

A Great Fit



Helen Kampfe, a child passenger safety technician, installs a car seat. Children should ride in rear-facing car seats until they are two years old.

SECURE Car Seat Inspection Station

Car accidents are the leading cause of death among children in the United States. When properly used, child car seats could reduce the number of serious or fatal injuries by more than 50 percent. But according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the problem is that they are often used incorrectly.

To complicate matters, many parents may not even realize a car seat is improperly installed. To help ensure infants and young children are safe and secure on the road, Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center has an established car seat inspection station. It is the only ongoing, stationary car seat fitting site in Lancaster County.

The program is based on the child passenger safety curriculum of the National Highway Safety Traffic Administration. The SECURE car seat inspection station gives parents the opportunity to have their child's car seat installed or checked by a certified child

passenger safety technician. They also receive one-on-one instruction on how to use their car seat and secure their child properly.

Helen Kampfe, a child passenger safety technician and instructor at Saint Elizabeth, said approximately 95 percent of the car seats she checks are installed incorrectly.

"Often times it's just a simple adjustment," Kampfe said. "But simple adjustments can make a big difference."

Parents can schedule an appointment even before their baby is born. Experienced parents, frustrated by complicated car seat instruction manuals, are also encouraged to take advantage of the program.

"I enjoy working with parents, seeing that light bulb come on and helping them understand why it's so important," said Kampfe. "Some people are astonished because they didn't know there was a problem."

The 45-minute fittings are held at the on-site inspection station at Saint Elizabeth. Initial appointments for one car seat cost \$25.

Individuals and families in need may request financial assistance for a fitting and car seat for their child.

"About 60 percent of the parents and caregivers that come in for a car seat check qualify for the free fitting and car seat," said Donna Hammack, chief development officer at Saint Elizabeth Foundation. "We provide more than 150 car seats each year to income eligible families."

"The program is part of the mission at Saint Elizabeth," said Hammack. "We are committed to community health. We have always been in the business of helping children. Our car seat program is a natural fit," she said.



**To schedule a car seat fitting,
call the Telephone Line to Care,
402-219-7000.**