

# There's more than patrolling to CHP; it offers many safety programs

By  
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I am the community outreach and media relations officer for the [California Highway Patrol](#). One of my main jobs is to inform the public of the various education programs and services the CHP offers. With 2015 only a month old, it is a great time to provide a quick overview of our outreach opportunities.

For starters, the CHP has many options for elementary and middle school presentations. Officers can share what we do for a living (career day), organize a walk or bike-to-school day, or maybe host a bicycle rodeo. At a rodeo, CHP officers will go to an elementary school, talk with children about bike and pedestrian safety, check helmets for correct size and fit them properly, and run the students through a short riding course. In addition, officers can also talk to students during Red Ribbon week about drugs, alcohol and bullying.

Another child-related service deals with [car seats](#). Partnering with the international organization [Safe Kids Worldwide](#), we provide the public with certified car seat technicians. CHP technicians receive ongoing training and must recertify with Safe Kids every two years. Car seats can be tricky and approximately 70% of them are installed incorrectly. The CHP also partners with community leaders to host car seat check-up events where we inspect dozens of seats in one day. If you need a child car seat installed or inspected, call your local CHP office and set up an appointment.

Traffic collisions are the leading cause of death for teens between the ages of 15 and 20. [Start Smart](#) is a program aimed at helping new (and future) licensed teenage drivers learn the critical responsibilities of driving and to understand collisions are 100 percent preventable. This is an interactive class taught to teens and their parent/guardians so they can work together to build a safe, responsible driver.

[Impact Teen Drivers](#) is a program that seeks to change behaviors through an emotional connection. Where Start Smart is an educational "class," Impact Teen Drivers reaches out to teens with real stories, motivational speakers, and ongoing reinforcement from peers regarding the hazards of reckless and distracted driving. This is the program we have been utilizing locally to establish Distracted Driver Clubs in high schools.

Another teen program is [Every 15 Minutes](#). Developed to prevent teen drinking and driving, the curriculum helps students see the impact of the tragedy through the eyes of family and friends. The CHP began administering Every 15 Minutes in October 2000, and since then, more than 1,276 events have been presented to high school students in California.

CHP officers also conduct traffic safety presentations for adults. These are usually taught for businesses with lots of employees who drive, like utilities and delivery services. Topics include distracted driving, driving under the influence, traffic safety and vehicle theft.

The Age Well / Drive Smart class is geared toward older motorists. Senior drivers have decades of driving experience, but might need to adjust their habits based upon their physiological changes. Driving habits which worked well in the 20s and 30s might require some adjustments in the 60s and 70s. This course provides suggestions and opportunities to exchange information in an open discussion between instructors and students.

All of these programs are available in Spanish through our "[El Protector](#)" program. Also, if you're not sure which CHP office area you live in, send me an email and I will assist you. It doesn't matter where you live in California, if you are

reading this and want the CHP to help you with a class or a car seat, email me and I will put you in touch with the right office.

California Highway Patrol officer David Singer's "On Duty" column publishes bimonthly. He can be reached at [dsinger@chp.ca.gov](mailto:dsinger@chp.ca.gov).

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