



## Baca County Public Health Agency

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The Baca County Public Health Agency and the Walsh Medical Clinic recently partnered with the Salvation Army with the support of Southeast Colorado Hospital District, Baca County Department of Human Services, along with the Springfield and Walsh Police Departments to host two Car Seat Safety Check-up events in Baca County. The purpose was to ensure the correct use of car seats and car seat restraints for children who are 0-13 years old. Car Seats and boosters provide protection for infants and children in a crash, yet car crashes are a leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 13. That's why it's so important to choose and use the right car seat correctly every time your child is in the car.

The first event was held in Springfield on June 8, 2018, 11 car seat inspections were completed that day. Technicians completed 8 inspections in Walsh on July 13, 2018, bringing the total to 19 car seat and/or seat restraint inspections. During an inspection, the Technician looks for various errors including proper location of the car seat in relation to the vehicle, where air bags are located, whether the seat is tightened sufficiently to the car's seat, and whether a tether is being used. They also check proper booster usage and whether the child is in the correct seat based on height and weight requirements for both the car seat and the harness, and technicians check for recalls on the seat in use and if the seat has expired. Technicians will walk the participant through any existing errors by letting them know why the seat is installed incorrectly, how the error can be corrected, and will provide installation tips to make things easier for parents while still ensuring safe travel for children.

The most common error that was found during the two Baca County Check-up Events was that car seats were not installed correctly, meaning the car seat was not tightened sufficiently to the vehicle seat. During the combined events in Springfield and Walsh it was found that 11 car seats were erroneously installed, there were 10 harnessing errors, 2 car seats were incorrectly selected based on the child's height and weight requirements, 2 expired car seats, and 1 car seat with an active recall.

Thanks to the partnership with the local Salvation Army, we were able to offer replacement car seats for those that had recalls, expired, damaged, or inappropriate seats based on the child's height and weight for safe traveling needs.

If you have any questions about safe car seat usage or would like to schedule a car seat inspection free of charge, please contact the Baca County Public Health Agency at 719-523-6621 or the Walsh Medical Clinic at 719-324-5253.