

Most Oakville drivers failed car seat spot check

By David Lea
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

Oakville residents received a failing grade in child safety Saturday when Halton police held a car seat spot check clinic on Upper Middle Road and found 70 per cent of those stopped were using improper car seats.

The clinic, held in conjunction with the Halton Partners for Car Seat Safety, saw a total of 75 cars stopped that were equipped with car seats or booster seats.

It found 70 per cent of them were sporting a wide array of problems.

Those safety issues included:

- Expired car seats
- Children required by law to be in a booster seat not using one

- Use of an infant car seat for a child over the weight/height limit

- Car seats purchased in the United States, which are not valid in Canada

- A child in a booster seat with no seat belt

Halton police Sgt. Julie Craddock-Bijl said seven regulation car seats and three booster seats, donated for the clinic, were handed out on Saturday to replace expired or undersized models that police could not permit the drivers leave with.

"That's a great number for a clinic," she said.

While the goal of the clinic was to educate caregivers about the proper way to secure a child in a car seat or booster seat, one caregiver received a hefty fine when a child was found to be not only not secured properly in a booster seat, but not even wearing a seat belt.

Craddock-Bijl said she had mixed feelings about the results of the car seat clinic.

"The clinic was a success because there were 75 vehicles inspected and we're confident that when everybody left those children were secure in properly fitting booster seats and car seats," she said.

"What scares us is that there is still such a

high failure rate and that people are not taking the time to read their car manuals, to read their car seat instruction manuals and have their kids in properly-fitting car seats and booster seats. We know that if we are seeing this kind of failure rate at a car seat clinic that there are a lot of kids out there that aren't in properly-fitting and installed car seats."

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