



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RSA Tower 201 Monroe Street, Suite 914 Montgomery, AL 36104

Phone 334-206-5300 Fax 334-206-5534

www.adph.org

Alabama observes Child Passenger Safety Week, emphasizes proper child car seat fit

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Folashade Ayanwale
(334) 206-5657

The Injury Prevention Branch of the Alabama Department of Public Health will conduct a child car seat fitting clinic on Thursday, Sept. 19, at the Alabama Farmers Market located at 1655 Federal Drive, Montgomery. The clinic will be held from noon to 3:30 p.m.

Individuals who are enrolled in ALL Kids, Medicaid, WIC or SNAP are eligible for a free seat for their child provided by Alabama Head Injury Foundation. Appointments are required.

This event is designed to teach parents and caregivers how to properly install and use a child safety seat. A properly installed and used child safety seat will greatly decrease the chance of children sustaining a serious or life-threatening injury during a motor vehicle crash.

The car seat fitting event is being held during Child Passenger Safety Week, Sept. 15-21.

A child safety seat is designed to:

- Hold the child in the seat in the vehicle
- Protect the child from being thrown out of the vehicle or from hitting something in the vehicle
- Absorb the force of the impact
- Spread the force of the vehicle's impact safely over the whole body
- Prevent crushing of the child by other passengers

Recommendations for size-appropriate restraint systems to keep your child safe are as follows:

Rear-facing only seats and rear-facing convertible seats (Infants/Toddlers)

All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car seat until they are 2 years of age or until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their car safety seat's manufacturer. Never put a rear-facing car seat in the forward-facing position or in front of an active airbag. The safety harness must be properly adjusted and the seat must be tightly anchored by the vehicle lap belt or anchorage system.

Convertible seats and forward-facing seats with harness (Toddler/Preschoolers)

All children 2 years or older, or those younger than 2 years who have outgrown the rear-facing weight or height limit for their car seat, should use a forward-facing car seat with a harness for as long as possible, up to the highest weight or height allowed by their car seat's manufacturer.

Booster seats (Children under 4 feet 9 inches in height)

All children whose weight or height is above the forward-facing limit for their car seat should use a belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle seat belt fits properly, typically when they have reached 4 feet 9 inches in height and are between 8 and 12 years of age. Recommendations for using booster seats follow.

- Use belt-positioning booster seats with lap and shoulder belts. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest.
- Use high back booster seats in vehicles with low seat backs.
- Only use low back booster seats if the child's ears are below the top of the seat back when seated.
- Use until the child's feet can touch the floor with knees bent at the edge of the seat and back is straight against the seat back. This raises the child up so the safety belt fits the way it is designed for an adult passenger.

Seat belts (Children who have outgrown booster seats through age 12)

When children are old enough and large enough to use the vehicle seat belt alone, they should always use lap and shoulder seat belts and ride in the back seat for optimal protection. The lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest.

Car seat fitting clinic guidance

To ensure correct installation of child safety seats and fast service, please read and bring your car seat instructions and vehicle owner's manual. A certified technician will help parents and caregivers learn to install and use their child safety seats properly.

Each car seat check takes about 30 minutes. Appointments **must** be made in advance. To schedule an appointment, please contact Wendy Caraway at (334) 206-3359. For more information, visit adph.org.