

Dear Sir/Madam

We all know how expensive it is to bring up children, and charity shops help parents save money by providing access to good quality second-hand items, in addition to raising valuable funds for good causes. But, one item you should never take a gamble on selling is a second-hand child's car seat.

### **What's the danger?**

It's impossible to know for certain if a used car seat has been in a collision and relying on a donor's word is too much of a risk to take. If a car seat has been involved in a crash there may be little or no visible damage to it, but there could well be substantial internal damage, rendering it dangerous. Missing instruction booklets in second-hand car seats could lead to them being fitted incorrectly, again rendering them dangerous.

### **How can you tell if it's safe?**

With second hand car seats you can't. Just looking at a car seat won't tell you what you need to know. In fact the only way of checking a used car seats integrity is through laboratory testing. The fact that many seats 'look' OK after an incident leads some parents to continue using their car seats after a crash, unwittingly putting their children at risk. The Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) advises that car crashes can weaken a child car seat to the extent that a child is left dangerously unprotected in the event of another incident. They advise parents to replace their children's car seats immediately after a crash.

### **How can you help keep children safe?**

Please do not sell second-hand child car seats through your charity outlet, the consequences of a seat failing, even in a relatively low speed impact, are simply not worth taking.

Yours faithfully/sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Collins'.

Councillor Melvin Collins  
London Road Safety Council Representative  
London Borough of Hounslow