



March 8, 2025

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Ashleigh Traud Receives Child Passenger Safety Technician of the Year Award

Clark County Health Specialist Recognized for Dedication to Community Safety

ITASCA, IL – One opportunity. One moment. One life changed.

That's how Ashleigh Traud's journey as a Child Passenger Safety Technician began—helping a young mother correctly install an infant car seat while overcoming a communication barrier. Today, that same passion and dedication have led to her being named the National Child Passenger Safety Technician of the Year. The award is presented by the [National Child Passenger Safety Board](#) and sponsored by [Toyota Motor North America](#).

Traud, a resident of New Albany, Ind., and an environmental health specialist at the Clark County Health Department, has made a remarkable impact in her community in a short time.

Her rise to this national recognition was swift and well-earned:

- **November 2021:** Traud and several colleagues took a Child Passenger Safety Technician certification course at the encouragement of Clark County Health Department Administrator Doug Bentfield.
- **May 2023:** Traud attended her first Child Passenger Safety Conference in Indianapolis. She was deeply moved by a child survival crash story shared by National Safety Council Senior Program Manager and former Texas state trooper Lonny Haschel. Traud pledged to take her role as a Technician more seriously.
- **Later that year:** She experienced a lightbulb moment when helping a family understand how to correctly install a car seat. With assistance from a bilingual colleague, she ensured a mother could correctly secure her child's seat.

"Mom was using an infant car seat and stroller combo and had just been wrapping the seat belt around the seat for installation," Traud said. "She had no idea how to lock the seat belt, adjust the recline or thread the lap and shoulder belt properly. Thanks to our team, we made sure she left with the knowledge to install it correctly every time."

Traud and her colleagues at Clark County Health Department work tirelessly to make a difference:

- In 2024, she participated in 54 of 61 car seat checks conducted by the agency.
- She assisted in the distribution of 27 car seats to families in need.
- Traud and the Clark County Team help five to six families per month at their car seat inspection station, with demand surging in warmer months.

"It's remarkable to see how much good one person can do in such a short time," National Child Passenger Safety Board Chair Scott Downing said. "Ashleigh has embraced her role as both a Technician and an educator, becoming a true safety ambassador in southern Indiana."

Beyond car seat safety checks, Traud and the team at the Clark County Health Department have engaged in community outreach events such as:

- A "baby shower" event with Nurse-Family Partnership
- Safety Saturday at the mall
- An educational fair at a local high school
- The Back to School Bash with the YMCA

For Traud, her success as a Technician comes down to one key ingredient: empathy.

"Anytime a parent or caregiver comes in for a car seat check, I believe they're doing a great job because they care about their kiddo's safety," she said. "I try to be as understanding and open as possible so they get the most out of the experience."

When she's not busy assisting others, Traud enjoys life with her husband, Nick, and their two dogs, Hank and Emma. She is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Health Administration. She spends her free time walking the dogs, watching scary movies, grabbing coffee with friends and playing drums at her church.

About the National Child Passenger Safety Board

The National Child Passenger Safety Board's mission is to save lives and prevent injuries by promoting child passenger safety through education, mentorship, engagement and innovation. The Board's work is managed by the National Safety Council. For more information about child passenger safety or the National CPS Board, please visit the Board's website:

www.cpsboard.org