



# NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 6, 2019**

## **ILLINOIS TOLLWAY AND ILLINOIS STATE POLICE LAUNCH OPERATION KID 2019**

*First event May 11 at The Promenade Bolingbrook for free child safety seat checks and kids' ID cards*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – The Illinois Tollway and Illinois State Police District 15 are teaming up to host their annual Kids Identification and Safety Seat (K.I.S.S.) events as part of Operation Kid 2019.

The Tollway and District 15 have worked together in partnership to promote child safety for more than 15 years, each year holding events throughout Northern Illinois to provide free kids' ID cards and inspect and install child safety seats. In 2018, Operation Kid helped families and caregivers with nearly 540 child safety seats checks and issued nearly 1,000 kids' ID cards to parents.

"Our mission is to keep children safe and parents worry-free, every trip, every time," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. "The safety of motorists and their families is a top priority for the Tollway and Operation Kid gives us the opportunity to help parents keep their children safe on the road and 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 more than 90 percent of child safety seats they inspect are improperly installed.

"Operation Kid offers a convenient way for drivers to make sure they're complying with Illinois law," said District 15 Acting Commander Dominic Chiappini. "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."

### **2019 K.I.S.S. Events**

To make it easy and fun for parents, grandparents and children alike, 10 K.I.S.S. events will be held at convenient locations at various locations along the 294-mile Illinois Tollway system.

Operation Kid 2019 events kick off on Saturday, May 11, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Promenade Bolingbrook, 631 E. Boughton Road along the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355). 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.
- Kids indoor and outdoor play areas, including an inflatable slide.

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

May 18	Hinsdale Oasis
June 1	Kohl Children's Museum in Glenview
June 8	Lake Forest Oasis
July 27	Bartlett Police Department (8 a.m. to noon)
August 3	Itasca Fire Protection District
August 10	Children's Museum of Oak Lawn
August 24	DuPage Children's Museum in Naperville
September 21	Family Safety Fair at Tollway headquarters in Downers Grove
September 28	IKEA Schaumburg

For more information about Operation Kid 2019 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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