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Jesse White Announces Statewide Poster Contest to Kick Off National Child Passenger Safety Week

Secretary of State Jesse White kicked off National Child Passenger Safety Week by announcing a statewide poster coloring contest for first- and second-grade students. White was joined by Skokie Mayor George Van Dusen and Skokie Police Deputy Chief Al Lopez at Fairview South School in the northern suburb.

Secretary White spoke about the importance of using child passenger safety seats from birth up to 8 years old. White said that for this year's Child Passenger Safety Week he would be looking for first- and second-graders statewide to help spread the message. Students received coloring sheets featuring a place for a slogan highlighting the importance of child passenger safety. The winning drawings will be featured on a poster that will be distributed statewide. The Secretary of State's office will be taking contest submissions statewide until December 16, 2013.

"The leading cause of death and injury for children is automobile crashes," White said, while at the school at 7040 Laramie Ave. "This poster contest is a great way to bring awareness to the fact that the majority of safety seats are improperly installed. In addition, it also reminds us that children in the first and second grades must be properly secured in booster seats to ensure their safety."

The event was aimed at encouraging parents, caregivers and their families to make sure children are properly secured in appropriate child safety seats. There was also a demonstration on how to properly secure a child in a booster seat.

In Illinois, three out of four child safety seats are improperly installed, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

- The Illinois Child Passenger Protection Act states that children under age 8 must be secured in an appropriate child restraint system, including booster seats.
- In 2012, 3,766 drivers in Illinois were ticketed for not having their children restrained.
- Child safety seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers in passenger vehicles.

For more information on the poster contest, please contact Kathleen Widmer at 312-814-2905 or kwidmer@ilsos.net.

The Secretary of State's office, through its Kids In Safe Seats program, has 12 fitting stations in Illinois where motorists can set up appointments or be referred to technicians in their area who can show them how to install their child safety seats properly. Safety seat technicians teach parents how to install more than 50 child safety seats a month in the Chicago metro area. To make an appointment or get more information, please call (866) 247-0213 or visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

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