

City of Willcox Newsletter April 2014

Child Safety Seats: Did You Know...?

Glenn Childers, Willcox Director of Public Safety

Many advances have been made in the area of child safety seats over the years. First responders can tell you story after story of arriving on the scene of a traffic accident in which a passenger vehicle is mangled beyond recognition, and finding that an infant is still sitting completely unharmed in their child seat inside the car.

Most drivers know that the law requires children to be properly restrained in a child seat when traveling in a vehicle. Hospitals will not allow newborns to leave unless parents prove that there is a child seat in the vehicle. However, there is more to properly installing a car seat than just quickly strapping it down with a seatbelt. If incorrectly installed, the child seat could endanger the child within it, as well as other passengers in the vehicle if it is involved in a collision.

Newborns and infants should be in a rear-facing car seat. This device actually cradles and moves with the child in a collision, which reduces the stress to a small child's fragile neck and spinal cord.

Between 1 and 3 years of age, a child can be moved into a forward-facing car seat. This device is equipped with not just a seatbelt, but a harness system that makes contact with the child at the strongest parts of their body to distribute the force sustained in a collision. An important part of this device is a tether which anchors the seat and limits the child's forward head movement. Please don't consider the tether just an option, it is a vital part of the safety system of the seat and must be properly secured for the device to work correctly.

Between 4 and 7 years of age, depending on the size of the child, they can move into a booster seat. At this point, the child begins using the vehicle's seatbelt while sitting in the booster seat. If the vehicle is equipped with low back seats and there is nothing behind the child's head, then the booster seat should have a back on it. This helps to prevent the child receiving whiplash in a collision.

Remember to seatbelt the booster seat into place, even when there is not a child sitting in it. An empty booster seat can become a nasty flying projectile inside the passenger compartment of a vehicle and cause injury to any of the passengers if it is involved in a collision.

Based on the child's size, they will usually transition to the vehicle's regular seatbelt without the aid of another seating device somewhere between 8 and 12 years old. The seatbelt should include both a lap and shoulder belt, and it should fit snugly across the shoulder and chest, not neck or face.

No child (or adult for that matter) should ever be seated in a vehicle equipped with only a lap belt. A person's body sustains an incredible amount of impact force against just one small area, and internal injury becomes highly likely. There is also nothing to keep the upper body

from moving forward, allowing the head to strike the windshield, the dashboard, or the seat in front of them. A driver who is not using a shoulder belt will almost always sustain heavy upper-body injury from striking the steering wheel, depending on the speed during the collision.

Child safety seats are not designed to last forever. They must be inspected regularly to ensure that all parts are functioning properly. A small crack in a plastic car seat is a weak point that will fail if it sustains enough force, and the seat itself could injure the child. Child safety seat recall websites are online and will let you know if your seat has any dangerous defects.

The Willcox Department of Public Safety will be participating in the first annual Safety Day in the TA Travel Center parking lot on May 9th. A certified Child Safety Seat Officer will be available between noon and 3 p.m. to assist anyone in inspecting or installing a child seat in their vehicle.

Please don't take any chances with those little people who are depending on you to take care of them. Child seats take time to install and properly use, but you do not want to see the results of taking a shortcut when a child is in a vehicle involved in an accident.

APRIL - Busiest Month For The Library!

Tom Miner, Library Director

Spring has arrived, and your local Library is busier than ever! April is the month marked by **many** Library-related events. This year, we celebrated **National Volunteer Week** and **National Library Week** in two consecutive weeks: April 6-12th, and 13-19th, respectively. Wednesday, April 16th, was also **National Library Worker's Day**, so we held a potluck and **Volunteer Recognition Event** on April 9th, honoring all of our volunteers and staff that day, including our main support group, the Friends of the Library, and the members of the Public Library Advisory Committee. Thursday, April 10th, we had our Brown Bag Lunch history series. Craig McEwan spoke about the famous frontier photographer and local area resident, Camillus S. Fly. Kathy Klump, President of the Sulfur Springs Valley Historical Society and Co-Founder of the Friends, co-sponsors the Brown Bag Lunch program. Tuesday, Apr 22nd, we co-sponsored the Willcox Astronomy Club meeting at Bill and Sara Nolan's place at 6220 N. Ft. Grant Rd, at 7 PM. All in all, a very busy month! We also want to take this opportunity to invite everyone to our **Library Open House celebration on May 9th**! Come check out your newly- renovated Community Library!

From the Office of the City Clerk...

Virginia A. Mefford, City Clerk

City Council Meetings

Regular Meeting

Thursday

May 1, 2014

&

Thursday

May 15, 2014

6:30 p.m.

City Council Chambers

300 W. Rex Allen Drive

Reminder: Except for Emergency Services, All City Offices will be CLOSED on Monday, May 26, 2014 for the Memorial Day Holiday.