



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**ILLINOIS TOLLWAY AND ILLINOIS STATE POLICE RESUME HOSTING KIDS IDENTIFICATION  
AND SAFETY SEAT EVENTS AS PART OF OPERATION KID 2022**  
*First event is June 4 at Kohl Children's Museum*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – After a two-year break caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Illinois Tollway and Illinois State Police District 15 are teaming up to re-launch their annual Kids Identification and Safety Seat (K.I.S.S.) events as part of Operation Kid 2022.

The Tollway and District 15 worked together to promote child safety for more than 15 years, each year holding popular events throughout Northern Illinois to provide free kids' ID cards and inspect and install child safety seats. In 2019, Operation Kid helped families and caregivers with about 375 child safety seats checks and issued more than 850 kids' ID cards to parents.

The events were paused in 2020 as a safety precaution because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, the Tollway and District 15 plan to hold four outdoor events, beginning June 4 and continuing through September.

"We're happy we have the opportunity to return to our education and safety initiatives that help keep children safe and parents worry-free, every trip, every time," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Lanyea Griffin. "Safety is always our highest priority and reaching out to families through Operation Kid allows us to help parents protect their children when they're on the road and out in their communities."

Illinois law requires that all children under age 8 must be properly secured in an appropriate child restraint system when riding in a vehicle with family or other caregivers. In addition, as of January 1, 2019, children under age 2 years are required by Illinois law to ride rear-facing, unless the child weighs 40 or more pounds or is 40 or more inches tall, to protect their developing muscles and bones.

Properly installed child safety seats save lives and significantly reduce injuries in the event of a crash. Yet, Illinois State Police find that as many as 90 percent of child safety seats they inspect are improperly installed.

"Operation Kid provides a great opportunity for us to educate drivers about Illinois' safety seat laws to ensure they're doing everything they can to protect children when they're riding in a car or truck," said Captain Jason Bradley, District 15 commander. "Offering parents and caregivers a kids ID card protects children by helping authorities more easily locate and identify a missing or lost child."

## **2022 K.I.S.S. Events**

To make it easy and fun for parents, grandparents and children alike, four K.I.S.S. events will be held at convenient locations at various locations along the 294-mile Illinois Tollway system.

Operation Kid 2022 events kick off on Saturday, June 4, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Kohl Children's Museum, 2100 Patriot Boulevard in Glenview near the Edens Spur (I-94). Highlights include:

- Free identification cards for children ages 3 and older and child safety seat inspections and installations
- Touch-a-truck display featuring hands-on exploration of a Tollway H.E.L.P. truck, snowplow and local emergency vehicles.
- Trooper Cooper, a talking, child-sized Illinois State Police car that offers simple safety tips to toddlers and young children
- Kids indoor and outdoor play areas.
- Families attending event will receive voucher for one free admission to the museum.

Unless otherwise indicated, all other events also are on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

July 23	Bartlett Police Department (8 a.m. to noon)
August 27	Children's Museum in Oak Lawn (Families attending receive voucher for one free admission)
September 24	Family Safety Fair at Itasca Fire Protection District

For more information about Operation Kid 2022 and to see additional activities at each event, visit the [Tollway's website](#).

### **Child Safety Seat Basics**

The safest place for infants, toddlers and young children to ride is in the back seat with the appropriate child safety seat for their age and weight.

Rear-facing child safety seats protect a growing baby's head, neck and back in an accident. Toddlers and young children should ride in a child safety seat with an internal harness until age 8 or they reach the maximum harness limit of the child restraint.

A booster seat is the most effective way to position a safety belt properly on a young child's growing body. Safety belts are designed for adults who are at least 4 feet 9 inches tall. Until age 8, most children have not developed strong hip bones and their legs and bodies are too short for the adult safety belt to fit correctly without use of a booster seat.

Illinois law requires that whenever a person is transporting a child under age 8, the person is responsible for properly securing the child in an appropriate child restraint system.

### **Missing Child Basics**

Information provided on kids ID cards can help law enforcement search and recover a missing child. That includes a description of the child's hair and eye color, height, weight, race, unique identifiers such as glasses or beauty marks, as well as date of birth, current photo and fingerprints.

The FBI suggests that parents keep their children's fingerprints, not only because fingerprints are unique but also because they don't change over time like a child's appearance. The FBI also recommends that parents update the photos of their children on ID cards at least once a year to ensure they are current.

With increased public awareness, training, laws and better technology, the recovery rate of missing children has jumped from 62 percent in 1990 to more than 97 percent today, according to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

**About the Illinois Tollway**

The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 294 miles of roadways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

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