



ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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"PROMOTING & PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF ONEIDA COUNTY"

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News Release

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Megan Graziano
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Oneida County to Host Car Seat Safety Event

The Oneida County Health Department and the Oneida County Sheriff's Office will be hosting a car seat safety event next week.

The event will take place from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on January 29, 2020 at the Deerfield Fire Station in Utica. Car seats will be available to income-qualified candidates by appointment only. For those already in possession of a car seat, a certified technician will be available to check that it is installed properly.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, injuries from motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of deaths among children in the United States. When properly secured in a car seat, the risk of injury is reduced between 71% and 82%.

"All too often, parents move their children to the front seat before they should, or they are unaware their car seat is not installed properly, which significantly increases the risk of injury and death," said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. "Determining the right seat for your child depends on your child's height and weight as well as the guidelines of the law."

The New York State Department of Motor Vehicles has provided the following examples to help you select the correct child safety seat:

- Infant seats are used for infants that weigh approximately 22 pounds or less, and are 25 inches or less in length. Always place the seat in the back seat of the vehicle and make sure the child safety seat faces the rear of the vehicle. Never put an infant in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger-side air bag. New York State law now requires all children up to the age of two be rear facing.
- Convertible child safety seats are typically for infants or toddlers that weigh approximately 40 pounds or less. For infants, face these seats toward the rear of the vehicle. Follow manufacturer instructions to adjust the seat as the child grows. For the best possible protection, NHTSA recommends a child continue to face the rear for as long as possible up to the weight and height limits specified by the seat manufacturer. For toddlers, a convertible seat can be adjusted to face the front of the vehicle.
- Booster seats are for children who have outgrown convertible or toddler seats, and are generally for children who are four to eight years old, weigh 40 to 80 pounds, and are less than four feet, nine inches in height. Booster seats can be used until an adult seat belt correctly fits the child without use of the booster seat. Both the shoulder and lap belts should always be used with a booster seat.

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- Any child under 13 years old should always sit in the back seat. Parents and caregivers should register their car seat or booster seat with the seat manufacturer so they can be notified in the event of a recall.

New York State law requires an appropriate child safety restraint system for all children until their eighth birthday, using a child safety seat, a harness, a vest or a booster seat attached with the vehicle seat belt system. The law requires the safety seat must meet the size and weight requirements for the child based on the federal requirements and the recommendations of the manufacturer, and should not be used in the front seat of the vehicle. The penalty for a car seat violation for a person under the age of 16 is a maximum fine of \$100 and three driver violation points upon conviction for the driver.

To ensure your child is riding safely, the Oneida County Health Department, along with the Oneida County Sheriff's Department, can provide you with a free car seat and the training to independently install the car seat.

“Having the appropriate car seat properly installed is the best action to avoid injury or death of a child in a motor vehicle accident,” said Oneida County Director of Health Phyllis D. Ellis, BSN, MS, F.A.C.H.E.

A limited number of free car seats will be distributed by appointment only to those parent/guardian drivers who are eligible. To qualify for this program, you must:

- Meet income eligibility – provide proof you receive public assistance.
- Bring the child who is in need of the car seat to the appointment. If you are pregnant, you must be expecting the baby within the next three months.
- Bring the vehicle for the seat to be installed.

For eligibility and registration for the event on Jan. 29, please call 315-798-5229.

For more information about how to find the right car seat for your child, you can visit

<https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats>.

This Car Seat Safety Event has been made possible through a grant offered by New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee.