



## Winnebago County Health Department - Child Passenger Seat Program

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), car crashes are the number one killer of children 1 to 12 years old in the United States. The best way to protect children in a car is to put them in the right seat, at the right time, and use it the right way. Child safety seats save hundreds of young lives every year, but proper use is vital. Child safety seats can significantly reduce the risk of death or injury in the event of a crash.

In FY12, with the support of a grant from IDOT/CPS, the Child Passenger Safety program at the Winnebago County Health Department was able to provide over 130 car seats to local families. With each car seat, staff provided information and installation education to the families. With an increase of grant funding of \$9, 244.00 dollars for FY13, the program will be able to serve over 144 families with car seats, education and training.

Also according to NHTSA, car manufacturer's work diligently to ensure cars and car seats are designed to keep kids as safe as possible. But it's up to every parent to take full advantage of these innovations by making sure car seats are used and installed correctly. To help parents ensure their child seats are installed and used correctly, the Winnebago County Child Safety Seat program encourages parents to conduct an at-home checkup using the following safety check list:

- Right Seat. Check the label on your car seat to make sure it's appropriate for your child's age, weight and height.
- Right Place. Keep all children in the back seat until they are 13. Doing this, along with correctly using the appropriate child restraints, greatly reduces the risk of injury.
- Right Direction. Infants should ride in a rear facing car seat which could be an infant-only carrier or convertible seat. The recommendation before forward facing is that the child be 1 year old and 20 pounds. Make sure you are installing the car seat correctly with either the seat belt or LATCH system. Always refer to your vehicle manual to determine which system is appropriate.
- Inch Test. Once your car seat is installed, give it a good shake at the base. Can you move it more than an inch side to side? A properly installed seat will not move more than an inch.
- Pinch Test. Make sure the harness is tightly buckled and coming from the correct slots (check manual). Now, with the chest clip placed at armpit level, pinch the strap at your child's shoulder. If you are unable to pinch any excess webbing, you're good to go.

For more information on car seats contact the Child Passenger Safety program at the Winnebago County Health Department at [www.wchd.org](http://www.wchd.org).

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