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**Champaign-Urbana Public Health District**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Contact:** Susan Butler, Coordinator /  
Health Educator – Safe Kids Champaign  
County / CUPHD (217) 531-4268  
Lori A. Holmes, Public Relations  
(217) 531-2927

## **Safe Kids Champaign County Asks for Help As Car Seat Program Faces Critical Funding Challenges**

*Safe Kids Champaign County Partners with Toys R Us for Give-A-Seat for Safety  
Program – New Car Seat Donation Drive*

Champaign, IL – Safe Kids Champaign County has partnered with Toys R Us to help provide low-income families with new car seats. Safe Kids Champaign County will be holding their annual new car seat drive on Saturday, October 13, 2007 from 9:00am – 1:00pm in the Toys R Us parking lot located at 40 East Anthony Drive in Champaign. Safe Kids Champaign County will be accepting all NEW car seats including Infant, Convertible, Combination and Booster. No used seats will be accepted.

Safe Kids Champaign County in collaboration with the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) currently provides a Child Safety Seat Inspection Station at the Provena Pro Ambulance Center on 408 South Neil Street in Champaign twice a week. This program provides free inspections and education on Child Passenger Safety to over 1800 Champaign County residents per year, and distributed 692 car seats to low-income families last year alone. The increased demands and costs of the inspection station are placing a strain on existing funding and require community assistance to maintain the current levels of service.

The mission of Safe Kids Champaign County is to prevent accidental childhood injury, the leading killer of children ages 14 and under. Vehicle Safety is the major contributor to these injuries. Many children in Champaign County were the victims of an accidental childhood injury involving a vehicle last year. Most of these children survived these injuries due in part to Child Passenger Safety regulations. Safe Kids Champaign County checked 1167 car seats last year and found that the average misuse rate in Champaign County to be 86%.

“Parents are very concerned about the welfare of their children. No one wants their child to be placed in a potentially hazardous position, but modern car seats can be complicated and parents are encouraged to have their seats inspected and adjusted by professionals.” said Susan Butler, Coordinator and Health Educator at Safe Kids Champaign County/CUPHD. “The technicians and volunteers at our Child Safety Seat Inspection Station receive 32 hours of training to receive certification, and are required to be recertified every two years.”

For more information about Safe Kids Champaign County programs and services, and how you can donate to the Car Seat Program, visit us on the web at [www.cuphd.org/ccsafekids](http://www.cuphd.org/ccsafekids) or call (217) 531-4268.

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