



**May 19, 2009  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Safe Kids Grand Forks Advisory: Used Car Seats**

Altru Health System, Grand Forks, ND – Bargain hunting at rummage sales can be fun and save you money. But dangers may lurk in some of the items you find. One example is car seats. Car seats can be expensive which makes it very tempting to buy one at a rummage sale for your child or grandchild. But safety experts recommend not buying used car seats for your child.

### **Car seats expire**

Car seats are often exposed to sunlight and extreme temperatures, which weaken the plastic. Most manufacturers stamp an expiration date on the back of the car seat. The car seat you buy at a rummage sale may be too old to use safely. Most car seats cannot be used longer than six years but some of them expire sooner. Check the seat for specific age limitations.

### **Is the car seat recalled?**

Recalls are common for car seats. If the car seat is recalled, only the original owner would be notified if they happened to send in the registration card. (Only one out of 10 registration cards are sent). The used car seat that you are thinking about buying may be recalled. To check for recalls or to register your seat, visit [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov).

### **Has the car seat been involved in a crash?**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) gives guidelines on when a car seat should be replaced after a crash depending on the severity of the crash. Do you totally trust the person selling you the car seat to tell you the truth when you ask these questions?

### **Is anything missing?**

Four out of five car seats are used incorrectly. The number one reason car seats are not used correctly is because parents or caregivers do not read the instruction manual that comes with the car seat. If the manual is missing, chances are you would not be able to safely use the car seat.

Car seats protect children when they are involved in a traffic crash. A child's life may depend on your decision to save a little money. Many communities have programs to help those who cannot afford a car seat for their child. Be smart—don't purchase a used car seat from someone you don't know or trust. For assistance with your car seat, new or used, visit [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com) or [altru.org](http://altru.org) to find a car seat check-up event near you.

**For more information, contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at 701-780-1489 or visit [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com).**

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**[altru.org](http://altru.org)**