



MARK B HORTON, MD, MSPH  
*Director*

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
**California Department of Public Health**



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
*Governor*

## **KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN VEHICLES IS GOAL OF STATEWIDE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH EFFORT**

*Hundreds to Be Trained As Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians*

Sacramento, CA. October 1, 2010 –The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has been awarded a \$225,000 grant from the state Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to support the coordination of child passenger safety (CPS) educational and training programs throughout California.

Under this grant, CDPH will undertake statewide activities aimed at saving the lives of children riding in vehicles. The goal is to increase proper child restraint use from birth through booster seat age (0-8 years). CDPH will oversee training for public health, public safety, and health providers as CPS Technicians and Instructors under the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's CPS Certification Program. CDPH will also provide educational resources and technical assistance, as well as facilitate communication among CPS programs, including local health departments, community-based organizations, hospital and trauma centers, and public safety offices.

A total of 3,894 children were injured in 2008; in 2009, that number dropped to 1,680. However, the total number of fatalities to children between the ages of birth and eight-years-old increased from 35 in 2008 to 47 in 2009. Among those who were killed, nearly two-thirds were not using any type of child safety restraint. These statistics highlight the need to remain vigilant in our efforts to inform parents and caregivers that infants and toddlers need to be in a car seat, transitioning the toddler to a forward-facing Child Safety Seat until he or she graduates into a booster seat; and then keeping the child in that booster seat until they reaches 4'9" tall.

“Our children are the most vulnerable passengers in vehicles,” said Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety. “Making them most safe takes time and attention. Parents and caregivers are well served when helped by the technicians trained by this program.”

Child occupant deaths are largely preventable. CDPH builds on complementary, age-appropriate engineering, enforcement, and educational strategies to diminish risks and motivate drivers to protect their children on every ride.

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