



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### **SBM CHARTIBLE FOUNDATION AWARDS \$20,000 GRANT FOR VIOLENCE AND INURY PREVENTION PROGRAM AT SAINT FRANCIS**

(HARTFORD, Conn.) – The Violence and Injury Prevention Program, an initiative of the Trauma/Surgery Department at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, has received a \$20,000 grant from the SBM Charitable Foundation (“SBMCF”) for the *Kids In Safety Seats (KISS)-CT* program.

The “We’re Pulling for You” grant was awarded by the SBMCF for children living east of the Connecticut River. With the grant, the *KISS-CT* program will host car seat clinics in Tolland and Windham counties, purchase car seats and safety equipment, conduct bike rodeos (where children learn the safety rules of the road and how to properly wear a helmet), and purchase new multi-sport helmets.

“We are proud to support Saint Francis and its outreach programs that promote safety for children in our communities,” said Doreen Downham, Executive Director of the SBMCF.

“The leading cause of death among children in Connecticut is unintentional injury,” said Marisol Feliciano, Saint Francis Violence and Injury Prevention Program Coordinator. “The largest percentage of fatalities is due to injuries children sustain in motor vehicle crashes. We tend to call them ‘accidents,’ but this is a misnomer because they can be predicted – and prevented.

“It is our goal to prevent injuries by providing our shared community with the resources, education, and advocacy that are needed to make the children safer in motor vehicles,” she adds.

The *KISS-CT* program hosts car seat check-up events throughout the year to provide education to the community on how to properly restrain and protect children in a car. At these events, Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians provide free car seat safety education to families, show them how to install the car seat, and ensure that they know how to correctly restrain their children in the seat. If for some reason a family cannot afford a car seat, one is provided to them, along with a safety kit. These car seat clinics and all materials are free to the public. A Technician works with each family to demonstrate correct installation of the safety

seat based on the child's age and size. *KISS-CT* provides families with education and practical assistance in the installation of their child's safety seat by Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety technicians who have the technical expertise needed to protect children in motor vehicle crashes.

For more information about the *KISS-CT* program and car safety seat workshops in your area, please call (860) 714-5477.

#### Safety tips

- Keep children rear-facing, in a back seat, for as long as possible
- Keep babies rear facing until 2 years old AND until the highest weight or height limit of their car seat
- Never hold a baby in a moving car
- Use the vehicle lap and shoulder seatbelt while seated on the booster seat.
- Use a booster seat until a child can safely fit into the adult seatbelt at 4'9" and between 80-100 pounds
- Until the adult seat belt fits a child, he/she needs to be in a car seat or booster seat
- Keep all children under 13 in a back seat
- Do not buy car seats or booster seats from flea markets or yard sales. You will not know if it has been in a crash or if all the parts are there.
- Make sure all adults are buckled up on every ride, even in the back seat

#### **About the SBM Charitable Foundation**

The SBM Charitable Foundation, Inc. was founded in 2000 by Connecticut Bancshares, Inc., the parent company of the former Savings Bank of Manchester. The Foundation's mission, perpetuating the vision of the former Bank, is committed to bettering the lives of those who live and work predominantly east of the Connecticut River in Hartford, Tolland and Windham Counties. Priority categories for funding include health, human services, education, housing and the arts. Since its inception the Foundation's philanthropy has reached over \$18 million in total grants and scholarships. The SBM Charitable Foundation is located at 935 Main Street in downtown Manchester.

#### **About Saint Francis**

Saint Francis *Care* is an integrated healthcare delivery system established by Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, an anchor institution in north central Connecticut since 1897. Licensed for 617 beds and 65 bassinets, it is a major teaching hospital and the largest Catholic hospital in New England. Other major entities of Saint Francis *Care* include The Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital, the Connecticut Joint Replacement Institute, the Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute of Connecticut, the Saint Francis/Mount Sinai Regional Cancer Center, and the Joyce D. and Andrew J. Mandell Center for Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care and Neuroscience Research. Its services are supported by a network of five major Access Centers and eight additional medical office centers sited throughout the region. For more information, visit [www.stfranciscare.com](http://www.stfranciscare.com).