



Safe Kids Maine Car Seat Inspection Station Sponsor FAQ

What is a Safe Kids Car Seat Inspection Station?

A Safe Kids Maine Car Seat Inspection Station is a permanent site where parents and caregivers can routinely go to learn how to safely transport their children by using the appropriate child safety seat or seat belt correctly. A one-on-one tutorial instruction is provided by Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians on the proper use and installation of child restraints. A Mobile Car Seat Checkup Event provides the same service except at various locations and at various times throughout the year.

The purpose of a car seat inspection is to provide assistance for:

- Using the correct child safety seat for the age/size/maturity of the child.
- Educating the parent/caregiver how to properly install the car seat into their vehicle.
- Educating the parent/caregiver how to properly secure the child in the car seat.
- Obtaining information and experience that will lead to self-sufficiency for future use.

Hands-on instruction to educate parents about the correct use of child safety seats is a proven safety intervention.

Why do car seats need to be inspected?

With motor vehicle crashes as the leading cause of death of children, the proper use of child safety seats has been shown to effectively reduce the risk by up to 71% (*National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2011*). However, it is estimated that over 90% of safety seats are used improperly, reducing their effectiveness in a crash. Since 2000, an average of approximately 1,900 children ages 14 and under have died in motor vehicle crashes each year; and nearly 179,000 children were injured, many the result of improper restraints. That's five children each and every day who die in a car crash! Free car seat checkup events and outreach activities help raise awareness about the proper transportation of children and reduce the misuse of child safety seats.

Car seats are not always intuitive or easy to use. There are many variables with fit between the car seat, the child and the vehicle that need to be taken into consideration. Not all car seats fit correctly in all vehicles. Incompatibilities that exist between the car seat and the vehicle complicate proper use of the seat. Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians are trained to identify and correct misuse and incompatibilities.

Why is funding for the inspection station needed?

As with most things in life, nothing is truly “free”. There are costs associated in one format or another with most seemingly “free” items. Safe Kids Maine does not charge parents and caregivers for car seat inspections that are conducted at inspection stations and checkup events because we want to make the service available to everyone in an attempt to increase attendance, increase correct use of car seats and decrease the number of injuries and deaths from motor vehicle crashes. Expenses related to operating an inspection station include supplies and equipment necessary to conduct inspections; technician incentives; educational material for both parents and children; and free and/or reduced cost car seats to make available to replace unsafe car seats to families in need. Budget cuts and staffing reductions have impacted many programs and Safe Kids is no exception. Funding is needed to ensure that car seat inspection stations remain open to continue to serve an important community need.

How much funding is needed for the inspection station?

An average car seat inspection station costs between \$500 and \$1,000 per month to operate (\$6,000 to \$12,000 per year). The expenses are not only related to the actual operation of the inspection station but also to the pre and post activities related to the inspection station including public relations to advertise and promote the inspection station and conduct evaluations of the inspection station. Evaluations provide valuable data about the inspection station such as the total number of car seats inspected, the rate of misuse, the number of new car seats distributed, how parents and caregivers heard about the event, etc. Safe Kids Maine receives no state or federal grant money to fund the inspection stations. All funding is provided from private donations, either business or individual. Many agencies and organizations also provide in-kind support in the form of staffing of a child passenger safety technician, providing printing and photocopying services, providing equipment storage space and providing supplies needed for the inspection station.

Why should we sponsor the inspection station?

For all children ages 14 and under, the total annual cost of death and injury caused by motor vehicle crashes exceeds \$17.8 billion. For every \$45 car seat purchased, society gains \$1,800 in benefits. For every \$30 booster seat purchased, society gains \$2,000 in benefits (Safe Kids Worldwide, 2007). By funding this important community program, sponsors are having a direct impact on the reduction of health care costs and are helping

to prevent unintentional childhood injuries and deaths. Without funding from sponsors, the car seat inspection stations will not be able to remain open and families will lose a valuable community resource. The result will be more children riding unsafely and at risk of preventable injuries and deaths. Sponsoring a car seat inspection program is great public relations for any business or organization! Visual recognition is provided at inspection station events by adding sponsor names and logos to a recognition banner. Names and logos are also included with press releases to the media, on websites and social media pages and on the educational material that is distributed at the event. With program sponsorship of Safe Kids Buckle Up, logos can also be added to the Safe Kids Maine Mobile Car Seat Checkup Event van and training trailer to provide further exposure.

What other businesses or organizations sponsor the inspection stations?

Sponsors vary by inspection station location but generally the site host, area businesses including banks, credit unions, auto dealerships, hospitals, insurance companies and others collaborate to help sponsor the inspection station. Sponsors for specific inspection stations can be provided upon request.

Is there anything else needed for the inspection stations besides financial sponsorship?

Funding is the number one need of the inspection station but there are other ways that the station can be supported as well. In-kind donations of photocopying and printing services, postage services, storage space, van and equipment maintenance, volunteers, meeting room space, public relations/advertising, new car seats, technical equipment, staffing a CPS technician at the event and giveaways to parents/caregivers and children are all items that are needed for the inspection station to operate smoothly and efficiently.

How can we get more involved with the program?

Car seat inspection stations are just one activity that Safe Kids Maine conducts! Other community outreach activities are conducted such as mobile car seat checkup events, information exhibit tables, school presentations, Lunch and Learn presentations to professionals, continuing education classes for Child Passenger Safety Technicians, National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Technician Certification classes, technician mentoring program, technician incentive program and much more! While child passenger safety is a major risk area that we focus on, we address all other unintentional injury risk areas as well including bicycle safety, fire and burn prevention, water safety, home safety, internet safety, pedestrian safety, sports safety and poisoning prevention. Safe Kids Maine has a coalition of members comprised of representatives from state and federal agencies, public safety departments, hospitals and health care facilities, child care providers, businesses, social organizations and concerned citizens.

The coalition meets quarterly in Augusta and all are welcome to attend! In addition to becoming a coalition member, our lead agency, the Tall Pine Safety Resource Center, is seeking members to serve on the board of directors. Help is also needed to serve on various committees including specific risk area committees and administrative committees such as fundraising and public relations. Refer to the Safe Kids Maine Membership form for more options of involvement!



With your support, we are able to protect children and save lives!

THANK YOU!!