

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Child Safety Seats Save Thousands of Lives Free Child Safety Seat Inspection at State Police Troop B

New Orleans (September 13, 2007) -- Chances are, not a single person in New Orleans would ever intentionally put a child at risk. Yet, that's exactly what happens when young passengers are not restrained.

That's why the LSU Interim Hospital is joining with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), state and local leaders to commemorate Child Passenger Safety Week (Sept. 16-22). A key component will be free child safety seat inspections to ensure all children are properly protected.

"Child safety seats and booster seats only work best when they are used correctly," said Bridget Gardner, RN, Injury Prevention Coordinator. "It is so important for people to get their child's seats checked. When it comes to the safety of a child, there is no room for mistakes."

On Wednesday, September 19, the LSU Interim Hospital will have certified technicians available to provide free child safety seat inspections, from 1pm – 4pm, at Louisiana State Police Troop B, in Kenner, 2101 I-10 Service Road, (504.471.2775).

Parents and caregivers are urged to get their child restraints checked to make certain children are secured properly, in an appropriate seat, for their size and height.

NHTSA research indicates that 7,000 lives have been saved by the proper use of child restraints during the past 20 years. In 2005 alone, among children under age 5, an estimated 420 lives were saved by child restraint use. Research on the effectiveness of child restraints show that these devices provide the best protection for all children up to age 8.

For maximum child passenger safety, parents and caregivers are encouraged to follow "4 Steps for Kids", a guideline for determining which restraint system is best suited to protect children, based on age and size:

1. For the best possible protection, keep infants in the back seat, in rear-facing child safety seats, as long as possible, up to the height or weight limit of the particular seat. At a minimum, keep infants rear-facing until a minimum of age 1 and at least 20 pounds.

2. When children outgrow their rear-facing seats (at a minimum age 1 and at least 20 pounds), they should ride in forward-facing child safety seats, in the back seat, until they reach the upper weight or height limit of the particular seat (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds).
3. Once children outgrow their forward-facing seats (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds), they should ride in booster seats, in the back seat, until the vehicle seat belts fit properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall).
4. When children outgrow their booster seats, (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall), they can use the adult seat belt in the back seat, if it fits properly (lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest).

For more information on Child Passenger Safety Week, a national effort to remind parents and caregivers of the lifesaving effect child safety seats have in protecting young children, please visit www.nhtsa.gov

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