



NEWS RELEASE

St. Charles County Government

Department of Community Health and the Environment

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Saving Lives with Safety Seats

Grant will help provide free child safety seats to low-income families

St. Charles County, Missouri – The St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment recently received a grant from the Community and Children’s Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB) and the Children’s Trust Fund (CTF) License Plate Fund to provide child abuse and child neglect prevention services. These funds will allow the department’s health education division to instruct families on proper vehicle restraint use. The grant also provides enough money to equip 90 low-income families with a free child safety seat.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among children in the United States. In 2006, 674 children under the age of four were killed in traffic crashes in Missouri, according to the State Highway Patrol. Many of these deaths could have been prevented by placing children in age- and size-appropriate restraint systems. The CDC says by using proper restraints, serious and fatal injuries can be reduced by more than half.

Having a child safety seat is not enough. Parents who use a child restraint system often misuse it, which can result in possible injury or death of a child. In 2001, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) conducted child restraint checks in six states, including Missouri. Results from the NHTSA study were alarming, as nearly three-quarters of child safety restraint systems had one or more critical misuses.

The St. Charles County program will focus on proper restraint use for children 12 and under with an emphasis on age- and size-appropriate safety standards. Low-income families in St. Charles County may also be eligible to receive a free child safety seat. To qualify, a family’s income cannot exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level. For more information about the child safety seat program, contact health educator Hollie Milam at (636) 949-7413.

For more information about the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment, call (636) 949-7400 or visit www.scchealth.org.

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