

# CHILD SAFETY ALERT

## Back To School Car Safety: Check Your Tires

(NAPSA)—America's youngsters are back to school—but parents have an important homework assignment of their own: ensuring that their cars can keep youngsters on the road to safety.

Every day, parents ferry carloads of children—their own and other families'—to and from school and other activities. Too many, however, will overlook one of the most important safety checks they should make before setting out on carpool duty—checking their tires.

A study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) at the U.S. Department of Transportation found that about one of every four passenger cars on U.S. roadways are driving with one or more substantially underinflated tires. NHTSA estimates that proper tire inflation could help save up to 80 lives and prevent up to 10,000 injuries each year—yet some 60 percent of drivers do not know that they should check their tire pressure once a month. Half of all drivers don't even know how to find the correct tire pressure for their vehicle.

"Improper tire inflation results in thousands of accidents each year. We must send the message that proper tire maintenance can save lives," says Tennessee Attorney General Paul Summers, Chair of the Safe Trip Campaign, a nationwide public awareness campaign on tire safety sponsored by the state Attorneys General and state offices of consumer protection. Some Safe Trip tips to help you:

- An underinflated tire may not be obvious and can't always be detected with a visual check. Check tire pressure in all four



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### **Check your tire pressure when tires are cool, experts advise.**

tires at least once a month with a tire gauge, available for as little as \$3 to \$5 at auto-parts stores.

- Check your tire pressure when tires are cool.

- Use the automaker's recommended tire pressure. This is printed on a placard that usually appears in the vehicle's doorjamb, inside the fuel-filler door, or on the inside of the glove box lid.

- If the tire pressure is too high in any of the tires, slowly release air by gently pressing on the tire valve with the edge of your tire gauge until you get to the correct pressure.

- If the pressure is too low, note the difference between the measured tire pressure and the correct tire pressure. At a service station, add the missing pounds to each tire that is underinflated.

- Check all tires to make sure they have the same air pressure, unless otherwise specified.

- Perform a monthly tread check. Take any penny and put it in the grooves of your tire with Lincoln's head down. As you look at it from the side, if you can see the top of Lincoln's head, you need new tires.

- Don't overload your car—it puts added stress on your tires. For more tire safety tips, visit [www.safetrip.org](http://www.safetrip.org).