

Strollerthon Funds Child Safety Seats and Booster Seats

In Illinois in need of child safety seats will benefit from the Strollerthon event, which took place on August 7 at the Chicago Convention Center. Organized by AAA President and CEO, the event was made up of AAA employees, volunteers, public, walked or pushed strollers on a three-mile route and

sought pledges to raise funds to purchase child safety seats for distribution to families in need, free of charge.

The money raised by the Strollerthon will be used to purchase and distribute child safety seats to low-income families who might otherwise not be able to afford the proper equipment.

Child passenger safety is AAA's major traffic safety initiative for 2004.

Throw A Baby Safety Shower

During National Child Passenger Safety Month, and if you are looking for ways to help parents take better care of their babies, consider organizing a baby safety shower — a baby shower with a new twist. A baby safety shower is a learning party where all the activities revolve around home safety and caregivers have fun — and leave with new ideas about keeping their babies safe at home.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and Gerber Products Company have organized a baby safety shower initiative to help good parents become even better parents. Still, no parents are born knowing about safety for their babies. Baby safety showers have been organized in all kinds of communities for all ages. As former First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton said when she hosted the first Baby Safety Shower in Washington, DC, "I hope families will have baby safety showers (to) educate each other on what we need to do to keep all of our babies safe and sound. Baby safety showers are an especially good way for local organizations, businesses, parents and parents-to-be with important safety information to come together."

For a baby safety shower for any number of people, from a small to a larger baby safety shower, parents can visit a website where volunteers illustrate important safety information, prizes, and other activities. At smaller showers, a parent can lead the group in safety games.

The focus, like the material included, on keeping your baby safe — or you can include additional issues, like nutrition and health.

Baby safety showers are also a good way to create and promote partnerships among many different organizations. By inviting local businesses, for example, to distribute donated baby products or health information, you can enhance your ties with the local business community. These relationships with local health and social service organizations is creates community goodwill — and provides your guests with welcome information, products, and services.

Resources you'll need to get started are included in the Baby Safety Shower How-to-Kit. Take special note of the Baby Safety Checklist, in both English and Spanish, which provides 12 important home safety tips that all parents should know.

For more information to create a baby safety shower for your specific situation. The Baby Safety Shower How-to-Kit provides important safety information in a festive and inviting setting. So get started today — and have fun!

The Baby Safety Shower How-to-Kit was developed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and Gerber Products Company.

Top 10 Most Popular Baby Names in 2003

Male

1. Jacob
2. Michael
3. Joshua
4. Matthew
5. Andrew
6. Joseph
7. Ethan
8. Daniel
9. Christopher
10. Anthony

Female

- Emily
- Emma
- Madison
- Hannah
- Olivia
- Abigail
- Alexis
- Ashley
- Elizabeth
- Samantha

(Source: U.S. Social Security Administration. Note: names are not edited or grouped together according to spelling variations of the same name.)

Babies Can Sign Before They Talk

Baby Hands Productions, a company founded on the principle that babies can communicate at a very early age, announced the release of "First Signs," the first in the "My Baby Can Talk" DVD series. Based on American Sign Language (ASL), this series is designed to educate, entertain and engage babies and their parents.

The format of "First Signs" is specifically designed to respect the developmental stage, attention span and intellect of babies from 10 to 24 months. This video teaches elementary signs that include some of the first words that are most loved by babies. Each ASL sign is demonstrated by both a baby and an adult, making "First Signs" the only DVD currently on the market that features a baby signing all the words presented.

The format includes captivating live footage, and visually engaging toys and baby products set to classical music from famous composers such as Mozart and Beethoven. Never before has sign language been presented to babies in such a compelling manner.

"Effective communication between baby and parent is a critical part of the child rearing process, and "First Signs" empowers babies and their parents in a way not previously thought possible. Baby Hands Productions was created to address the need for products that engage babies directly, facilitating the mutual education of babies and parents without the need for a class or group setting," said Kathleen Waidhofer, Creative Director of Baby Hands Productions. "Given the demands on parents' time, the ability to learn to sign in a one-on-one, flexible environment is increasingly important."

Research has shown that babies are able to communicate at a much earlier age than they are physically able to speak. Babies taught to sign at an early age are better adjusted, speak sooner with larger vocabularies and boast higher IQ scores than their peers. Preverbal signing has also been shown to reduce the frustration broadly associated with "the terrible twos."

Understanding that babies can effectively communicate as early as ten months old, the Company created this DVD series to tap into a baby's innate language capabilities. To enhance the learning process, Baby Hands Productions is in development on a full line of ancillary products including board books, flash cards and other tools.

"First Signs" has a suggested retail price of \$19.95. For more information visit at www.MyBabyCanTalk.com.