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### Stepped Up Enforcement Planned Locally

*Editor's note: The Following Is Submitted by Hiawatha Police Chief John Defore*

Beginning September 14 thru September 18, the Hiawatha Police Department will join other Kansas law enforcement agencies to stop what has been likened to an epidemic in Kansas.

In 2014, 28 children ages 0-17 lost their lives due to car crashes in Kansas. Sadly, half of those children were not wearing their seat belts, and 8 of them were ejected from the vehicle.

“In the health field, they talk about making sure children have received their immunizations to prevent deadly diseases, “but what many parents don’t think about is that wearing a seat belt properly is the best prevention of serious injury or death in a vehicle.”

According to the 2015 Kansas observational seatbelt survey, children are much more likely to be buckled up if the driver is wearing their seat belt. If the driver is buckled, about 95% of the children are restrained. If the driver is not buckled, only about 25% of the observed children were buckled. We want adults to model good driver behavior for the children.

Throughout National Child Passenger Safety Week, September 14-18, law enforcement across Kansas will be extra-vigilant when patrolling around schools.

For more than twenty years, officers have educated and warned drivers and passengers regarding the importance of using seat belts while in their vehicle.

There should be no surprises when it comes to this enforcement effort. Officers will issue citations to anyone who does not obey Kansas law.

“Even one child’s death is unacceptable. Please slow down, especially in school zones, eliminate the distractions, and always buckle up.”

For the latest data and to see more about Kansas safety belt laws, go to: [www.ktsro.org](http://www.ktsro.org)

Sincerely,

John A. Defore  
Chief of Police

Many Signals Communications