SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT
Ed Barberini
Chief of Police

200 Franklin Parkway
San Mateo, CA 94403
(650) 522-7700
www.sanmateopolice.org

# MEDIA RELEASE / COMMUNITY ALERT

**For Immediate Release No. 20260909-061**
**Wednesday, September 9, 2026**

**Child Passenger Safety Week: Protect Your Child with the Right Car Seat**

San Mateo, CA – September 9, 2026-The San Mateo Police Department (SMPD) encourages all parents and caregivers to make sure their children are riding safely by using the correct car seats, booster seats and properly fitted seat belts. This annual campaign takes place from September 21-27 and aims to raise awareness about the importance of car seat safety and proper installation.

On September 26, from 9:00am to 1:00pm, SMPD will have certified child passenger safety technicians available at 200 Franklin Pkwy, San Mateo, to check car seat installations. The technicians will teach parents and caregivers how to install the car seat correctly, as well as educate them on the appropriate seat based on the child's age and size.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), nearly half of car seats (46%) are misused. Properly installed car seats have been shown to reduce fatal injury crashes by 71% for infants under a year old and by 54% for toddlers ages 1 through 4.

Current California law requires all children under 2 years old to ride in a rear-facing car seat, unless the child is 40 or more pounds or is 40 or more inches tall. Once a child reaches these milestones, all children under the age of 8 years old are still required to be secured in a car seat or booster seat, in the back seat. Children 8 and older, or who are at least 4 feet 9 inches tall, may be secured by a booster seat, but at a minimum must be secured by a safety belt.

As of January 1, 2027, AB 435 requires children ages 8 to 16 years old to pass all steps of the "Five-Step Test"` before they can safely use a seat belt without a booster seat. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to keep children in the proper rear or forward-facing seat as long as possible and use the Five-Step Test as a guide, before it becomes law in 2027, to determine if their child is big enough to safely use a seat belt without a booster seat.

Visit www.gosafelyca.org for more traffic safety information.

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

**MEDIA CONTACT**
Andrew Peek

Public Information Officer
City of San Mateo Police Department
200 Franklin Parkway, San Mateo, CA 94403
650-522-7626 | pdpio@cityofsanmateo.org

# # #