
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

January 31, 2018

For More Information, Contact:

Dawn Mayer

Program Director, Child Passenger Safety

North Dakota Department of Health

Phone: 701.328.4533 Email: drmayer@nd.gov

Tether Strap Essential to Reducing Head Injuries to Children

Bismarck, N.D. – According to 2016 data collected from North Dakota car seat checkups, 50 percent of forward-facing car seats were not installed using the tether. Nationwide, the number is 64 percent. A tether is a strap that locks down the top portion of the car seat, so if involved in a crash, the car seat will not move dangerously forward. This protects a child from hitting their head on the vehicle’s interior. Tethers have been required on car seats since 1999.

“Tether use is an essential step to safety that should not be skipped,” said Dawn Mayer, program director for the North Dakota Department of Health Child Passenger Safety Program. “Car seat tethers can reduce the movement of a child’s head by 4 to 6 inches or more in a crash. That doesn’t sound like much, but in the event of a crash, when everything else is flying around in the vehicle, it is.”

The following is information on tethers:

- **What is a tether strap?** A tether is a strap attached to the back of a car seat with a hook at the end. Tether straps are on car seats that can be used forward-facing in a vehicle.
- **Why use the tether strap with a forward-facing car seat?** It keeps the top of the car seat from moving in a crash, helping to protect a child’s head from hitting other parts of the vehicle.
- **When should you use a tether strap?** Use the tether with forward-facing car seats whenever possible, in addition to using the seat belt or lower anchors.
- **How do you use a tether strap?** Almost all vehicles have designated locations (anchors) to attach a tether strap. Locate the tether anchor in the vehicle by looking in the vehicle owner’s manual. Attach and tighten the tether to the designated location. The vehicle anchor location may have a symbol like this: .
- **How do you know if your vehicle has a tether anchor?** Most vehicles made since 2000 have at least three tethers. Look in your owner’s manual to find the tether anchors. Many can be found on the back of the vehicle seat, in the window shelf or on the ceiling. The anchor may look like a ring, loop or bar.

Parents and caregivers can find more information about tethers at www.ndhealth.gov, by visiting a local child passenger safety technician or contacting the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2286.

###