



## **For Immediate Release**

**Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph  
Community Health Agency**

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### **Granholm Signs Bill Protecting Children From Leading Cause of Death**

**March 27, 2008. Legislation introduced by Senator Michelle McManus and signed into law today by Governor Jennifer Granholm will require children who are both under 8 years of age and 4'9" to be properly secured in a child restraint (car seat or booster seat) when traveling in a motor vehicle.**

**The current law requires that children under 4 years of age ride in a child restraint. The new child restraint legislation extends the requirement to include older children who are not optimally protected by seat belts alone. "Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for Michigan children ages 14 and under," said Mary Proctor Safe Kids Coordinator, Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph County.**

**Partners for Child Passenger Safety conducts the worlds largest ongoing study of children in crashes from 16 states including Michigan, reports that risk of injury for a 4 to 8 year old child is reduced by 59% when using a child restraint. Standard safety belts are designed for restraining occupants taller the 4'9" and therefore do not fit children correctly. Children using seat belts alone are 4 times more likely to suffer head/brain injury compared to those using a child restraint (car seat or booster seat). In states with a law requiring child restraint use for children 4 to 8 years of age, usage increases dramatically.**

**The signing of Senate Bill 82 is a culmination of a multi-year effort on the part of child passenger safety advocates in the State of Michigan, including Safe Kids Coalitions, Chapters and Boost MI Kids Coalition. Michigan will be joining 38 other states that already have a booster seat law. Michigan's new occupant protection law goes into effect July 1, 2008.**

**For additional information please visit:**

**Michigan Safe kids at [www.michigansafekids.org](http://www.michigansafekids.org)**

**Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency web site: [www.bhsj.org](http://www.bhsj.org)**