

Dear Parent:

Today your child took part in a "Teddy Bear Clinic" — an injury prevention education program sponsored by the Stony Brook University Trauma Center. The kids pretended to be doctors and nurses, and helped care for their stuffed animals. Have your child share their story about what happened to their stuffed animal and talk with them about ways to stay safe and injury free.

About Trauma (Injury). Trauma is the leading cause of death for all Americans under age 44, but it's something we can often prevent. By modeling and teaching safe behavior, you'll communicate to your children the importance of staying safe. Here's what you can do:

Make Sure Everyone Buckles Up. Everyone should wear a seatbelt or be in the right kind of child safety seat every time you are in a car, with no exceptions. This important safety rule will help keep your child safe as they grow into young adults. For more information, visit nhtsa.dot.gov and nydmv.state.ny.us

Choose the Right Restraint. NY State law says **all children must use a proper child passenger restraint (car seat or booster seat) until their 8th birthday.** Seat belts are not designed for younger children. Booster seats help raise kids up until the seat belt fits safely, which typically happens when the child is between **8-12 years old and around 4'9" tall.**

Get a Free Car Seat Check. Seventy-three percent of car seats are not used or installed correctly. Before you hit the road, get your car seat checked. Visit trauma.stonybrookmedicine.edu/injury-prevention/children#carseats for a list of free car seat and booster seat fitting locations.

Keep Kids in the Back Seat. The safest place for all children under age 13 is the back (or middle row) of cars. Air bags are designed to protect adults and can be dangerous for kids in the front seat.

Enforce Helmet Use. Helmets reduce the risk of serious head injury by 88 percent, but less than half of kids under 14 usually wear them. **Suffolk County law requires helmets for bicycle, scooter and skate riders under age 18.** Helmets are also important when snowboarding, skiing and playing many sports. Children whose parents wear helmets are more likely to wear them too. For more information on helmet safety visit safekids.org

Know We're Here for You. Sometimes, despite parents' best efforts, kids get hurt. That's why the expert team at Stony Brook Children's Hospital is here for you at our specialized Pediatric Emergency Department, open 24/7.

We had fun talking about safety with your child today.

For more information, contact our Injury Prevention Coordinator:

(631) 444-8385 or

Kristi.Ladowski@stonybrookmedicine.edu

Visit our website:

trauma.stonybrookmedicine.edu/injury-prevention



Stony Brook Children's