

Safe Rides for Safe Kids car seat saftey program debuts at Riverbend

There’s a new item on the check-out list as families with newborns discharge from PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend.

Now, thanks to the Safe Rides for Safe Kids program, families are offered a free car seat check before their newborns take their very first ride.

Free car seat checks are offered to families leaving Sacred Heart at RiverBend’s Mom & Baby Unit and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

They also are available to families with children leaving the hospital’s Pediatrics Unit and Emergency Department.

New car seats are available to families who do not have the financial means to replace broken or recalled seats, or seats that are not appropriate for their child.

“We’re so happy that PeaceHealth is able to offer Safe Rides for Safe Kids, and we’re deeply

grateful to the many donors who are supporting this program to benefit children and families.

“This truly will prevent injuries and save lives,” said Dr. Angela Zallen, a pediatric hospitalist at Sacred Heart at RiverBend and co-chair of Safe Kids West Oregon, a nonprofit child safety advocacy group.

“Going home for the first time, especially as first-time parents, is very terrifying,” said Brittney Secora, who delivered her daughter, Evelyn, a month ago at Sacred Heart at RiverBend.

She and her husband, Zachary said they appreciated having a car seat inspection before they drove Evelyn home.

“It definitely was that extra peace of mind leaving the hospital knowing that she was buckled in safely and that somebody who knows what they’re talking about has looked at her car seat and seen

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pediatric hospitalist at Sacred Heart at RiverBend

that she was going to be safe,” Secora said.

Motor vehicle collisions are the leading cause of preventable deaths and injuries to children in the United States. Yet national data show that almost three out of four car seats are installed incorrectly.

Offering families the opportunity to have a Certified Child Passen-

ger Safety Technician evaluate their child’s car seat and make sure it’s installed and functioning properly takes away the guesswork.

A properly installed car seat can reduce a child’s risk of death in a motor vehicle collision by as much as 71 percent.

In May, Sacred Heart at RiverBend hired two Certified Child Passen-

ger Safety Technicians, Elizabeth Price and Debbie Janeczek, to start conducting car-seat checks at the hospital.

From May through August, the technicians assisted 640 families. In that time they checked 350 car seats and found that about 80 percent had been installed incorrectly.

Some of the most

common fixes included adjusting the seat’s settings for the child’s size, smoothing out twisted straps and re-threading straps that had been threaded improperly.

Safe Rides for Safe Kids was made possible through generous donations to a fund managed by the Sacred Heart Medical Center Foundation.

For more information about the Safe Rides for Safe Kids program and other PeaceHealth supported car seat safety services, watch this video. To contribute to the fund, please visit the Safe Rides for Safe Kids website.



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