



Lead organization

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### SAFE KIDS TREASURE VALLEY OFFERS CAR SEAT INSPECTIONS, SAFETY BELT FIT TESTS

*February 12-18 is Child Passenger Safety Week*

**Boise, ID (February 13, 2006)** – Safe Kids Treasure Valley is holding car seat inspections and safety belt fit tests on Saturday, February 18 at Babies R Us in observance of Child Passenger Safety Week (CPS). At more than 200 Child Passenger Safety Week events across the country, certified CPS Technicians will teach parents and caregivers to install and adjust their car seats properly and to determine when an older child is ready to graduate from a booster seat to adult safety belts.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading killer of children under 14. “Child passenger safety is not just about babies and toddlers,” says Alissa Lean, Safe Kids Treasure Valley coordinator. “It’s a commitment that lasts as long as childhood. Too many kids move from a booster seat to a safety belt before they’re big enough.”

Babies ride in safety restraints more than 90 percent of the time, but children ages 4-7 ride in safety restraints only 73 percent of the time. “That’s an alarming difference, and it shows that many parents and caregivers are unaware of the importance of booster seats,” says Lean.

Kids who have outgrown car seats (usually 40 pounds, but some car seats are rated for 60 pounds or more) are safest and most comfortable on a booster seat until they are 4’9” (57”) tall and 80 to 100 pounds — a height and weight most kids reach between ages 8-12.

“Comfort is a factor in safety,” says Lean. “Kids who can’t sit comfortably on an adult seat are likely to slouch or squirm and move out of a safe position. That’s when adult safety belts can fail to provide enough protection.” A booster seat positions the adult safety belt correctly and also helps a child see out the window.

“You’ll be able to see for yourself whether your child is big enough to be safe in an adult safety belt,” says Lean. “Whether you bring your child to one of our checkup events to be weighed and measured and take the Safety Belt Fit Test, or learn the test and perform it at home, you can actually see whether the adult safety belt protects your child better with a booster seat.”

During CPS Week, Safe Kids Worldwide is unveiling a new Parent Toolkit to help educate kids, carpool members and other caregivers about the importance of booster seats. The kit includes:

- the Safety Belt Fit Test
- Q&A for kids talking to other kids about booster seats
- carpool safety checklists and guidelines for starting a safe carpool

(MORE)

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Babies R Us is located at 1200 N. Eagle Rd. in Meridian. Inspections are being held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. To make an appointment call 381-3033; drive-ups are also available.

Safe Kids Treasure Valley provides car seat inspections throughout the year as well. To find an inspection site or certified technician near you, call 208.381.3033. Visit [www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org) for more information about child passenger safety.

Safe Treasure Valley works to prevent accidental childhood injury, the leading killer of children 14 and under. Safe Kids Treasure Valley is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations dedicated to preventing accidental injury. Safe Kids Treasure Valley was founded in 1996 and is led by St. Luke's Children's Hospital.

Safe Kids Buckle Up<sup>®</sup> is a national program developed by Safe Kids Worldwide and sponsored by Chevrolet and General Motors to educate parents and caregivers about the importance of properly restraining children on every ride. The 10-year-old program has:

- inspected nearly 700,000 car seats
- held more than 15,000 car seat checkup events around the country
- donated more than 300,000 car seats to low-income families
- given hands-on training to more than 9 million parents and caregivers
- launched 119 Mobile Car Seat Check Up Vans — Chevy Express and Chevy Venture vans stocked with supplies and equipment to hold car seat inspections in underserved communities.

### **SIDEBAR MATERIAL: Safety Belt Fit Test**

- *Have the child sit all the way back on the vehicle seat.* Do the child's knees bend over the front edge of the seat? Do the child's feet touch the floor?
- *Buckle the lap and shoulder belts.* Does the lap belt rest on the upper legs or thighs? Does the shoulder belt rest on the shoulder or collarbone? (*Never* put the shoulder belt under the arm or behind the back.)
- *Watch the child for the length of the trip.* Can the child stay seated properly with the safety belt buckled?

If you answered “no” to *any* of these questions, keep the child seated on a booster seat. Test again in a few months.

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