

SAFETY SEATS SAVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

(*Burnaby, B.C.*) – Despite criticism from a recent U.S. consumer report, the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation strongly encourages parents to use the Transport Canada approved infant seats and child booster seats to protect their children's lives when in a vehicle.

The report suggests that infant and child safety seats do not provide adequate protection because they came off of their bases or twisted in place. Contrary to these findings, research and real world evidence indicates that children are up to 75% safer in a vehicle when properly restrained in age and weight appropriate safety seats and booster seats.

BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation Director for Provincial Programs, David Dunne points out that the most serious injuries and deaths surrounding safety seats occur due to human error when a seat is not used properly, is not appropriate for the age and weight of the child, has not been installed correctly or is not vehicle compatible. Over 50% of the child seats that are seen by the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation child passenger safety technicians are used incorrectly.

“This is a reminder to parents to make sure their child *is* safe in their vehicle,” stated Dunne. “It is extremely important to use an age, weight, and size appropriate child seat because it provides far greater protection whether you are going around the block or across the country.”

The BCAA Traffic Safety Foundations has a few points that parents should remember when purchasing and installing an infant seat or a child booster seat.

- Follow manufacturer's instructions to give your baby the safest ride possible with current technology. Read the instructions and follow them carefully. Even if you don't usually read the instructions for other products, read your safety seat owner's manual cover to cover. Also read the section of your vehicle owner's manual that deals with occupant protection.
- Purchase the right safety seat / booster seat for your vehicle. Although any safety seat made after 2002 can be installed either with safety belts or the UAS (LATCH) system in a vehicle made in 2002 or later, your child is safest in a seat that is compatible with your vehicle.

- Make sure your infant safety seat is less than six years old, has never been in a crash, is reclining at about a 45-degree angle in the car, is secured tightly in the back seat and the harness straps are adjusted correctly for your baby.
- It is recommend that all children remain rear facing until at least one year of age **and** until they reach the infant/child safety seat's weight limit for the rear-facing position. Rear-facing safety seats support and protect the head and spine in the event of a crash. – always check manufacture's instructions.
- Use safety belts or UAS (LATCH) for an infant seat, whichever you prefer, but not both. If you're worried about the performance of UAS (LATCH), use the safety belt.

BCAA's Traffic Safety Foundation, together with program partner ICBC, has developed a comprehensive Child Passenger Safety Program to help you ensure your child's safety on the road. It includes:

- Toll-free child seat information line: 1-877-247-5551. Speak with a certified child passenger safety technician (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
- Child Safety Seat Inspection Clinics
- Boost BC, a program to increase the use of booster seats.
- Information sessions for professional and community groups
- Child passenger safety technician certification training courses

For more information visit the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation website at www.bcaatsf.ca or call 1-877-247-5551 to speak with a certified child passenger safety technician.

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Available for Interview:

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