

**16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly**

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**Car Seat Safety Education Program**

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since last November when my son was born, my wife and I have had to install, take out and reinstall car seats to safely transport our son. Like other parents, we read the instructions and do the best we can to install the car seat. Currently in the Northwest Territories there is nowhere a parent can go to have a car seat inspected to see if it has been recalled or properly installed.

This is a concern, because car crashes are the number one cause of death for children from birth to 14 years. In a recent report submitted to the federal Health Minister, Tony Clement, Dr. Kelly Leitch reported that there are over 6,000 head injuries per year — a figure that she states is grossly underestimated — and that the vast majority of these are caused by car accidents. Her recommendation is that each territory and province have a site where parents or grandparents can go to ensure their children or grandchildren are transported safely in a vehicle.

Again, Mr. Speaker, today there isn't one place, whether it is in Yellowknife, Hay River or Inuvik, where parents can go to have that seat checked for proper installation. Currently there is a proposal that has gone forward to the Department of Health and Social Services asking for some funding to bring a trainer to Yellowknife and to Inuvik to train people in becoming St. John Ambulance's car seat installation educators. The successful participants would then become educators in their home communities.

The course will also include a discussion on how to offer community based clinics and a discussion on the use of used child seats and loaner programs. The successful participants of the training will educate others on how to properly select and install child seats. The goal will not be to have them become installers but, rather, educators, to spread the knowledge as widely as possible across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, funding this project and this proposal makes sense. I'm not sure why we are continually finding excuses not to fund the training program when we know there is a gap in service. It will make the transport of our greatest resource, our children, much more safe and also provide those parents who need advice or guidance with an outlet to ensure they're selecting the right car seat and installing it properly for their children. Mahsi.