ArriveAliveFL
Car & Driveway Safety

CHILD SAFETY TIPS

Heatstroke Prevention – Never Leave Children in a Car

- Keep vehicles in driveways or garages locked and store keys out of children’s reach to avoid children becoming trapped in a vehicle.

- When getting out of your vehicle, check to make sure all children are out of the vehicle and accounted for. Put a purse or other important item in the backseat with your child as a reminder.

- Never leave a child unattended or unsupervised in a motor vehicle. It is extremely hot, especially in Florida, and can result in the child’s injury or death.

- Florida law states that children under six should never be left in a motor vehicle for longer than 15 minutes, or for any period of time if the motor is running, the health of the child is in danger or if the child appears to be in distress. A violation of this law is a second degree misdemeanor and can result in a fine of up to $500. If a child is injured, the violation becomes a third degree felony.

Driveway Safety

- Teach children to never play in, on, around, or under vehicles. Keep toys or bicycles off the driveway.

- Designate safe play areas for your children that are off the driveway and away from vehicles.

- If children play in the driveway, have an adult supervise at all times.

- Keep vehicles in driveways or garages locked and store keys out of children’s reach to avoid children getting in a vehicle and turning it on or moving it on accident.

- When backing out of the driveway or parked spot:
  - Walk around your vehicle to check for children playing and make sure all children are safe and accounted for.
  - Turn off your radio and roll down windows to listen for children or pedestrians.
  - Know your vehicle’s blind spots and look again before backing. Check your rearview and side mirrors.
  - Look both ways and watch for children or pedestrians especially in school zones and residential areas.

- Florida law states that the driver of a vehicle shall not back up unless such movement can be made with safety and without interfering with other traffic. Take a second look if you have any doubt!